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**Determinants of job satisfaction of new generation employee in China**

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# Determinants of Job Satisfaction of New Generation Employee in China

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## I. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate what leads to people's job satisfaction. We selected eight possible work-related factors from previous research which are Maturity level, Relationship status, Educational level, Years of experience, Managerial ranking, Organization size, Salary, and Opportunities (Daud 2016). We aim to see whether they are also significantly associated with job satisfaction in China. In order to measure the relationship between work-related factors and job satisfaction, we used questionnaires to get responses of 100 employees from various organizations in Wenzhou which is a city in China. The method modules we used are Cronbach Alpha reliability and Regression analysis to test which of these factors determine job satisfaction. The results show Relationship status, Educational level, Managerial ranking, Salary, Opportunities for growth contribute significantly to job satisfaction. These results build a positive relationship between job satisfaction and these work-related factors.

**Keywords:** new generation employee; job satisfaction; salary; work-related factor

## II. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is a topic that has been studied by authors in many places. Authors of these previous studies investigate divergent factors influencing people's job satisfaction in terms the circumstances of different countries. Its importance cannot be ignored, because according to previous study, satisfied employees are more likely willing to continue to stay in their workplace (Daud, 2016). In addition, the prior study also indicates the more satisfied employees have better work performance (Wiener 1982). Previous studies have illustrated many factors that impact the job satisfaction. For example, it showed that work-related factors such as maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary contributed significantly to job satisfaction among new generation employees (Daud 2016). Other researchers' study also researched the different level of job satisfaction of different gender, age, and so on (e.g., Wiener 1982).

It is unknown what impact people's job satisfaction in China and whether these factors have the same influence on it as they do on Malaysia. It is already known that in

Malaysia, maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary contributed significantly to job satisfaction (Daud 2015). Also, according to Wiener gender, age, health problems and other individual characteristics are also associated with job satisfaction (Wiener 1982). Therefore, by examining the relationship between these factors and job satisfaction in China, we can know more about the new generation employee so that their performance can be improved.

The exploration of job satisfaction is also significant for China. Chinese employee is less engaged in work compared with employees in other countries (Parvin and Kabir 2011). Therefore, it aims to see whether the work-related factors of other countries such as Malaysia that previous studies discussed are also closely associated with job satisfaction in China and thus finds out the main reasons why Chinese employees are less committed to their jobs.

Most of literatures which research job satisfaction conclude that salary is one of the most significant factor that determine how satisfied are people with their jobs. According to Groot, actually when people compare their own wages with others, the difference affects the degree of job satisfaction rather than the salary itself (Groot 1999). I reason that it has the same effect in China. Chinese new generation employees tend to be more satisfied when they get higher salaries.

### **III. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is a topic which many people are interested in. The previous study defined it traditionally as a subjective feeling of people about their work (Egri and Ralston 2004). In addition, they also mentioned that job satisfaction relied on the job category and people's hope before getting it (Egri and Ralston 2004). According to Wiener, job satisfaction is an attitude towards work-related conditions (Wiener 1982). Froese and Xiao support this view by defining job satisfaction as the extent to which employees like their work (Froese and Xiao 2012). Howe and Strauss defines job satisfaction as an affective or emotional response towards various aspects of an employee's work (Howe and Strauss 2007). This researcher also defines job satisfaction as the feeling that a worker has about his job or a general attitude towards work or a job and it is influenced by the perception of one's job (Howe and Strauss 2007).

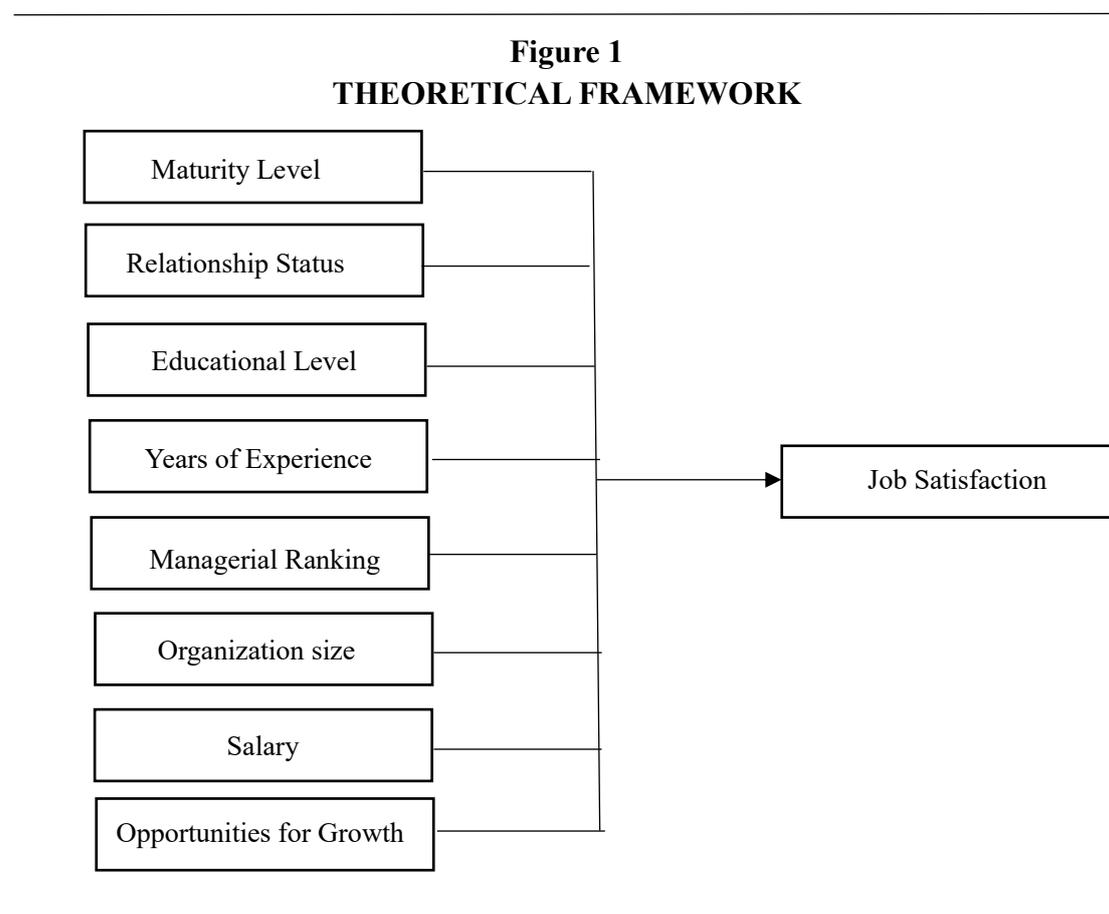
#### **Who are new generation employees and what are their characteristics?**

New generation employees are those between twenty and forty years old, who born in 1980 to 2000 (Luo et al. 2015). According to Egri and Ralston, since different growing environments build different ideology and personality of people in different times, new generation employee acts inconsistent with elder generation in terms of how they deal with works in their workplace (Egri and Ralston 2004). New generation employees have their own work values corresponding to the change of society (Howe et al. 2007). For example, Ralston's study implies among younger Chinese managers, they demonstrate a greater sense of individualism and they are more likely to act independently and take risks in the pursuit of profits even when these actions are in conflict with traditional ways (Ralston et al. 1999). Previous study also suggests the

significance of empowerment in managing new generation employee (Danish et al. 2010). The study indicates once Generation Y employees are trusted and empowered, they tend to perform well in both their job and career (Danish et al. 2010). Furthermore, the results of this study suggest that managers should attempt to assign challenging and meaningful tasks to young employees and to increase their responsibility and impact in the organization (Danish et al. 2010). To attract and retain qualified young employees, career competences should be enhanced to achieve a level of career satisfaction (Danish et al. 2010). These features and personalities of new generation employee are helpful to explore what they value in their career so that we can figure out their job satisfaction determinants.

### **Determinants of Job Satisfaction for new generation employees in China and theoretical framework**

In previous paper, Daud used Maturity level, Relationship status, Educational level, Years of experience, Managerial ranking, Organization size, Salary, and Opportunities as potential work-related factors and explore their effects on job satisfaction (Daud 2016). The same theoretical framework is used in the case of China to investigate their relationship with job satisfaction. The theoretical framework diagram is showed below in Figure 1:



In China, the relationship between age and job satisfaction emerges different

situations in different professions. According to Tu's study, in China, the older the faculty is, the more satisfied he or she feels about their job in teachers' field (Tu et al. 2005). Also, in some fields, age is considered as a concern to decide whether to stay in the current job position. For example, according to Wang, nurses regard age as an important consideration of continuing their job position (Wang 21012). According to Lee and Wilbur, the same results were generated from the study that there is a correlation between job satisfaction and age regardless of the different salaries, education and job tenure of the respondents (Lee and Wilbur 1985). However, there are also studies which provide the different results. For example, Luthans and Thomas's study indicates that people in their 40s have higher level of job satisfaction than that of people in 30s and 50s (Luthans and Thomas 1989).

Considering the marital status, according to Knerr and M. (2006), the results of their cross tabulations indicate a conditional relationship between marital status and job satisfaction (Knerr and M. 2006). For instance, the correlation between marital status and job satisfaction appears statistically significant for males under age 30, female aged 30 to 49, males over age 50, and females over age 50. Conversely, this association is statistically insignificant for females under age 30 and males aged 30 to 49. According to Al-Aameri, Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are found to be influenced by nurses' marital status (Al-Aameri and A 2000). Widowed nurses are found to be the least satisfied and committed to their hospitals, whereas the divorced ones are the most satisfied and the married nurses are the most committed group (Al-Aameri and A 2000).

According to Gordan and Arvey, (1975), they argue that more highly educated people were less satisfied with the general way the organization was being managed than were the less educated people. The reason behind this is probably that the well educated people are more familiar with what compose good management techniques. According to Gazioglu and Tansel, it shows better education contribute to less job satisfaction in Britain (Gazioglu and Tansel 2006). Other studies such as paper by Carrell and Elbert also provides the conclusion that level of job satisfaction decreases with the increase of educational level (Carrell and Elbert 1974). Therefore, education may be a determinants of job satisfaction among new generation employees.

According to Klassen et al., improvement of teachers' professional skills through years of experience can boost their confidence so that it can increase the job satisfaction (Klassen et al. 2010). According to Van (2012), their results show that the more years of experience a teacher has the less satisfied he or she is with the job. This aligns with the argument that older and more experienced teachers do encounter career exhaustion (Parvin et al. 2011). Contrary to their expectations, however, the relationship between teacher trust and job satisfaction is not influenced by past teaching experience. In other fields, study by Lum et al. indicates that nurses with longer experience are more satisfied with their job (Lum et al. 1998).

Money is a good motivator, actually all employees' work for money, employees need the money, a good salary and good compensations are key factors in satisfying the employee. We can increase the employee salary and compensation to motivate the employee, the good pay back can be one of the key factors affecting job satisfaction,

also in this way one can increase the service quality and organizational performance (Parvin et al. 2011).

Danish's study suggests that when a worker get promotional opportunities and opportunities for growth, they can feel secured about their job so that they get sense of job satisfaction (Danish et al. 2010). Wanous's study found out opportunities for growth contributes to workers' self-esteem, social interactions, and job security and so on (Wanous et al. 1972). Therefore, opportunities for growth is considered as a potential related factor.

#### **IV. METHODOLOGY**

Methodology includes samples and procedures used in this study, measuring instrument, measuring modules, and expected results.

##### **Samples and procedures**

The samples of this research are the new generation employees in Wenzhou, which is a city in Zhejiang province in China. They are twenty to forty years old and working in various organizations in Wenzhou. I used convenience sampling and finally selected 4 companies in Wenzhou which are Semir, Zhengtai Group, Baoxiniao Group, and Dongjing Technical orporation. For these companies, I contact the managers of the companies by finding the E-mail and phone number posted on their websites. I provided the questionnaire link to the managers and they helped us sent questionnaires to get responses from 100 employees.

##### **Measuring Instrument**

This survey used questionnaires. The questionnaire is divided into two parts. First part is designed in order to obtain specific information of respondents and get the characteristics them. We controlled gender (nominal variable with 1=male and 2=female), relationship status (nominal variable with 1=single and 2=married), age, educational level (nominal variable with 1=diploma, 2=bachelor's degree, 3=master's degree), salary level (nominal variable with 1=less than 1000RMB, 2=1000-5000RMB, 3=5001RMB and above).

In the second part, which is used for data analysis, a five Likert-type scale was used, which has five intervals: 1- strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree. Each question in the second part corresponds to a variable we mentioned above, which has Maturity level, relationship status, educational level, years of experience, managerial ranking, organization size, salary, and opportunities for growth. In the second part of the questionnaire, every question is designed and edited in the same direction.

##### **Measuring Modules**

The method modules include Cronbach Alpha Reliability test and Regression Analysis in order to analyze the data and conclude relationship between work-related factors and job satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. It is considered to be a measure of

scale reliability. In the Cronbach Alpha Reliability test, we suppose that we measure a quantity which is a sum of K components:  $X=Y_1 + Y_2 + Y_3 + \dots + Y_K$ . Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is defined as:

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} \left( 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^K \sigma_{Y_i}^2}{\sigma_X^2} \right)$$

$\sigma_X^2$  is the variance of the observed total test scores and  $\sigma_{Y_i}^2$  is the variance of component i for the current sample of persons. The Cronbach's Alpha measures the intercorrelations among the items, which is also called internal consistency. The table 1 shows the internal consistency results based on the value of Cronbach's Alpha. If the value of  $\alpha$  is less than or equal to 0.5, the variables almost have no internal consistency. If the value of  $\alpha$  is between 0.5 and 0.6, there are poor internal consistency among variables. If the value of  $\alpha$  is between 0.6 and 0.7, the reliability of variable is questionable to be reliable. If the value of  $\alpha$  is between 0.7 and 0.8, the variable is acceptable. If the value of  $\alpha$  is between 0.8 and 0.9, the reliability of the variable is good. If the value of  $\alpha$  is greater than 0.9, the reliability of variable is excellent. In general, we accept variables whose  $\alpha$  is greater than 0.6.

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**Table 1**  
**Internal Consistency to Corresponding  $\alpha$**

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$0.9 \leq \alpha$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

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In the Regression Analysis module, the equation  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon$  is used where y is the dependent variable,  $X_1$   $X_2$  and  $X_3$  are the independent variables,  $\beta_0$  is the y-intercept of the regression line,  $\beta_1$   $\beta_2$   $\beta_3$  are the slope of the regression line, and  $\epsilon$  is the random error term. In terms of this topic, Maturity level ( $X_1$ ), Relationship status ( $X_2$ ), Educational level( $X_3$ ), Years of experience ( $X_4$ ), Managerial ranking ( $X_5$ ), Organization size ( $X_6$ ), Salary( $X_7$ ), and Opportunities for growth ( $X_8$ ) are defined as independent variables and the job satisfaction( $Y$ ) is defined as dependent variable. Significance which is less than 0.05 usually indicates that this work-related factor has high positive correlation with job satisfaction. Furthermore,  $R^2$  is an index which measures the degree of fitting of the equation of linear regression and the relationship between work-related factors and job satisfaction. In other words,

it explains how much of variance in the dependent variable is explained by the variance in the independent variable. Adjusted  $R^2$  eliminates the influence of increase of variable on the degree of fitting so it is more accurate. Generally, if the value of  $R^2$  is greater than 0.6, the equation is well fitted with the relationship. DW is an index which indicates whether there is a serial correlation or self-correlation so that we can know the accuracy of the results. If it is close to 2, there is no serial correlation and self-correlation and the results we get about the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables are more reliable.

## V. EXPECTED RESULTS

According to Daud, it indicates that Maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary have significant relationship with job satisfaction in Malaysia (Daud 2016). Because the sample he used have some similar characteristics with mine such as age, I predict that Maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary are also determinants of job satisfaction in China.

## VI. RESULTS

The results state the characteristics of respondents which are statistics of results from the first part of the questionnaire. The results generated by SPSS under Cronbach Alpha Reliability and Regression Analysis are also provided.

### Characteristics of the respondents

In the total of 100 respondents, 46 of them are male and 54 are female. Less than half of the total is single (44%) and more than half of respondents are married (56%). Most of respondents are above 30 years old (55%) and 42% of them are between 25 and 30 years old. Only 3 respondents are less than 24 years old. More than half of respondents get bachelor's degree (58%). Some get master's degree (40%) and 2 people get only diploma. Most of people's salary are between 1000 and 5000rmb. 29 respondents have salary more than 5000. In the respondents, 22 of them are junior managerial level, 63 are middle, and 15 are senior.

**Table 2**  
**Demographic Profile Respondents**

	n	Percentage		n	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Marital status</b>		
Male	46	46%	Single	44	44%
Female	54	54%	Married	56	56%
<b>Age</b>			<b>Educational Level</b>		
20-24	3	3%	Diploma	2	2%
25-30	42	42%	Bachelor's degree	58	58%
Above 30	55	55%	Master degree	40	40%

<b>Salary</b>			<b>Managerial level</b>		
Less than 1000	0	0%	Junior	22	22%
1000-5000	71	71%	Middle	63	63%
Above 5000	29	29%	Senior	15	15%

### Cronbach Alpha Reliability

Under Cronbach Alpha reliability test, if the value of alpha is beyond 0.6, the dimension is considered reliable. The Table 3 shows the results of Cronbach Alpha reliability test of the eight dimensions. If the value of cronbach's alpha is more than 0.6, the factor is considered reliable. There is internal consistency among maturity level (0.789), relationship status (0.638), educational level (0.763), years of experience (0.655), managerial ranking (0.779), salary (0.885), and opportunities of growth (0.86). Only Organization size (0.494) is not considered as a reliable source of job satisfaction. In addition, the table also shows the mean for Maturity level (3.28), Relationship status (3.36), Educational level (3.28), Years of experience (3.45), Managerial ranking (3.4), Organization size (3.17), Salary (3.56), Opportunities of growth (3.37). The standard deviations of Maturity level, Educational level, Years of experience, Salary, and Opportunity for growth are greater than 0.9. Relationship status and organization size are the the two whose standard deviations are less than 0.8. The rest are between 0.8 and 0.9.

**Table 3**  
**Internal Consistency Analysis and Factor Analysis**

Dimensions	n	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Maturity level	100	3.28	0.933	0.789
Relationship status	100	3.36	0.798	0.638
Educational level	100	3.28	0.986	0.763
Years of experience	100	3.45	0.936	0.655
Managerial ranking	100	3.4	0.899	0.779
Organization size	100	3.17	0.792	0.494
Salary	100	3.56	0.914	0.885
Opportunities of growth	100	3.37	0.95	0.86

### Regression Analysis

In order to further investigate the dependency between these factors and job satisfaction, we used Regression Analysis. Table 4 illustrates the results of regression

analysis. The overall significance of the factors is 0.000. In the table 4, it shows Relationship status (0.007), Educational level (0.029), Managerial ranking (0.004), Salary (0.000), Opportunities for growth (0.001) contribute significantly to job satisfaction in terms of their significances respectively. For other factors, Maturity level and Years of experience are the factors that are not closely associated with job satisfaction. It shows  $R^2$  is 0.803 and Adjusted  $R^2=0.786$  is 78.6%. It means 78.6% of variance in the dependent variable is explained by the variance in the independent variable. In the Regression Analysis module, the equation  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1+ \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \dots + \beta_nX_n + \epsilon$  is used. The values of  $\beta$ s are listed in the Table 4. The table shows DW=1.852. It means there is no serial correlation and self-correlation and the results are accurate and reliable.

**Table 4**  
**Regression Analysis**

Model	Beta	Significance
Maturity level	0.083	0.215
Relationship status	0.171	0.007
Educational level	0.129	0.029
Years of experience	0.056	0.326
Managerial ranking	0.187	0.004
Salary	0.351	0.000
Opportunities for growth	0.236	0.001
$R^2=0.803$ Adjusted $R^2=0.786$ DW=1.852      F=46.361 Overall Significance=0.000 Equation of linear regression		

There are some problems in the process of data collection. In the process of data collection, although we randomly picked ten organizations, the employees' contact information is hard to get. At the end, only five companies are willing to help to send the questionnaires to their employees. We have sent emails to 124 employees of various organizations. Finally, we only get 100 employees who filled out the questionnaires. Because the respondent lacks of motivation of helping us finish the survey, this leads to a limited sample size. Therefore, the representatives of the results generated from these employees' responses are not as we expected.

### Summary

In summary, we used Cronbach Alpha Reliability to test the internal consistency among the work-related factors and job satisfaction and Regression Analysis to find the dependency among the determinants and job satisfaction. The results of Cronbach Alpha reliability shows there is internal consistency among maturity level, relationship status, educational level, years of experience, managerial ranking, salary, and opportunities of growth. Only Organization size is not considered as a reliable source

of job satisfaction. Among these factors, the results of Regression Analysis show Relationship status, Educational level, Managerial ranking, Salary, Opportunities for growth have positive correlation with job satisfaction.

## **VII. DISCUSSION**

### **Main Results Review**

The purpose of this study is to investigate what leads to people's job satisfaction. We selected eight possible work-related factors from Daud's research which are Maturity level, Relationship status, Educational level, Years of experience, Managerial ranking, Organization size, Salary, and Opportunities. We aim to see whether they are also significantly associated with job satisfaction in China. The results we got are listed in the above tables using Cronbach Alpha Reliability and Regression Analysis. They finally show Relationship status, Educational level, Managerial ranking, Salary, Opportunities for growth contribute significantly to job satisfaction.

### **Limitations of Research**

There are also some limitations in my study. Firstly, Sample size is defined by only 100 respondents who are selected in only one city of China (Wenzhou) instead of multiple cities in different provinces. The sample size makes this study less powerful to represent the whole country. Secondly, this study focuses only on new generation employees who are 20 to 40 years old. The results are inappropriate to define the determinants of job satisfaction of every age group. Thirdly, this study is finished within four months, which is a short span of time, so the researcher could not widen the study. Finally, this study used convenience sampling method, with participants selected according to their accessibility. Future studies should collect a reasonably broad sample by using probability sampling methods.

### **Unexpected Results**

There are some unexpected results. We have predicted that Maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary were also determinants of job satisfaction in China. Compared with what we expected, Maturity level and organization size do not have close relationship with job satisfaction. On the other side, relationship status, educational level and managerial ranking are the additional factors that contribute to job satisfaction based on what we expected. One explanation that may be responsible for the unexpected results is the sample size which has been mentioned above. The sample size is small so that the results may not be exactly same as we predicted. Compared with this study, Daud's research found out that maturity level, organization size, opportunities for growth and salary have significant relationship with job satisfaction among new generation employee in Malaysia (Daud 2016).

### **Reliability and Validity of Research**

Although there are limitations and unexpected results in this study, the validity and reliability of this paper still exist. This study is free from participant error. In other

words, it avoids the factors which adversely alters the way in which a participant performs. The questionnaires used in this study are anonymous so that respondents have no concerns to give their answers. The answers from questionnaires are reliable. In addition, this study is free from researcher bias. That means that I tried to avoid the factors which produces a false response. The results of the data analysis under Cronbach Alpha reliability and regression analysis are directly generated from SPSS. The interpretation for the results are description of results generated by SPSS which proves its objectivity. The results generated in this research should obtain credence because the method modules used in this research are reliable. Cronbach Alpha Reliability and Regression Analysis are the two of the most commonly used reliability estimates in the testing literature.

### **Theoretical Contribution**

These main work-related factors are discussed in many literatures and concluded as factors which influence differently but generally significantly many job areas. This study considers main factors like Maturity level, Relationship status, Educational level, Years of experience, Managerial ranking, Organization size, Salary, and Opportunities which may contribute to job satisfaction. It concludes the factors that affect Chinese new generation employees to remain in an organization or change their jobs and other career decisions. It also explains why Chinese employees are less committed to their employers in some cases. The determinants of job satisfaction of new generation employees represent what they value in their career in some ways, so this paper can help the organizations manage these employees and provide guidance of how to motivate their employees. For example, this paper has suggested salaries contribute to job satisfaction, thus the organizations can develop incentive system or give commissions to promote employees' performance.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study is to investigate what leads to people's job satisfaction. We selected eight possible work-related factors from Daud's research which are Maturity level, Relationship status, Educational level, Years of experience, Managerial ranking, Organization size, Salary, and Opportunities. We aim to see whether they are also significantly associated with job satisfaction among new generation employees who are 20 to 40 years old in China. In order to measure the relationship between work-related factors and job satisfaction, we used questionnaires to get responses of 100 employees from various organizations in Wenzhou which is a city in China. The method modules we used are Cronbach Alpha reliability and Regression analysis. Cronbach Alpha Reliability is to test the internal consistency among the work-related factors and job satisfaction and Regression Analysis is to find the dependency among the determinants and job satisfaction. The results of Cronbach Alpha reliability shows there is internal consistency among maturity level, relationship status, educational level, years of experience, managerial ranking, salary, and opportunities of growth. Only Organization size is not considered as a reliable source of job satisfaction. Among these factors, the results of Regression Analysis show Relationship status, Educational level,

Managerial ranking, Salary, Opportunities for growth have positive correlation with job satisfaction. The determinants of job satisfaction of new generation employees represent what they value in their career in some ways, so this paper can help the organizations manage these employees and provide guidance of how to motivate their employees.

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