Factors influencing the effects of realistic job previews on applicant judgments of organizational attractiveness

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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EFFECTS OF REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS ON APPLICANT JUDGMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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by

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Abstract

Realistic job previews (RJPs) involve the presentation of both positive and negative job attributes to job applicants. Although several researchers have studied effects of RJPs on satisfaction, turnover, and performance, comparatively less research has focused on the effects of RJPs on attraction. This study extends previous RJP research by sampling both students who are education majors and currently employed teachers. It compared their ratings of attraction to organizations represented by an RJP or a traditional job preview (TJP). In addition, both teachers and education students completed a measure of negative affectivity (NA). Contrary to expectations, results of this study showed that teachers were less attracted to both the RJP and the TJP than education students. However, consistent with expectations, teachers and education students were less attracted to the RJP than the TJP. Also contrary to expectation, no evidence was found for a significant relationship between NA and organizational attraction. Past research on the effects of RJPs on organizational attraction has not included employed persons; however, these findings suggest that future research may consider including employed persons. It also suggests that organizations may want to consider whether use of RJPs is appropriate for their recruitment needs.
Introduction

Attracting qualified individuals to apply for employment vacancies is a goal that organizations strive for. Periodic worker shortages and low unemployment rates have made attracting qualified applicants an important concern for large organizations (Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001; Rynes & Barber, 1990). Although attracting qualified job candidates is an important first step, it is far from being the last stage of the recruitment process. Once applicants are attracted to the organization, their interest must be held throughout the selection process, and finally, their attraction must be maintained so they will accept a job offer (Barber, 1998). Thus, the maintenance of attraction throughout the application process plays perhaps the most important role in recruitment.

Interest in recruitment research in general is evidenced by the dramatic increase in published research in this area between 1976 and 1991 (Barber, 1998). In 1976, the subject of recruitment received less than one page of coverage in a chapter on selection in the Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology (Guion, 1976). This lack of attention was due to a severe deficit in the area of recruitment research (Rynes, 1991). In 1991, Rynes wrote a chapter in the second edition of the Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology devoted to the topics of recruitment, job choice, and post-hire consequences. This increased interest in recruitment research has continued beyond the publication of Rynes’ Handbook chapter and is evidenced by the number of publications on the subject of recruitment. For example, a PsycINFO search yielded 659 citations for recruitment related articles, chapters, and dissertations prior to 1975, whereas a search of the years 1976 to the present found 2,627 citations.
One area of recruitment that has been the focus of considerable research is the topic of realistic job previews (RJPs) (Barber, 1998; Phillips, 1998; Rynes, 1991; Suszko & Breaugh, 1986). Realistic job previews involve the presentation of both favorable and unfavorable job related information to job candidates (Rynes, 1991). The presentation of positive and negative information can serve to allow job candidates to match their needs with what they might encounter on the job.

Dimensions on which RJPs differ include the format, the timing, and the amount of negative information presented. For example, with respect to format, one may choose from audio-visual format, a written RJP, spoken by a job incumbent, or spoken by a recruiter (Wanous, 1989). The timing of the presentation is another dimension on which RJPs differ (Phillips, 1998). Some RJPs are presented when the applicant makes initial contact with the organization, others after the offer has been extended, and still others after employment begins. The amount of negative information presented can vary from medium to high (Wanous, 1989). Previous research has demonstrated that these factors influence the effects of the RJP on the outcome variables (Bretz & Judge, 1998; Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985).

RJPs can be beneficial because they are relatively inexpensive to develop and implement, and even when the effects of RJPs on performance, turnover, and job satisfaction are relatively small, the economic savings in selection and turnover costs can be quite large (Phillips, 1998). For example, based on survey results it is estimated that employee turnover costs for a healthcare system range from 14 to 27 million dollars annually (Hansen, 2001). Another example of how costly turnover can be, is for a hotel with thirty employees and a 50% turnover rate, turnover costs were figured to be $150,000 per year (Simmons & Hinkin, 2001). These two examples
illustrate how costly high turnover is. Further, looking at these examples it is easy to see how beneficial even small reductions in turnover can be.

Previous RJP research has examined numerous outcomes such as turnover, job satisfaction, and performance, and to a much lesser extent, prehire outcomes such as attraction. However, the effects of RJP on attraction are perhaps most important because maintaining an applicant's attraction to the job is crucial to selecting a qualified employee.

The present study will focus on how the presentation of RJP may affect applicant attraction as an outcome of job previews. However, the majority of RJP research has focused on turnover, satisfaction, and performance. A brief review of this literature will follow. Then, research focusing on applicant attraction as an outcome will be discussed. Finally, this introduction will conclude with an overview of the current study.

Review of RJP Literature

Turnover. Turnover is an outcome variable that has received much attention in RJP research (Saks, Wiesner, & Summers, 1994; Suszko & Breaugh, 1986). Rynes (1991) discussed several hypotheses that have been proposed to explain why RJP lead to lower turnover. The first is the *self-selection hypothesis*, which suggests that RJP positively affect retention because applicants are given realistic information that is used to determine whether their work-related needs will be met. The second explanation for effects of RJP on turnover is the *commitment hypothesis*, which proposes that, when given all the information necessary to make informed job choices, those that do enter the organization will be more committed. The *coping hypothesis* holds that, when provided with realistic information about the job, new employees are better able to prepare coping strategies to handle situations that will arise on the job. The final explanation for this effect discussed by Rynes is the *met expectations hypothesis*, which suggests that RJP
tend to lower an applicant’s expectations, causing their expectations to be met more easily. Meeting the employee’s expectations causes them to experience increased job satisfaction, which in turn leads to a reduction in voluntary turnover.

Research examining the effects of RJPs on turnover has found that the use of RJPs can lead to lower turnover, although the effects appear to vary widely from study to study. For example, Colarelli (1984) conducted a field study with applicants for bank teller positions and presented them with an RJP from an incumbent, an RJP in the form of a brochure, or a control group who received no job preview. The control group experienced more than twice the turnover than that of the group who received the RJP from an incumbent. However, the differences in turnover between the groups of participants who received the RJP in the form of a brochure and the control group were not significant. In another study by Reilly, Brown, Blood, and Malatesta (1981), the findings were quite different. A large sample of applicants for the position of telephone representative either saw an RJP film, visited the job, or were in a control group who received no job information prior to accepting the job offer. After six months on the job there were no significant differences in turnover between the groups. In fact, at no point during the six-month period was turnover for the preview groups lower than turnover for the control group.

Some research has found rather large effects of RJPs on turnover. For example, Hom, Griffeth, Palich, and Bracker (1998) conducted research with newly hired nurses and found that the group who viewed an RJP experienced reduced turnover. The nurses in the control group saw a traditional job preview (TJP), which only presents the positive aspects of a job (Saks, 1989). In this study, turnover for the RJP group was almost two and a half times lower than that of the control group. Another study presented an RJP to a group of participants after they joined
the organization and before they began reporting to the organization (Ilgen & Seely, 1974). In this study, the control group experienced two times the turnover the RJP group experienced. Both of these studies found large reductions in turnover for the RJP group.

Some research on the effects of RJPs on turnover has found small effects. In one such study, Wanous (1973) found that after three months on the job the RJP group experienced a reduction in turnover 1.3 times that of the TJP group. However, the difference in job survival for the two previews was not statistically significant. In another study, applicants for the position of truck driver were presented with a written RJP and then waited twelve months before returning to measure turnover (Taylor, 1994). Turnover decreased by 28%, from 207% to 150%, after implementing the RJP.

McEvoy and Cascio (1985) meta-analyzed 20 field studies and found a small correlation ($\Phi = .09$) for RJPs and turnover reduction (retention rate). Aggregating across 40 studies, Phillips (1998) found that for voluntary turnover the mean correlation with RJPs was $r = -0.06$. The findings of these meta-analyses once again demonstrate reliable effects of RJPs on turnover, yet these findings also demonstrate how small these effects are. Therefore, it may be necessary to consider whether implementing an RJP that yields small effects on turnover will be beneficial for the organization.

Job Attitudes. Several studies have examined the relation between RJPs and job satisfaction. The met expectations hypothesis has been used to explain how RJPs increase job satisfaction. Recall that the met expectations hypothesis suggests that RJPs lower an applicant’s job expectations, causing them to be more easily met. Hom et al. (1998) presented newly hired nurses with either an RJP or a TJP. These researchers found that the RJP led to an increase in met expectations as well as higher job satisfaction. One study by Suszko and Breaugh (1986)
found that applicants for the job of inventory taker who were given an RJP reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction than the control group who received no RJP. Although Suszko and Breaugh did not hypothesize that met expectations was the reason for RJP effectiveness, the authors found that prior to viewing the job preview both the RJP and the control group on average reported high job expectations and after 6 weeks on the job the RJP group reported higher job satisfaction. These findings led the authors to make the argument that the RJP resulted in the lower expectations, thus allowing applicants’ expectations to be met. Thus, research has shown that RJPs can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction, and the reduction of applicants’ expectations may be the cause.

However, some RJP research has found limited support for the met expectations hypothesis (Dilla, 1987; Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981). For example, Dugoni and Ilgen found that, two months after receiving the RJP, the experimental group held lower expectations for the job, but their job satisfaction did not differ from the control group who did not receive a preview. In a lab study, Dilla provided participants with a prescriptive preview, a descriptive preview, a combination of these two, or a control group given the same information given during recruitment. Dilla found that, although the job previews led to lower expectations, participants that viewed the descriptive preview had lower task satisfaction.

Studies that have examined the effect of RJPs on job satisfaction may have found mixed results due to the varying lengths of time participants were employed or working on the task. For example, Hom et al. (1998) asked nurses about their job attitudes 3 weeks after they entered the organization, whereas Suszko and Breaugh (1986) waited 6 weeks. Dilla (1987), on the other hand, had participants perform one work session before asking them to rate their satisfaction. For employees to determine their job satisfaction it may take more experience than one work
session. Because Hom et al. and Suszko and Breaugh measured job satisfaction after a longer period of work, one may have more confidence in their results and the support they have found for the met expectations hypothesis. Therefore, it is possible that met expectations are responsible for employees experiencing improved job satisfaction.

Performance. RJs have generally been found to have small effects on performance; however, research has found that the use of RJs has generally led to increases in performance. For example, Phillips (1998) meta-analyzed the results of 12 studies using performance as the outcome. She found that, in general, the presentation of RJs leads to increased performance ($r = .05$). However, Phillips included both published (6) and unpublished (6) studies in her meta-analysis. Several of the published studies included in Phillips' meta-analysis are reviewed here and find little support for the positive effects of RJs on performance. Therefore, it is likely that the unpublished studies included in Phillips' meta-analysis accounted for the significant effects of RJs on performance.

In one study, Dean and Wanous (1984) provided bank teller applicants with either an RJP with specific and general information, an RJP with only general information, or with no preview at all. The three groups did not differ in performance (calculated as the number of days without errors divided by the number of days scheduled). The authors warn that perhaps RJs do not affect performance because they do not provide enough information about how to do the job successfully.

Dilla (1987) provided participants with information on how to perform the job. Participants were presented with a prescriptive preview, descriptive preview, no preview, or a combined preview with both the descriptive and prescriptive information. The prescriptive preview provided new employees with suggestions to help them cope with the job such as, “pay
attention during training” (Dilla, 1987, p. 37). The descriptive preview provided participants with information such as the least and most favorable aspects of the job. Participants were provided with a task that involved the computation of prices for catalog merchandise. Those in the descriptive preview condition had the highest level of performance, which was measured using the number of errors made when reporting prices. Thus, in this study, providing participants with information on how to do the job did not lead to better performance, but providing information about the favorable and unfavorable parts of the job did.

Another study by Miceli (1985) used four different preview types. Subjects were given either a TJP, an RJP, an unfavorable preview, which contained only negative and neutral information, or no preview, which gave the job title and a paragraph with little information. Some subjects were given the choice of accepting the task that was previewed or accepting an alternative task. It was anticipated that subjects who viewed the RJP and were given a choice of tasks would be the best performers. However, this group exhibited the worst performance. Subjects who received the unfavorable preview with no choice in task had the highest level of performance. Miceli suggested that, when subjects were presented with unfavorable information, they might have considered the task a challenge.

In another study, Pond and Hay (1989) created a task that simulated the job of a Customs Inspector, in which the participants had to make decisions about shipments. The participants viewed either a favorable or a realistic task preview prior to performing the task. They found that for participants who viewed the realistic task preview self-efficacy was positively related to task performance. However, for the participants that viewed the favorable preview task performance was negatively related to self-efficacy. The authors concluded that the effects of RJP s on performance might depend on the applicant’s level of self-efficacy.
Examination of the various methodologies used in these studies may explain some of the differences in findings. For example, Dean and Wanous (1984) conducted their research with actual applicants for the job of bank teller and developed the job preview materials based on information from the bank and found no differences in performance. Pond and Hay (1989), Dilla (1987), and Miceli (1985) conducted their research with undergraduate students and each developed tasks that simulated those of a clerical worker. Pond and Hay found that for RJP participants, self-efficacy was positively related to task performance, whereas Dilla found that participants who saw the descriptive preview performed better. However, Miceli found that participants who saw an unfavorable preview and had no choice in the task they did performed better. Perhaps the tasks that were created for use in the laboratory were not a good assessment of performance. In order to better understand how RJP s affect performance, more research conducted with job applicants who subsequently accept the job is necessary.

Meta-Analyses of RJP Research

Premack and Wanous (1985) meta-analyzed 21 studies of RJP s. They found that RJP s did lower initial job related expectations ($r = -.17$) while increasing other outcome variables such as self-selection ($r = .06$), job satisfaction ($r = .02$), commitment to the organization ($r = .09$), job survival ($r = .06$), and performance ($r = .03$). The conclusions of this meta-analysis are consistent with those of a more recent meta-analysis by Phillips (1998). Phillips’ findings indicated that RJP s led to small decreases in job satisfaction ($r = -.01$), decreased turnover ($r = -.06$), less attrition from the recruitment process ($r = -.03$) and higher levels of performance ($r = .05$).

In an effort to understand the weak overall effects presented above, Phillips (1998) examined the studies for three moderators. Table 1 presents the results of the moderator
analyses. The first moderator investigated was setting, or whether the study was conducted in a lab or in the field. The second moderator was the timing, or whether the RJP was presented before or after a job offer. The third moderator was the format, or whether the RJP was presented in a video, in person, or in writing. The three moderators accounted for 65% of the variance in effect sizes for studies using satisfaction as an outcome variable, 49% of the variance in organizational commitment, 45% of the variance in performance, 41% of the variance in voluntary turnover, 33% of the variance in all turnover, and 14% of the variance in attrition from the recruitment process.

Table 2 summarizes the moderated relationships between RJPs and the outcome variables. The largest effect was for setting moderating the relationship between RJPs and job satisfaction. Field studies reported a positive relationship between RJPs and job satisfaction and laboratory studies reported a negative relationship. These results provide an explanation for the conflicting findings regarding job satisfaction. It is also interesting to note that setting moderated the relationship between RJPs and voluntary turnover, such that field studies showed a negative relationship between RJPs and voluntary turnover and laboratory studies reported no consistent relationship. Performance is another outcome variable where results of previous research have been conflicting. Timing and medium were both moderators of the relationship between RJPs and performance. Timing moderated this relationship such that when RJPs were given very early in the recruitment process or just before hiring there was no consistent effect, but RJPs given after hiring demonstrated a positive effect. Similarly, with respect to medium, videotaped RJPs were the only ones to have a positive relationship with performance. This demonstrates how important the choices concerning the format of the RJP, the timing of the presentation of the RJP, and the setting of the study are to the effects on outcomes.
Table 1
Results of Regression Analysis for RJP Outcomes Regressed on Moderators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Attrition from Recruitment Process</th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Organizational Commitment</th>
<th>Voluntary Turnover</th>
<th>All Turnover</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>.01**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.02**</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.08**</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.03**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>.02**</td>
<td>.01**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.06**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total R²</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table entries are the changes in $R^2$ accounted for by the dummy-coded moderator variables entered as a block. 
** p < .01

Table 2
Summary of the Moderating Effects of Medium on the Relationship between RJP s and Organizational Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>RJP Timing</th>
<th>RJP Medium</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Very Early</td>
<td>Before Hiring</td>
<td>After Hiring</td>
<td>Written</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Videotaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A R P**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>n. a.</td>
<td>-.05*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Turnover</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.07*</td>
<td>-.05*</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Turnover</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.06*</td>
<td>-.05*</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
<td>-.03*</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Attrition from Recruitment Process
* The confidence interval for the mean correlation does not include zero

The research reviewed in this section has demonstrated the potential benefits of RJP s for reducing turnover and increasing employee satisfaction and performance. Some of the findings are small, and for some of these outcome variables, it is difficult to determine whether RJP s are beneficial. However, the meta-analyses of RJP research (McEvoy & Cascio, 1986; Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985) have demonstrated that RJP s reduce turnover and increase performance and satisfaction. An examination of the moderators of the effects of RJP s indicates that, under the right circumstances, RJP s may be very valuable to an organization. Specifically, when the desired outcome of the RJP (e.g., improved satisfaction, turnover reduction) is clearly identified, and the timing, setting, and medium that are appropriate for that outcome are implemented, RJP s may be beneficial. Moreover, it is also important to note that, for a larger organization, even the slightest reduction in turnover or increase in performance and satisfaction may be of great value. For example, a large organization that reduces turnover by a very small percentage could save hundreds of thousands of dollars a year on turnover costs.

Though post-hire outcomes are important, an applicant must remain in the recruitment process and become an employee of the organization before RJP s can exert their effects on turnover, performance, or job satisfaction. Therefore, maintaining applicants’ attraction to the job opening is perhaps most important. Next, I will review studies of the effects of RJP s on applicant attraction.

Research on Attraction

As mentioned earlier, research on job previews has not given sufficient attention to pre-hire outcomes such as applicant attraction (Bretz & Judge, 1998; Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001; Rynes, 1991). Maintaining applicants’ attraction is vital to the recruitment process, especially when those individuals are among the most qualified in the applicant pool (e.g., Murphy, 1986).
Bretz and Judge (1998) studied effects of RJPs on attraction and found that, overall, the participants had lower levels of attraction when more negative information was given. The participants considered better qualified (as indicated by their résumés) gave lower attraction ratings to the RJP job compared to the ratings given by less qualified participants. However, participants also reported greater attraction when negative information was communicated in a procedurally just manner (i.e., the organization was sorry the negative factors could not be removed and had tried to make the job pleasant) and when the source of the information was a friend.

Saks, Wiesner, and Summers (1996) manipulated pay in an RJP and TJP and examined effects on applicant attraction. The TJP presented only positive features of the job such as comprehensive training and rewarding learning and work experiences, whereas the RJP added negative job features such as weekend and evening hours and competition for promotions. Saks et al. found that applicants that saw both a TJP and an RJP were more attracted to the TJP when the pay level for both jobs was high, but they were no more likely to accept the TJP job. However, when the RJP job offered high pay and the TJP job offered only average pay, significantly more participants felt they were likely to accept the RJP job. These authors concluded that the use of RJPs to present job attributes such as pay may affect levels of attraction and the likelihood of accepting a job offer.

Coleman and Irving (1997) examined the effects of message source and positive and negative job information on job attractiveness and job choice. Each participant previewed a TJP job (contained only positive information) and an RJP job (contained some negative and some positive information) from either a trained recruiter or a job incumbent. Significantly more participants chose the RJP job, regardless of the source from which they received the preview.
More than half of the participants who chose the RJP job indicated that the honesty of the preview source was the reason for their choice. Eighty-five percent of the participants who selected the TJP job indicated that specific job attributes were the reason for their choice. Thus, it appears that the honesty of the preview source can affect participants’ level of attraction and job choice.

Studies examining the effects of RJPs on attraction, described above, have each used student samples. However, Rynes, Orlitzky, and Bretz (1997) found that 62% of jobs calling for a college degree were filled through experienced hiring. Therefore, there is a need for research that examines how viewing an RJP affects the attraction of individuals who already have some post-college work experience.

Reviews of the differences between college students and the general population indicate that there are several ways in which these two groups may differ (e.g., Sears, 1986). Two of these are that college students tend to change their attitudes more frequently and are more easily influenced. Yet another difference is that college students tend to be from a more narrow age range. Sears points out that age is a demographic factor that has a major influence on attitudes and attitudinal processes. Thus, these differences suggest that using information about college students to make inferences about the population as a whole may be unwise.

The use of student samples may cause these results to be less generalizable to the population of employed persons (Gordon, Slade, & Schmitt, 1987). An important way that students differ from employees is that, on average, students are likely to have less work experience. Individuals who have been previously employed may already have more realistic job expectations than a student with less experience. Therefore, negative job or organizational
attributes may be less likely to negatively affect their attraction. This study will compare the effects of RJPs and TJP s on attraction across student and employee sub-samples.

The met expectations hypothesis suggests that the effects of RJP s on applicant attraction may be different for students and employed persons. Wanous (1978) describes research that has shown that individuals who are new to the organization hold inaccurate job expectations. Because students may have less work experience, their expectations may be higher, and viewing negative job and organizational attributes may cause them to be less attracted to the job. Because individuals who are employed are likely to have more work experience, they will likely have more realistic expectations about the job. Because their expectations are more realistic, viewing negative job and organizational attributes is less likely to affect their attraction to the job.

It is anticipated that students will have less work experience than will employed persons. Because of their lack of work experience, I expect that, students will view the RJP and have their job expectations not be met. When their job expectations are not met, I expect that, students will be less attracted to the RJP than employed persons. However, students and employees are not expected to differ in their level of attraction to the TJP because only positive attributes are being presented.

Hypothesis 1: Type of participant (student or employed person) will interact with type of preview (RJP or TJP) to affect ratings of attraction. Students will be less attracted to the RJP than employed persons, but students will not be less attracted to the TJP than employed persons.

Though the difference between students and those with work experience is expected to play an important role in how RJP s affect attraction, other individual differences may also
influence attraction to a job for which negative attribute information is presented. One such individual difference is negative affectivity (NA). Watson (2000; Watson & Clark, 1984) describes individuals who are high on NA as those who tend to focus on the negative aspects of themselves, other people, and the world around them. Because these individuals examine the negative aspects of themselves, this may contribute to the pervasive distress, negative self-concept, and generally poorer adjustment that characterize those who are high on NA. These authors also describe the tendency for individuals with NA to ruminate on their failures and shortcomings.

The tendency to view the world more negatively by individuals high on NA is evidenced by studies that examine how ambiguous stimuli are interpreted (Goodstein, 1954; Haney, 1973; Phares, 1961). This research has found that high-NA individuals tend to interpret ambiguous stimuli more negatively. In one study, Phares used a measure of anxiety, which plays a role in NA (Watson & Clark, 1984). This study found that participants who scored high on a measure of anxiety preferred TAT themes involving accident, threat, or trauma. In another study Haney classified participants as repressors (similar to low-NA) and sensitizers (similar to high-NA). Participants were asked to make associations related to sentences with either a positive, negative, or neutral connotation. Haney found that sensitizers made significantly more negative associations for the neutral sentences than did repressors. The results of this study suggest that high-NA individuals have negative impressions of the world around them.

Although there is a lack of research examining how NA might affect an individual’s level of attraction, a great deal of research has examined how NA leads to lower job satisfaction. The findings have shown that high-NA individuals report lower job satisfaction. In a field study, Levin and Stokes (1989) used the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) to measure employees’
perceptions of job characteristics, such as task significance, autonomy, and skill variety. Multiple regression was used to predict job satisfaction first using employees’ perceptions of the seven job characteristics and second their scores on the measure of NA. When NA was added to the regression it accounted for a significant portion of the variance in job satisfaction. NA was also significantly negatively correlated with six of the seven job characteristics, (e.g., job autonomy, job identity, job feedback, and dealing with others). This finding led Levin and Stokes to suggest that high-NA individuals perceive their jobs as containing fewer desirable characteristics than do low-NA individuals. High-NA individuals’ perceptions that their jobs contain fewer desirable job characteristics could lead one to anticipate that, if they perceive their jobs as having fewer desirable job characteristics when they view negative job characteristics in an RJP, they may be less attracted than low-NA individuals.

Hypothesis 2: NA will be negatively related to attraction to the RJP.

Hypothesis 3a: Type of preview (TJP or RJP) and NA (high or low) will interact to affect ratings of organizational attractiveness. High-NA individuals will be less attracted to the RJP than low-NA individuals, but will not differ significantly from low-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP.

Some research, however, suggests that high-NA individuals may not be affected by negative job characteristics. Judge (1993) examined the moderating effects of NA on job satisfaction and turnover. Judge’s findings suggest that high-NA individuals tend to be dissatisfied with the world around them. Thus, changing the characteristics of the job is not likely to change the generalized state. Judge found that, for high-NA individuals, the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover was not significant. However, for low-NA individuals a significant relationship was found such that when these individuals were
dissatisfied they were more likely to leave the job. This suggests that high-NA individuals may not be affected by negative job characteristics. These findings lead to an argument for an alternative hypothesis: High-NA individuals generally tend to interpret the world around them more negatively, such that when they are presented with negative job attributes, their level of attraction is not affected.

Hypothesis 3b: Type of preview (RJP or TJP) and NA (high or low) will interact to affect ratings of organizational attractiveness. Low-NA individuals will be less attracted to the RJP than high-NA individuals, but will not differ significantly from high-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP.

Graphical representations of the proposed interaction effects are presented in figures 1 and 2.

One question that would be interesting is whether NA will be more strongly negatively related to attraction to the RJP than to attraction to the TJP. At present there is a lack of theoretical support to predict this, but this question deserves consideration as it would further our understanding of how high-NA individuals interpret negative information, as opposed to positive information. Therefore, it will be posed as a research question. Will NA be more strongly negatively related to attraction to the RJP than attraction to the TJP?

Summary and Overview of the Present Investigation

RJPs can communicate the positive and negative attributes of a job, which can help applicants match their own needs with what they may encounter on the job. Recruitment research has paid much attention to RJPs; however, pre-hire outcomes such as attraction have received little attention. Thus, the current investigation will further knowledge in this area by examining the effects of RJPs on attraction. The research presented here has led to the
Figure 1
Proposed Interaction: Type of preview x NA predicting organizational attraction (H3a).
Figure 2
Proposed Interaction: Type of preview x NA predicting organizational attraction (H3b).
development of hypotheses that compare the levels of attraction between employed persons and students and between individuals with high and low levels of NA.

End Notes

1 The phi (Φ) coefficient is a special case of the product moment correlation (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1984). The Φ symbol is used to denote that both variables are dichotomous.

2 Turnover reduction is the opposite of turnover. Thus, a positive correlation with turnover reduction can be interpreted as a negative correlation (of the same magnitude) with turnover.
**Method**

**Participants**

Both students and teachers served as participants in this study. Two hundred and ninety-four surveys were distributed to teachers. They returned 205 surveys; however, 6 surveys could not be used in the analyses (i.e., the teacher was also a student or the respondent was not a teacher at all). Therefore, 199 surveys were included in the analyses for a usable response rate of close to 68%. One hundred and eighty-nine teachers indicated that they taught at a variety of schools in the southeast; however, 10 teachers did not indicate the school in which they teach. Therefore, schools taught at were categorized as Louisiana public (n = 64), Louisiana private (n = 86), Georgia public (n = 22), or Georgia private (n = 17). The mean age was 37.9 years. One hundred and seventy-eight of them were female. Fifty-four percent of teachers reported that they held a graduate degree. They indicated that they had held a mean of 2.8 teaching jobs and had a mean of 13 years work experience in a full-time teaching job.

Surveys were distributed and completed by 341 students at a large Southern university. Of these 188 were used since they were from students working towards a teaching degree. Because there are several majors that can result in a teaching degree students’ majors were categorized as Alternative Certification (n = 6), Education (n = 27), Elementary Education (n = 82), Secondary Education (n = 41), Music Education (n = 8), General Studies (n = 8), and Other (n = 16). The students had a mean age of 21.7 years. One hundred and sixty-one of the students were female. Eighty-five percent of the students sampled had only completed a high school education. Forty-five indicated that they had held a full-time teaching job.
Materials

The job preview was developed using methods outlined by Suszko and Breaugh (1986). The previews are presented in Appendix A. First, four job incumbents were asked to answer the questions found in Appendix B. The responses to these questions were used to make lists of positive and negative attributes about the job. The TJP was presented in the format of a brochure that described only positive and neutral attributes of the job. The RJP consisted of the TJP brochure plus the addition of a sheet of paper listing several negative attributes of the job. To control for order effects in the RJP, half of the participants saw the negative information first and the TJP brochure second and the other half saw the TJP brochure first and the RJP information second. One hundred and eighteen participants saw the RJP information first and 81 participants saw the RJP information second.

Measures

Initial Attraction to the Occupation. Participants were asked to rate their level of attraction to the occupation of teaching. This measure was comprised of four items that were adapted from a measure of organizational attraction developed by Sinar and Highhouse (2001). These items are presented in Appendix C. Participants responded to these items on a 5-point continuum ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Attraction to the occupation was controlled for when examining participants’ ratings of attraction to the job previewed. The coefficient α for this scale was 0.83.

Negative Affectivity. Participants completed the 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). The PANAS scale is presented in Appendix D. The PANAS is comprised of two scales: one measures positive affectivity (PA), and the other measures NA. In a scale development study, Watson et al. found
the PANAS NA had an internal consistency reliability of $\alpha = .87$. The two scales also were found to have low intercorrelations ($r = -0.12$ to -0.23). Watson et al. also administered the PANAS to participants on two occasions separated by eight weeks. The PANAS was administered using various time frames which participants were asked to reference while responding to the scale items. When participants completed the PANAS using the time instructions for how they feel in general, both the PANAS NA and PANAS PA showed strong test-retest reliability ($\alpha = 0.87$ and 0.88, respectively). The strong reliability coefficient indicates that the scale may be used as a trait measure of affect. Therefore, the current investigation used the time instructions for how one feels in general. The current study found that the PANAS NA and PANAS PA had coefficient $\alpha$’s of 0.83 and 0.85, respectively.

Organizational Attraction. Participants’ attraction to the hypothetical recruiting organization was measured using two five-item scales adapted from Sinar and Highhouse (2001). These scales are presented in Appendix E. One scale measured attraction to the school and the other scale measured intentions toward the school. Participants were asked to respond to these items on a 5-point continuum ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The coefficient $\alpha$’s for the attraction to the school and intentions toward the school scales were both 0.87.

Manipulation Check. Six items were included in the survey to assess whether participants perceived positive and negative information in the previews and how realistic participants felt the previews were. These items are included in Appendix F. The first three items asked participants whether they were told good things about the job, some bad things, or they were not given negative information about the job. The next three items asked participants whether the job characteristics were what someone would find in a school setting, whether the
preview was realistic, and whether the information given was an honest description of working in a school. Participants responded on a 5-point continuum ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Work Experience. Participants were asked to indicate their previous work experience by responding to three items included in a survey of background information. These items are in Appendix G. The items asked participants to indicate how many full-time teaching jobs they have held, whether they are currently employed as a teacher, and if they are employed as a teacher, how many years they have been working in that occupation.

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to the RJP or TJP group. Materials were distributed to the teachers at the school where they worked. Some schools encouraged teachers to fill out the materials at that time and others had teachers fill out the materials on their own time and return them to the researcher using a posted addressed envelope. Teachers were given a small incentive (cookies) to participate in the study.

The materials were distributed to students in their classes, in Psychology department experimental sessions, or from a table setup outside the student union. Students participating through the Psychology department received extra credit for their participation. All participants (teachers and students) were entered into a cash prize drawing where two prizes, one for $150 and one for $50 were awarded.
Results

The results are presented in three sections. The first describes the preliminary analyses. It includes an examination of within group differences on ratings of organizational attraction for students and for teachers, differences in organizational attraction due to the order of the presentation of the stimulus materials, a manipulation check, and a table of means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations. The second section describes the tests of the hypotheses and the final section describes additional analyses that were conducted.

Preliminary Analyses

Prior to testing the hypotheses, an analysis was conducted to see whether students with different majors differed significantly in their ratings of organizational attraction. The students were placed in one of seven categories based on their major: seeking Alternative Certification, (M = 4.27, SD = 0.69); Education, (M = 3.73, SD = 0.75); Elementary Education, (M = 3.75, SD = 0.74); Secondary Education, (M = 3.76, SD = 0.82); Music Education, (M = 3.75, SD = 0.47); General Studies, (M = 3.49, SD = 0.71); or Other (e.g., Pre-K, English Education), (M = 4.11, SD = 0.55). Because there were unequal numbers of participants in each group, Levene’s test of equality of error variances was used to determine that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met \( F(6, 184) = .98, p = 0.44 \). The results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that students with different majors did not differ significantly in their ratings of organizational attraction \( F(6, 178) = 1.16, p = 0.33, \eta^2 = 0.04 \). Therefore, the data was collapsed across students’ majors.

Because teachers indicated that they taught at a variety of schools in the Southeast, an analysis was conducted to determine whether teachers at different schools differed significantly in their ratings of organizational attraction. The schools taught at were placed into one of four
categories: Louisiana Public school, (M = 3.54, SD = 0.85); Louisiana Private school, (M = 3.72, SD = 0.74); Georgia Public school, (M = 3.53, SD = 0.70); or Georgia Private school, (M = 3.19, SD = 0.85). Because there were unequal numbers of participants in each group, Levene’s test of equality of error variances was used to determine that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met $F(3, 187) = 0.51, p = 0.68$. The results of a one-way ANOVA indicated that teachers at different schools did not differ significantly in their ratings of attraction, $F(3, 184) = 2.42, p = .07, \eta^2 = 0.04$. Therefore, the data was collapsed across schools.

In order to control for order effects, half of the participants viewing the RJP saw the realistic information first and the other half saw the realistic information after the TJP brochure. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine if there were any significant differences in ratings of organizational attraction between participants seeing the RJP information first, (M = 3.44, SD = 0.78) and the RJP information second, (M = 3.37, SD = .71). The results of the ANOVA, $F(1, 197) = .36, p = 0.28, \eta^2 = 0.002$, indicated that there were no significant differences. Therefore, the data was collapsed across the versions of the realistic preview and the analyses only looked at differences between the TJP and the RJP.

A manipulation check was conducted to see if the type of preview had an affect on participants’ ratings of organizational attraction. A one-way ANOVA was used to examine these differences. Participants who viewed the TJP, (M = 4.12, SD = 0.81), perceived that more positive information was presented than participants viewing the RJP, (M = 2.27, SD = 0.94), $F(1, 379) = 420.71, p < 0.001$. Participants viewing the RJP, (M = 3.75, SD = 0.85), perceived the preview to be more realistic than participants viewing the TJP, (M = 2.91, SD = 0.92), $F(1, 379) = 85.7, p < 0.001$. These findings indicate that the intended manipulation via the stimulus materials was successful.
Table 3 presents descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for variables of interest. Type of Preview was dummy coded as RJP = 0 and TJP = 1 and Type of Participant was dummy coded as Teacher = 0 and Student = 1. Because NA was a focus of this research, the reader might be interested to see that NA was significantly negatively correlated with level of education, \( r = -0.35 \) the number of full-time teaching jobs the participant has had \( r = -0.33 \), and the length of work experience they have in a full-time teaching job \( r = -0.29 \). This suggests that teachers may have lower levels of NA than students. It was also interesting to see that NA was negatively correlated with participants’ initial attraction to the occupation \( r = -0.13 \). Thus, participants with higher levels of attraction to the occupation had lower levels of NA. It is somewhat surprising to see that NA was not related to ratings of organizational attraction.

In summary, this section has discussed the preliminary analyses used to assess differences in participants’ ratings of organizational attraction, order effects for the RJP, and the manipulation check. First, an analysis was conducted which showed that students with different majors did not differ significantly in their ratings of organizational attraction. Next, an analysis showed that teachers at different schools did not differ significantly in their ratings of organizational attraction. An analysis also showed that participants’ ratings of organizational attraction did not differ according to which version of the RJP they viewed. Finally, participants viewing the TJP perceived the information to be more positive and less realistic than participants viewing the RJP. The next section will discuss the results of the tests of hypotheses.

Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. A significant interaction was hypothesized between Type of Preview and Type of Participant affecting ratings of organizational attraction. Students were expected to be less attracted to the RJP than teachers, and students and teachers were not expected to differ
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Type of Preview</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>387</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Type of Participant</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Initial Attraction</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NA</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Attraction</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Education</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>-.83**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. No. of Jobs</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>-.66**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Work Experience</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>9.92</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>-.66**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Positive Information</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Preview is Realistic</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>-.039</td>
<td>-.53**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Scale reliabilities are in parentheses on the diagonal. Type of Preview = dummy code for preview condition (RJP = 0, TJP = 1); Type of Participant = dummy code for participant (student = 0, teacher = 1); Initial Attraction = initial attraction to the occupation; NA = Negative Affectivity; Attraction = organizational attraction; Education = dummy code for level of education completed (High School = 1, College = 2, or Graduate Degree = 3); No. of Jobs = number of full-time teaching jobs held; Work Experience = length of work experience as teacher; Positive Information = perception of positive information in the preview; Preview is Realistic = perception that the preview is realistic.

** p < 0.01.
significantly in their attraction for the TJP. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test this hypothesis in order to control for the effects of initial attraction to the occupation. Because there were unequal numbers of participants in each group, Levene’s test of equality of error variances was used to determine that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was met, $F(3, 377) = 1.05, p = 0.37$. Results of the ANCOVA are presented in Table 4. It indicates that the interaction between Type of Participant and Type of Preview, $F(1, 376) = 0.85, p = 0.358, \eta^2 = 0.002$, was not significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Table 4 indicates that there were significant main effects for both Type of Preview and Type of Participant. The main effect for Type of Preview showed that ratings of attraction for the RJP, $(M = 3.41, SD = 0.75)$; differed significantly from ratings for the TJP, $(M = 3.97, SD = 0.69)$, $F(1, 376) = 58.07, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.134$. The main effect for Type of Participant showed that students, $(M = 3.78, SD = 0.74)$; rated their attraction significantly different from teachers, $(M = 3.59, SD = 0.79)$, $F(1, 376) = 8.60, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.02$. It was expected that students would be less attracted to the RJP than teachers and that students and teachers would not differ significantly in their attraction to the TJP. So, even though the main effect for type of participant was significant, it was in the opposite direction of that expected.

Hypothesis 2. It was hypothesized that NA would be negatively related to attraction to the RJP. Hierarchical regression was used to examine this relationship and participants’ initial attraction to the occupation was controlled for. Results are presented in Table 5. The relationship between NA and attraction to the RJP was not significant, $\beta = 0.081, t(1, 184) = 1.11, p = 0.27, R^2 = 0.02$. Consequently, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypotheses 3a and 3b. It was hypothesized that NA and Type of Preview would interact to affect ratings of organizational attraction. Hypothesis 3a suggested that high-NA individuals
Table 4
Analysis of Covariance for Interaction Between Type of Preview and Type of Participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean squared</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>η²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Attractiona</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Participant</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>8.60</td>
<td>.004**</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Preview</td>
<td>29.24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29.24</td>
<td>58.07</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Participant x Type of Preview</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Sources</td>
<td>189.33</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.  
**a Initial Attraction to the Occupation (Covariate).
** p < .01

Table 5
Hierarchical Regression Investigating the Relationship Between NA and Ratings of Attraction for the RJP (N = 187)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Attractiona</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.  
**a Initial Attraction to the Occupation

would be less attracted to the RJP than low-NA individuals, but would not differ significantly from low-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP. Conversely, hypothesis 3b suggested that low-NA individuals would be less attracted to the RJP than high-NA individuals, but would not differ significantly from high-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP. Hypotheses 3a and
3b were tested simultaneously. Hierarchical regression was used to test these hypotheses. NA and Type of Preview were entered in the first step and the interaction term (NA x Type of Preview) was entered in the second step. The predictor variable NA was centered in order to reduce the effects of multicollinearity, which can be introduced into regression equations when interaction terms are used (Aiken & West, 1991). However, when the predictor variable is categorical, as is Type of Preview, Aiken & West do not recommend centering.

Results are presented in Table 6. It indicates that there was not a significant interaction, \( \beta = 0.003, t(1, 366) = 0.06, p = 0.95, R^2 = 0.00 \). Thus, there is a lack of support for both Hypotheses 3a and 3b. Consistent with the findings in Hypothesis 2, there was no significant relationship between NA and ratings of attraction. Consistent with the finding in Hypothesis 1, there was a significant relationship between Type of Preview and ratings of organizational attraction, \( \beta = 0.36, t(1, 367) = 7.5 \ p < 0.01, R^2 = 0.13 \).

Table 6
Hierarchical Regression Investigating the Interaction Between Type of Preview and NA on Ratings of Attraction (N = 370)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>( R^2 )</th>
<th>( \Delta R^2 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Preview</td>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA x Type of Preview</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01
Additional Analyses

The current study explored the relationship between NA and ratings of attraction to the TJP and RJP. Regression was used to examine this relationship and participants’ initial attraction to the occupation was controlled for. Results of these analyses are presented in Tables 7 and 8. NA was not significantly related to either attraction for the TJP, $\beta = 0.115$, $t(1, 177) = 1.52, p = 0.13$, $R^2 = 0.02$, or the RJP, $\beta = 0.086$, $t(1, 185) = 1.18, p = 0.24$, $R^2 = .02$. This suggests that NA was not related to the level of attraction for either job preview.

Table 7
Hierarchical Regression Investigating the Relationship Between NA and Ratings of Attraction for the RJP (N = 188)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Attraction$^a$</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $^a$ Initial Attraction to the Occupation

Table 8
Hierarchical Regression Investigating the Relationship Between NA and Ratings of Attraction for the TJP (N = 180)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
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<tr>
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Note. $^a$ Initial Attraction to the Occupation
Summary

The results of this study indicated that teachers had lower levels of organizational attraction than students. Participants were less attracted to the RJP than the TJP. However, there was no interaction between the type of participant and the type of preview they viewed. Several hypotheses and the additional analyses considered the relationship between NA and organizational attraction. No relationship was found between NA and ratings of attraction for the RJP or for the TJP. These findings, their implications and areas for future research are discussed in the next section.
Discussion

The present study looked at the influence of job previews on organizational attraction while sampling employed persons and students. It also looked at the influence of NA on ratings of organizational attraction. The following discussion is presented in three sections. First, the findings of the research are discussed. Second, implications of findings are considered. Finally, limitations and areas for future research are described.

The results indicated that participants who viewed the TJP perceived that the preview contained more positive information than participants who viewed the RJP. On the other hand, participants who viewed the RJP perceived this preview to be more realistic than participants viewing the TJP.

The present study hypothesized that the type of participant and the type of preview would interact to influence ratings of organizational attraction. The results were not consistent with the hypothesis. However, there were significant main effects for both type of participant and type of preview on ratings of organizational attraction. With respect to type of participant, teachers rated organizational attraction lower than students for both the RJP and the TJP. However, teachers and students did not differ significantly in their ratings of their initial attraction to the occupation. This finding suggests that teachers’ lower ratings of organizational attraction are not because they are disenchanted with their chosen occupation.

A significant main effect was also found for the type of preview affecting ratings of organizational attraction. Both students and teachers had lower ratings of organizational attraction for the RJP. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bretz and Judge (1998), who found that job previews with more negative information resulted in lower levels of attraction to the job being previewed. Bretz and Judge also found that participants who were
judged to be better qualified experienced lower levels of attraction. Similarly, the current study found that the teachers, who had more education and more work experience than students, had lower ratings of organizational attraction.

The second hypothesis suggested that NA would be negatively related to ratings of attraction for the RJP; however, this hypothesis was not supported. Although this is the first time the relationship between NA and organizational attraction has been examined, this finding is somewhat unexpected. The relationship between affect and job satisfaction has been well established (Judge & Larsen; 2001; Weiss & Crompanzano, 1996). This study hypothesized that affect would have a relationship with organizational attraction similar to its relationship with job satisfaction. There are no readily apparent explanations for this finding.

The current study also looked at the influence of NA and Type of Preview on ratings of organizational attraction. It was hypothesized that low-NA individuals would be less attracted to the RJP than high-NA individuals, but would not differ significantly from high-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP. An alternate hypothesis was made that high-NA individuals would be less attracted to the RJP than low-NA individuals, but would not differ significantly from low-NA individuals in their attraction to the TJP. However, support was not found for either hypothesis. A main effect was found for type of preview being related to organizational attraction. Consistent with the previous finding, the relationship between NA and organizational attraction was not significant.

A research question was posed, regarding the strength of the relationship between NA and ratings of attraction for the RJP and TJP. NA did not demonstrate a significant relationship with either ratings of attraction for the RJP or the TJP job. This finding suggests that an individual’s level of NA is not related to their attraction to the job previewed.
Implications

This study contributes to the body of recruitment research by looking at a prehire outcome, applicant attraction. Requests have been made that more research focus on these outcomes of recruitment efforts (Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001; Rynes, 1991), as so much attention has already been given to post-hire outcomes such as turnover.

The findings of the current study echo the findings of previous research concerning the effects of RJP on applicant attraction (Bretz & Judge, 1998; Saks et al., 1996). Bretz and Judge manipulated the amount of negative information presented and also whether it was presented in a procedurally just way. Saks et al. manipulated the pay so that it was either high or low for the RJP or TJP. Finally, the present study showed students and employed persons an RJP or a TJP. It appears as though RJP consistently reduce attraction to the job being previewed. In the present study this was true for both the group of students and the group of teachers.

A major contribution of the current study is that it looked at the effects of RJP on ratings of organizational attraction of both students and employed persons. Previous research has primarily used student samples to test the effects of RJP on applicant attraction. The finding that the employed persons were consistently less attracted than the students suggests that studies using only students may have been underplaying the reduction in applicant attraction. Future research may benefit from including employed persons as participants.

The findings in the current study also have implications for organizations. These findings suggest that organizations using RJP should consider whether job applicants who will make good employees would lose interest in the job after viewing an RJP. For some jobs, such as those with high turnover, use of RJP may remain the best choice. Because the maintenance of
attraction plays an important role in the recruitment process, organizations may consider making an informed decision regarding the use of RJP.

Limitations and Future Research

A potential limitation of the current study is the development of the job previews. This study used a method of developing the job previews that was outlined by Suzsko and Breau (1986). However, there is no one generally accepted method for developing job previews, so there is no way to guarantee that job previews across studies consistently package information the same way (Brooks-Laber, 2002).

Oftentimes, there is a desire to package the negative information in a way that softens it, such as refocusing the negative information. Brooks-Laber (2002) examined the effects of different methods of packaging negative information on attraction to the job previewed. The packaged negative information affected attraction differently than the straightforward negative information. This finding indicates that it may be difficult to make comparisons across studies because it is unknown whether researchers or organizations are creating RJP that provide straightforward negative information or use a packaging strategy of some kind. This is an area that future research may consider, as it is important to furthering our understanding of the effects of RJP on, not only applicant attraction, but also all outcome variables.

Another potential limitation of the current study is the occupation that participants previewed. Most people have had experiences with teachers at some time in their life. Therefore, students may already be familiar with the positive and negative aspects of this occupation. Although familiarity with the occupation may make the students in this study more similar to actual job applicants, future research should consider other occupations that students may not feel as knowledgeable about. By considering other occupations, future research may
establish whether RJP s influence organizational attraction the same way when students are not familiar with the occupation.

The present study found that teachers were less attracted to both the RJP and TJP than students. It is possible that teachers were initially attracted to the occupation, but their dissatisfaction with their current job led them to have lower ratings of attraction for the job being previewed. However, the present study did not measure job satisfaction; therefore, this explanation cannot be ruled out. Future research with employed persons could measure job satisfaction in order to better understand influences on organizational attraction.

The present study found that NA does not seem to be related to organizational attraction; however, other individual differences such as personality factors may show a relationship with organizational attraction. For example, Judge, Heller, and Mount (2002) found that the five-factor model of personality was positively related to job satisfaction.

Likewise, job attitudes such as job satisfaction, job commitment, and job involvement may influence participants’ ratings of organizational attraction. Studies found relationships between job commitment and job involvement and job satisfaction (Brown, 1996; Mathieu & Zajac 1990). The findings in these studies indicate that future research may want to consider how these individual differences relate to organizational attraction.

Conclusion

The current study found that participants were less attracted to the RJP. Results also showed that teachers were less attracted to the jobs previewed than students. It was somewhat surprising that the current study found that NA was not related to organizational attraction. This study contributed to the body of recruitment research by examining a prehire outcome with samples of students and employed persons. Although RJP s are found to consistently reduce
attraction to the job, organizations with high turnover may be wise to continue to employ RJP\text{s as even small reductions in turnover can result in financial savings.}
References


Appendix A: Job Previews

TJP Text
- Greenwood is located in a residential area of a suburban community.
- The average class at Greenwood has 26 students.
- Teachers at Greenwood teach a variety of subjects including math, science, social studies, language arts, and enrichment classes.
- Greenwood is currently seeking teachers who will care about our students and are eager to educate today's youth.

Our School Offers:
- A cooperative work environment
- An opportunity to impact the lives of children
- Progressive classrooms

Greenwood Offers:
- A supportive work environment
- The chance to make a difference in the life of a child
- Classrooms that foster a learning environment

Read on to learn more about what is available at Greenwood School!
- Greenwood offers the chance to impact the lives of children. Our teachers feel they are able to make a difference in the lives of most students. One teacher comments, “I have a student who gives me a hug and thanks me at the end of each day.”
- Greenwood offers a supportive work environment. Our faculty and administration work together and support one another. Teachers frequently discuss issues and work together to solve problems.
- Greenwood offers state of the art classrooms. Our classrooms provide teachers with many ways to foster a learning environment. Each classroom is equipped with 30 computers with Internet access, as well as a television with cable.

Come join the Greenwood Team!
We feel that it is important to provide a complete picture of what it is like to teach at Greenwood. In addition to many of the pleasant characteristics of Greenwood, there are also some aspects of the job that may be less pleasant.

When asked about unpleasant aspects of their job, some of our teachers reported that it is difficult to maintain order in the classroom. In the past, teachers have encountered students who misbehave in class. Because many parents of our students work they are unavailable to discuss their children’s behavior with teachers when problems occur. Because of these difficulties with behavioral problems, some teachers find the role of disciplinarian to be a challenge.

One other issue that has come to our attention is that, prior to starting the job, some teachers are unaware of the time spent working outside of school hours. Generally, teachers arrive early to perform last minute preparations before students arrive; after school most teachers remain to grade papers, prepare lessons, and meet with parents and administrators. Most teachers also report that, at the end of the day, they have work to take home with them.

Again, our purpose in presenting this information is to provide you with a complete picture of what it is like to teach at Greenwood.
Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your job?

2. What knowledge and skills are important?

3. Can you describe a typical day?

4. Can you tell me about specific incidents that made you feel good about working here?

5. Can you describe for me things that occurred while you were working that made you feel bad about your job?

6. Can you tell me about experiences that you had when you first started the job that you would not have anticipated from the training you received?
Appendix C: Occupation Attraction

1. A career as a teacher is very appealing to me.
2. For me this career is a last resort.
3. A teaching job is an attractive career to me.
4. For me being a teacher is a good career choice.
Appendix D: The PANAS Scale (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you generally feel this way, that is, how you feel on the average. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1  2  3  4  5
very slightly  a little  moderately  quite a bit  Extremely

_______Interested_______ Irritable
_______Distressed_______ Alert
_______Excited_______ Ashamed
_______Upset_______ Inspired
_______Strong_______ Nervous
_______Guilty_______ Determined
_______Scared_______ Attentive
_______Hostility_______ Jittery
_______Enthusiastic_______ Active
_______Proud_______ Afraid
Appendix E: Organization Attraction

Items Assessing Organization Attraction

1. For me, this school would be a good place to work.
2. I would not be interested in this school except as a last resort (R).
3. This school is attractive to me as a place for employment.
4. I am interested in learning more about this school.
5. A job at this school is very appealing to me.

Items Assessing Intentions Toward the Organization

1. I would accept a job offer from this school.
2. I would make this school one of my first choices as an employer.
3. If this school invited me for a job interview, I would go.
4. I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this school.
5. I would recommend this school to a friend looking for a job.
Appendix F: Presentation of Information

Items Assessing Positive Information is Presented

1. I was told only good things about the job.

2. I was told some of the bad things about the job. (R)

3. I was not given negative information about the job.

Items Assessing Realistic Information is Presented

1. The job characteristics in the preview were similar to what one might find in a school environment.

2. The information in the job preview is realistic.

3. The information provided in the job preview is an honest description of working at a school.
Appendix G: Background Information

Gender: (circle one) Male  Female

What is your age? ________years

Are you currently a student? ________yes ________no

If yes, what is your major? _______________________

How many full-time teaching jobs (i.e., 30-40 hours per week) have you held (circle one)?
1  2  3  4  5  6 or more

Are you currently employed as a teacher? _____yes _____no

If you are currently employed as a teacher, how many years experience do you have in this occupation _____?

What is the highest level of education you have completed (circle one)?
High School  Bachelor’s Degree  Graduate Degree

Your income makes up ______% of your total family income?
Vita

Natalie Bourgeois received her Bachelor of Science degree from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas in December 1999. She is currently a graduate student at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and will receive a Master of Arts degree in May 2003. Her research interests include issues surrounding the measurement of emotional labor and the influence of emotions in the workplace on employee performance.