Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH) (e-ISSN : 2504-8562)
2025, Volume 10, Issue 10, e003586
DOI: https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v10i10.3586

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Job Resources, Job Involvement, and Employee Satisfaction in Chinese Companies

Mingjie Xue[1], Suli Yan[2], Rozita@Uji Binti Mohammed[3*]

[1]Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Email: 2022608206@student.uitm.edu.my
[2]Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Email: 2023567499@student.uitm.edu.my
[3]Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Email: rozlim97@uitm.edu.my

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (*):
Rozita@Uji Binti Mohammed (rozlim97@uitm.edu.my)

KEYWORDS:
Career Development
Compensation
Employee Satisfaction
Interpersonal Relationships
Job Involvement
Mediation Effect

CITATION:
Xue, M., Yan, S., Rozita@Uji, M. (2025). Job Resources, Job Involvement, and Employee Satisfaction in Chinese Companies. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH), 10*(10), e003586. https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v10i10.3586

ABSTRACT

Globally, low employee satisfaction has led to high turnover costs and poor performance, creating a significant problem in both academia and industry. Based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, it takes a look, which detects the mechanism using technology sources, as well as mutual conditions, compensation, and the development of the profession, the employee affects happiness and investigates work on work engagement. A questionnaire survey of 256 respondents (N=256) earned valid data in China which has been analyzed thru partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-Sem). The findings suggest that these technology resources are not best at once and affect the satisfaction of the employee, but also do not contribute directly through engagement, where the intermediate effect of work engagement is particularly high. The result suggests that it is important for their pleasure to improve the feelings of employee involvement and dedication. This study provides realistic insights to strengthen the employee's satisfaction for companies and beyond, validating the walking cultural purpose of the JD-R model. Companies should prioritize to promote an excellent mutual environment, optimize reimbursement and gain systems and expand the development paths to the profession. By increasing the feeling of commitment and performance, they are able to establish a virtuous cycle of resources, effectively stimulate the staff's motivation and constantly develop in satisfaction.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the existing literature by using the Job Demands-Resources model to examine job resources, job involvement and employee satisfaction in Chinese companies.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of China's economy and the continuous opening of the labor market, significant changes have occurred in corporate employment patterns. Organizational structures are becoming increasingly flatter, job mobility is increasing, and the phenomenon of employees holding long-term positions within the same company is gradually diminishing. To maintain their competitive edge in employment, employees increasingly value key job resources such as interpersonal relationships, Salary and Welfare, and personal career development, using these factors as important criteria for job selection and work evaluation.

In recent years, employee turnover has become a common human resource management challenge faced by various enterprises in China. Extensive research indicates that supportive interpersonal environments, compensation satisfaction, and career growth significantly impact employee satisfaction, turnover intention, and organizational commitment (Locke & Latham, 1990; Matzler & Renzl, 2006). How to effectively enhance employee satisfaction and reduce turnover risk has become an urgent issue for enterprises.

Employee satisfaction, as a crucial indicator measuring work experience and organizational identification, not only affects job performance and turnover tendency but also profoundly impacts operational efficiency (Mor Barak et al., 2001). Existing research often focuses on single factors and seldom systematically integrates the comprehensive pathways of core job resources such as interpersonal relationships, Salary and Welfare, and career development. Simultaneously, Job involvement, as a key variable reflecting employees' psychological state, lacks sufficient verification regarding its mediating role in the relationship between job resources and employee satisfaction.

According to the Job Demands-Resources model, job resources encompass all supportive elements that help employees achieve work goals, reduce work stress, or promote personal growth (Demerouti et al., 2001). Existing studies generally regard interpersonal relationships, Salary and Welfare, and career development as vital components of job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Specifically, interpersonal relationships represent social support resources, Salary and Welfare belong to organizational material resources, and career development reflects growth resources. These key job resources not only stimulate employees' Job involvement but also significantly influence employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

Building on the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) framework, this study aims to investigate how interpersonal relationships influence employee satisfaction and job involvement in organizational contexts, with job involvement serving as a mediating variable. Therefore, targeting employed individuals in China as the survey subjects and collecting cross-industry samples through convenience sampling, this study systematically explores the impact pathways of interpersonal relationships, salary and welfare, and career development on employee satisfaction. It introduces job involvement as a mediating variable to establish a more comprehensive theoretical model. This research will provide empirical evidence for enterprises to optimize human resource management, enhance employee satisfaction, and reduce turnover risk.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis development

Employee satisfaction, as a key indicator measuring work experience and organizational identification, has always been a focal area in business management and academic research (Robertson et al., 2012). Numerous empirical studies show a significant positive correlation between employee satisfaction and job performance (Mazzola & Disselhorst, 2019), and employee satisfaction significantly influences outcome variables such as turnover rate and organizational commitment (Harrison et al., 2006).

Locke (1976) defined employee satisfaction as the pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an individual's appraisal of their job or job experiences. Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012) argued that employee satisfaction encompasses not only affective elements but also important cognitive components and is closely related to work environmental characteristics (Xia et al., 2016). Existing research indicates that good interpersonal relationships, reasonable Salary and Welfare, and clear career development opportunities are key job resources influencing employee satisfaction (Tims, Bakker & Derks, 2013).

2.1. The Impact of Interpersonal Relationships on Job involvement and Employee Satisfaction

In the workplace, interpersonal relationships, as social job resources, are important factors influencing employees' work attitudes and behaviors (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The JD-R model posits that social support, as part of job resources, can stimulate employees' work motivation, thereby enhancing Job involvement and job performance (Tims et al., 2013). Establishing positive interactions with others, gaining understanding and support, has been proven to effectively reduce work stress and enhance well-being and ES (Frone & Major, 1988; Matagi et al., 2022).

In the Chinese cultural context, the influence of interpersonal relationships on employee behavior is particularly significant. Collectivism and Confucian culture emphasize the importance of "harmony" and "relationships" in workplace interactions, stressing emotional connections, trust, mutual assistance, and interdependence (Kao, 2023). Positive interpersonal interaction is not only a form of social capital but also a psychological resource that satisfies employees' needs for belonging and identification (Guanxi-based View). When employees feel support, inclusiveness, and care from colleagues or superiors within the organization, they are more likely to form stable psychological attachment and positive work attitudes, thereby enhancing their Job involvement and improving overall job satisfaction (Brunetto et al., 2014; Sutanto et al., 2024).

Interpersonal resources in Chinese culture are reflected not only in daily communication and interaction but also more deeply associated with trust, affection, and reciprocity. A good interpersonal support environment can reduce feelings of conflict, enhance employees' psychological safety, and make them willing to invest more emotion and identification in the organization. The "interpersonal harmony" established in this cultural context is precisely one of the important mechanisms prompting employees to engage actively in their work (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006).

Therefore, this study posits that interpersonal relationships, as a key job resource, can not only directly enhance ES but also exert an indirect influence by boosting employees' Job involvement. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Interpersonal relationships have a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction.

H2: Interpersonal relationships have a significant positive impact on Job involvement.

H3: Interpersonal relationships have a significant indirect impact on employee satisfaction through Job involvement.

2.2. The Impact of Salary and Welfare on Job involvement and Employee Satisfaction

Salary and Welfare, as the most fundamental external motivational resources in the work environment, have long been considered a key driver of employee motivation (Deci et al., 2017; Mor Barak et al., 2001). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), extrinsic motivators like Salary and Welfare are typical sources of controlled motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Although compensation primarily satisfies employees' economic needs, fair and reasonable compensation systems play an important role in stimulating employee motivation and promoting positive behaviors (Rigby & Ryan, 2018). When employees perceive the compensation system provided by the enterprise as fair, reasonable, and aligned with their value expectations relative to their input, they are more likely to generate positive psychological reactions and higher satisfaction (Li et al., 2024).

In existing literature, the relationship between Salary and Welfare and employee work attitudes has been widely confirmed (Schön Persson et al., 2018). Fair compensation not only directly influences employee satisfaction but can also significantly enhance employees' level of Job involvement (Miao et al., 2017). According to the JD-R model, Salary and Welfare, as key material job resources, have a positive motivating effect on employees' Job involvement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Highly engaged employees typically perceive the various resources provided by the enterprise more positively and enhance their overall satisfaction with work through psychological investment (Frone & Major, 1988; Matagi et al., 2022). Furthermore, employee satisfaction is essentially an emotional reaction to the work environment, organizational resources, and the fulfillment of personal value (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; Locke, 1976). A satisfactory Salary and Welfare system can further enhance employees' emotional attachment and sense of identification with their work by satisfying their basic needs for fairness, respect, and livelihood security, thereby effectively increasing employee satisfaction.

Therefore, this study posits that Salary and Welfare not only directly enhance employee satisfaction but also plays a mediating role in the psychological pathway by enhancing employees' Job involvement. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Salary and Welfare have a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction.

H5: Salary and Welfare have a significant positive impact on Job involvement.

H6: Salary and Welfare have a significant indirect impact on employee satisfaction through Job involvement.

2.3. The Impact of Career Development on Job Involvement and Employee Satisfaction

Career development refers to employees achieving career goals, enhancing personal capabilities, and obtaining promotion and compensation opportunities commensurate with their abilities during their work (Weng et al., 2010). Career development is not only a job resource that promotes employee growth but also a significant factor influencing employees' work attitudes and behaviors. Research shows that employees' perception of career growth can effectively predict their satisfaction and profoundly impact their positive work behaviors (Weng & McElroy, 2012).

According to the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), ES largely depends on whether the organization provides external reinforcing conditions that match their psychological needs and career expectations (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). When employees perceive that the enterprise provides a favorable career development environment, including clear promotion paths and opportunities for skill enhancement, they are more likely to generate positive emotional experiences and psychological identification (Sluss et al., 2008; Weng et al., 2010). Especially in the current context of intense competition and rapid environmental change, career growth opportunities have become a key reference factor for employees to evaluate organizational attractiveness and value (Savickas, 2002).

The JD-R model further points out that career development, as a key growth-oriented job resource, can effectively stimulate employees' Job involvement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Employees who perceive good developmental support are more likely to exhibit high levels of enthusiasm, concentration, and psychological investment in their work (Xanthopoulou et al., 2009). Job involvement, as a positive psychological state, not only promotes employees' initiative and performance but also has a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction (Morin et al., 2023; Törnroos et al., 2019).

Moreover, existing research confirms that employees' positive evaluation of career development opportunities can directly enhance their satisfaction (Costen & Salazar, 2011; Lee & Bruvold, 2003) and further strengthen satisfaction by stimulating Job involvement (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). When enterprises provide employees with clear development paths, employees are more likely to feel organizational support and recognition, leading to higher satisfaction with the overall work environment.

In summary, this study posits that career development, as an important job resource, not only enhances employee satisfaction but also plays a mediating role in the psychological pathway by boosting employees' Job involvement. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Career development has a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction.

H8: Career development has a significant positive impact on Job involvement.

H9: Career development has a significant indirect impact on employee satisfaction through Job involvement.

2.4. The Impact of Job Involvement on Employee Satisfaction

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, job resources can not only directly affect employee satisfaction but also indirectly generate positive effects by stimulating employees' Job involvement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job involvement refers to employees' psychological attachment and identification with their current work (Paullay et al., 1994), reflecting a psychological state concerning the importance of work value in personal life (Lawler & Hall, 1970).

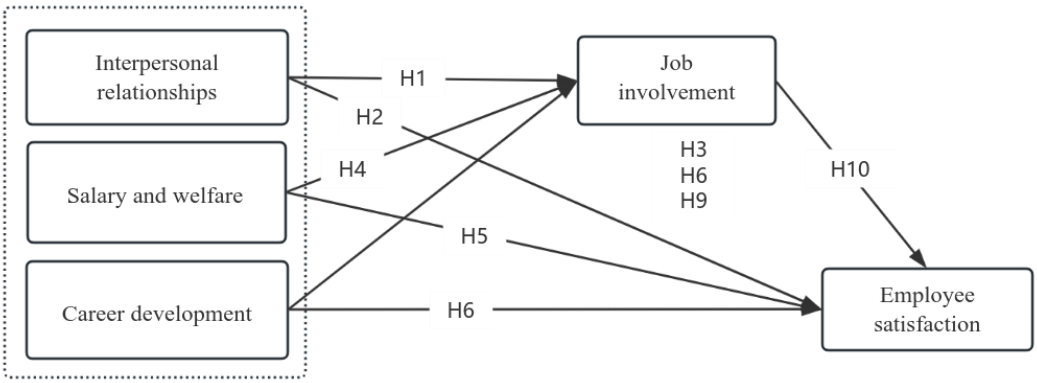
Existing research indicates that abundant job resources can effectively enhance employees' Job involvement (Hackett et al., 2001). High Job involvement not only stimulates employees' sustained effort (Diefendorff et al., 2002; Janssen, 2003) but also positively influences their psychological evaluation and satisfaction with the enterprise (Cavapozzi & Dal Bianco, 2021; Matagi et al., 2022). When employees place high value on the job resources provided by the enterprise, they are more likely to generate strong Job involvement and form higher satisfaction with their overall work experience (Frone, 2000).

H10: Job involvement has a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction.

2.5. Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review and the hypothesis developed in this study, Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework employed in this study:

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework



3. Research Methods

This study features a quantitative design utilizing survey methodologies. Quantitative research is employed to elucidate the connections between variables. Survey methods are techniques in quantitative research used to discern societal trends, beliefs, views, or individual attitudes. The purpose of employing survey methodologies in this context is to evaluate the correlation among interpersonal connections, career advancement, and incentives and benefits concerning employee happiness, with job engagement serving as a mediating variable.

This study chose Chinese corporate as target population based on the following ideas. First, China is one of the world's largest emerging economies, and corporate organization structures and human resources management have made rapid changes over the past two

decades. Employee satisfaction, career development and mutual conditions are very relevant and research qualified (Wang et al., 2021). Second, China has some institutional functions in terms of compensation and profit systems, career development paths and relationships between the employee organization, which are quite different from mature western markets. Therefore, the testing of the relevant theoretical model in the Chinese context will help to expand cross -cultural approaches and enrich existing literature. Third, in this study, researchers were able to reach sample resources in this study and secured the scope of the questionnaire and representation of the sample.

3.1. Sampling

Data were published and collected online through the Wen Juan Xin platform using convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method. Employees were invited to complete the questionnaire through social networks, industry exchange groups, alumni resources, and corporate HR forwarding in China company. All participants were explicitly informed that the survey was anonymous data would be used solely for academic research, participation was completely voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time. According to Hair Jr. et al (2021) recommendation for PLS-SEM models, if the model includes mediating paths and has a relatively large number of variables , the sample size should be no less than 150-200 to ensure statistical power (Power ≥ 0.80) and model stability. The sample size was also determined by GPower with a minimum sample size of 138.PLS SEM can achieve high statistical power with small sample size. Therefore, the final sample of 256 valid responses not only meets the requirements for PLS-SEM analysis but is also conducive to subsequent mediation effect tests and path significance assessment, providing a solid data foundation.

3.2. Data Analysis

This study focused on measuring five latent variables: ES, Job involvement, Interpersonal Relationships, Career Development, and Salary and Welfare, comprising a total of 25 measurement items. All items were sourced from validated mature scales used domestically and internationally, with some moderately revised according to the Chinese context to ensure clarity of expression and cultural appropriateness. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale for measurement (1 = "Strongly Disagree", 5 = "Strongly Agree"), with higher values indicating greater agreement with the related statements. The ES variable was measured using 6 items, primarily referencing Homburg and Stock (2004) and Netemeyer et al. (2005) in their empirical research on the impact of salesperson satisfaction on customer satisfaction. Examples include: "*I am generally satisfied with my job*," "*I would not consider working for another company*," "*I consider my current organization my first choice*." The Job involvement variable included 4 items, referencing Schaufeli and Salanova (n.d.) on scale development for Job involvement and burnout, and the theoretical framework proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) based on the JD-R model. Content involved statements like: "*I am highly engaged in my work*","*I might continue working even without pay*." Interpersonal Relationships, as an important job resource in the organizational context, comprised 5 items, referencing Kao (2023) on the role of interpersonal resources in job performance and on interpersonal stress and satisfaction. Measurement content involved feelings about typical interpersonal interactions, such as: "*I trust my colleagues*," "*Building connections with others alleviates work troubles*." The Career Development variable contained 4 items, sourced from the career growth structure research proposed by Weng et al. (2010), Weng and McElroy (2012). Examples include: "*My current job lays the foundation for my career goals*," "*My*

current job provides good development opportunities." The Salary and Welfare variable included 6 items, reflecting employees' satisfaction with their unit's compensation system, fairness, incentive nature, and welfare policies. Items referenced Luo and Chui (2020) and Wang et al. (2021) on satisfaction and turnover intention among early-career stage employees, covering dimensions like: "*I am satisfied with the company's salary increase opportunities*," "*Our unit's welfare system is fair*."

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data. This method is good for evaluating mediation models with several latent variables and low sample sizes. We used SmartPLS 4 software to look at the measurement and structural models. We used Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability to check for reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Fornell–Larcker criteria, and HTMT ratio to check for validity. We used bootstrapping to find path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to see if there were direct and indirect (mediated) impacts. Furthermore, Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) was employed to yield pragmatic insights into the key areas for improving employee happiness. We used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to analyse the data. This method is good for evaluating mediation models with several latent variables and smaller sample numbers. We used SmartPLS 4 software to look at the measurement and structural models. We used Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability to check for reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Fornell–Larcker criteria, and HTMT ratio to check for validity. We used bootstrapping to find path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to see if there were direct and indirect (mediated) impacts. Furthermore, Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) was employed to offer pragmatic insights into the key sectors for improving employee happiness.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly followed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before completing the questionnaire on first page of questionnaire before they procced with the questionnaires thus the ethical standard has been approved. Respondents were assured that participation was voluntary, responses were anonymous, and they could withdraw at any point without penalty. Data were collected and used solely for academic purposes, in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki.

4. Results

4.1. Demographic profile

A total of 256 valid questionnaires were distributed and successfully collected. There were no missing data or abnormal response records, and the overall response time fell within a reasonable range. In the sample, males accounted for 50.8% and females for 49.2%. In terms of educational background, 66.8% had a college degree or higher. In terms of job positions, management, technical, and skilled positions accounted for 16.8%, 37.1%, and 46.1% respectively. Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondent:

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondent

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	130	50.8%
	Female	126	49.2%
Age range	under 20	51	19.9%
	21-30	82	32.0%
	31-40	58	22.7%
	41-50	36	14.1%
	Above 51	29	11.3%
Educational level	Below high school	85	33.2%
	Junior College	43	16.8%
	Bachelor	100	39.1%
	above Master	28	10.9%
Working role	Management position	43	16.8%
	Technical position	95	37.1%
	Skilled position	118	46.1%
Years of working	Under 1	85	33.2%
	1-3	73	28.5%
	4-5	56	21.9%
	6-7	24	9.4%
	Above 8	18	7.0%

4.2. Reliability and Validity of the measurement model

Outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values explain the validity of each indicator. Outer loading values ≥ 0.4-0.7 and AVE values ≥ 0.5 are considered valid research indicators (Hair et al., 2017). Convergent validity measurements must be valid to proceed with further analysis. Results showed that the outer loadings of all latent variables ranged from 0.753 to 0.873, significantly higher than the recommended standard of 0.7, indicating that each measurement item had good explanatory power for its respective latent variables. Furthermore, the AVE for all latent variables exceeded the standard threshold of 0.5 (CD=0.682, ES=0.654, IR=0.609, JI=0.696, SAW=0.633), demonstrating good convergent validity of the scales, with no need to remove items.

Regarding reliability analysis, Cronbach's Alpha values for all latent variables ranged from 0.839 to 0.894, and Composite Reliability (rho_c) was also above 0.88, indicating the measurement instruments were highly reliable in terms of internal consistency. See Table 2 for specifics.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity of the measurement model (reliability and convergent validity).

Construct	Item	Factor Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Interpersonal relationships (IR)	IR1	0.753	0.839	0.886	0.609
	IR2	0.777			
	IR3	0.791			
	IR4	0.763			
	IR5	0.815			
Salary and welfare (SAW)	SAW1	0.780	0.885	0.912	0.633
	SAW2	0.821			
	SAW3	0.761			
	SAW4	0.782			
	SAW5	0.844			
Career development (CD)	CD1	0.833	0.846	0.896	0.682
	CD2	0.837			
	CD3	0.773			
	CD4	0.859			
Job involvement (JI)	JI1	0.847	0.855	0.902	0.696
	JI2	0.841			
	JI3	0.815			
	JI4	0.835			
Employee satisfaction (ES)	ES1	0.786	0.894	0.919	0.654
	ES2	0.791			
	ES3	0.780			
	ES4	0.838			
	ES5	0.873			
	ES6	0.778			

Additionally, discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of the AVE for each construct was higher than its correlation coefficients with other constructs, further confirming the distinctiveness between constructs. The model possesses sufficient statistical validity at the measurement level. Discriminant validity was also validated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2016). Using the strictest HTMT standard of 0.85, all values were below 0.90 and 0.85, see Table 3.

At the structural model level, this study focused on examining path relationships and explanatory power among latent variables. Results showed that the R^2 for Employee Satisfaction (ES) was 0.402, and the adjusted R^2 was 0.392, indicating that the explanatory variables in the model (CD, IR, SAW, JI) collectively explained approximately 40% of the variance in satisfaction, representing a moderate level of explanatory power. The R^2 for Job involvement (JI) was 0.235, adjusted to 0.225, indicating that the three job resource

variables explained 23% of the variance in employee engagement, also demonstrating a certain level of predictive ability.

Table 3: Validity discriminant (Fornell--Larcker criterion).

	CD	ES	IR	JI	SAW
CD	0.826				
ES	0.390	0.809			
IR	0.206	0.369	0.780		
JI	0.385	0.545	0.301	0.835	
SAW	0.254	0.379	0.221	0.315	0.796

Overall, the model constructed in this study not only exhibits good reliability and validity at the measurement level but also shows clear causal logic at the structural path level, providing solid empirical support for further exploring how job resources affect satisfaction through employee engagement.

4.3. Hypothesis Testing

4.3.1. Direct Effect Test

This study proposed nine path hypotheses. The relevant test results are shown in Table 4. Analysis of the Interpersonal Relationships (IR) paths showed a significant direct impact on ESemployee satisfaction (ES) ($\beta = 0.256$, $t = 4.519$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis H1; it also had a positive effect on Job involvement ($\beta = 0.197$, $t = 2.975$, $p = 0.003$), supporting Hypothesis H2.

For the Salary and Welfare (SAW) paths, analysis results indicated a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction ($\beta = 0.254$, $t = 4.041$, $p < 0.001$), validating Hypothesis H4; simultaneously, SAW also had a significant impact on Job involvement ($\beta = 0.196$, $t = 3.272$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H5.

Regarding Career Development (CD), it had a significant positive impact on employee satisfaction ($\beta = 0.273$, $t = 4.618$, $p < 0.001$), validating Hypothesis H7; simultaneously, Career Development (CD) also had a significant positive effect on Job involvement (JI) ($\beta = 0.295$, $t = 4.862$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis H8.

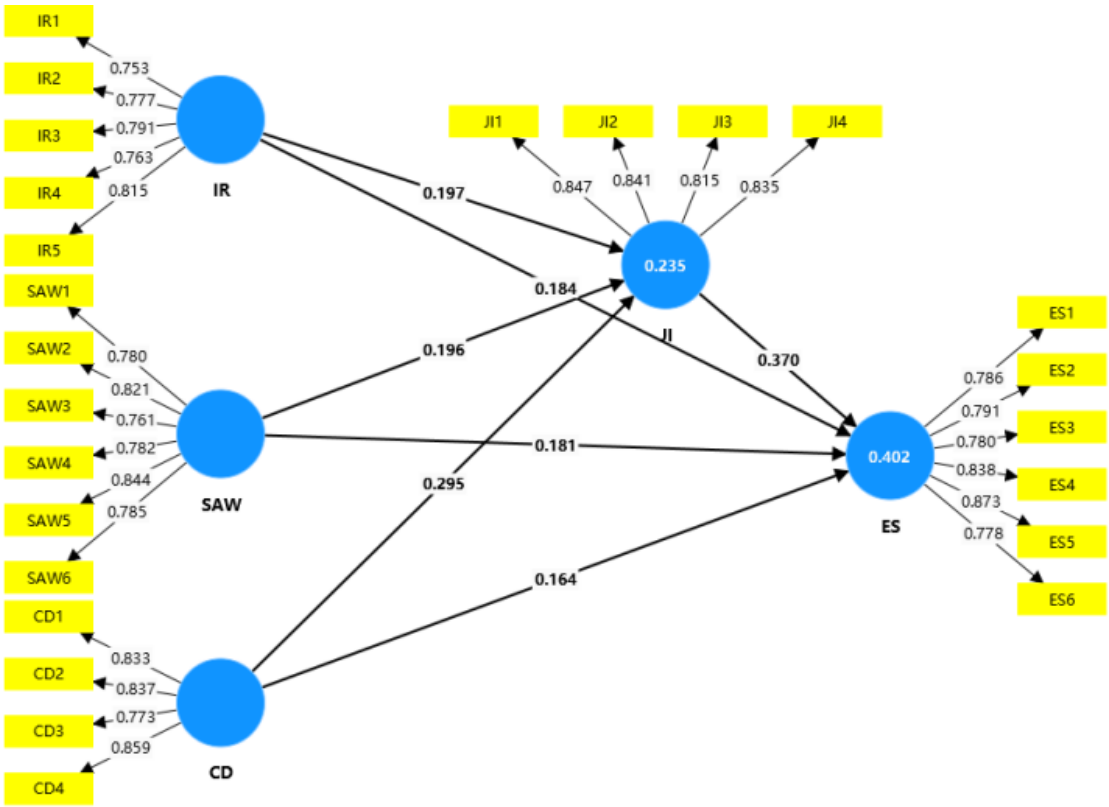
Furthermore, the direct path effect of Job involvement (JI) on ES was the most significant ($\beta = 0.370$, $t = 5.815$, $p < 0.001$), validating Hypothesis H10.

Figure 2 shows the results of hypothesis testing using path coefficient values, p-values, and t-statistics. The strength of the relationship between variables is assessed by the path coefficient value, where values closer to +1 indicate a stronger relationship (Hair et al., 2017). The p-value indicates acceptance or rejection of the proposed hypothesis.

Table 4: Structural equation model validation results

H	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Hypothesis
H1	IR -> ES	0.256	0.260	0.058	4.452	0.000	supported
H2	IR -> JI	0.197	0.199	0.066	2.970	0.003	supported
H4	SAW -> ES	0.254	0.258	0.064	3.988	0.000	supported
H5	SAW -> JI	0.196	0.201	0.060	3.286	0.001	supported
H7	CD -> ES	0.273	0.273	0.059	4.658	0.000	supported
H8	CD -> JI	0.295	0.297	0.061	4.819	0.000	supported
H10	JI -> ES	0.370	0.368	0.064	5.792	0.000	supported

Figure 2: Structural model.



4.3.2. Mediation Effect Test

To further explore the mechanism of Job involvement (JI) between various job resources and employee satisfaction, mediation path analysis was conducted. Results in Table 5 show that all three mediation paths reached significant levels, indicating that Job involvement played a partial mediating role in the process by which different job resources affect employee satisfaction.

Specifically, the mediating effect of Interpersonal Relationships (IR) → Job involvement(JI) → employee satisfaction (ES) was also significant (β = 0.073, t = 2.603, p = 0.009), supporting Hypothesis H3. This suggests that in a good interpersonal atmosphere, employees are more willing to engage actively in work, thereby enhancing satisfaction. The indirect path of Salary and Welfare (SAW) → Job involvement → employee satisfaction was also significant (β = 0.073, t = 2.773, p = 0.006), validating Hypothesis H6. This indicates that the fairness and incentive nature of compensation not only directly affect ES but also function indirectly by enhancing Job involvement. Career Development (CD) indirectly affected ES through Job involvement, with a path coefficient of β = 0.109, t = 3.473, p = 0.001, validating Hypothesis H9. This shows that when employees perceive career growth space, they are more likely to invest emotions and energy in their work, thereby enhancing their satisfaction level.

In conclusion, Job involvement plays a positive mediating bridge role between the three core job resources and ES, further confirming the theoretical validity of the "Resource → Motivation → Attitude" path in the JD-R model.

Table 5: The mediation effects test analysis results.

H	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Hypothesis
H3	IR -> JI -> ES	0.073	0.073	0.028	2.590	0.010	supported
H6	SAW -> JI -> ES	0.073	0.074	0.026	2.785	0.005	supported
H9	CD -> JI -> ES	0.109	0.110	0.031	3.488	0.000	supported

4.4. Importance-performance map analysis

Table 6 presents the results of the Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA), used to further assess the impact of each variable on ES considering performance levels (Hair et al., 2022). Results show that Job involvement (JI) had the greatest impact on satisfaction (Importance = 0.370), but its performance score was relatively low (61.406). This indicates that although its effect is significant, there is still room for improvement in its actual performance.

The important scores for Interpersonal Relationships (IR) and Salary and Welfare (SAW) were 0.256 and 0.254 respectively, with higher performance scores (73.399 and 70.593 respectively), indicating these two factors perform well in the current organization. Career Development (CD) had an importance of 0.273 and performance of 66.903, showing its influence cannot be ignored but also has potential for further optimization. Overall, the results suggest organizations should prioritize enhancing employee Job involvement while consolidating the advantages of interpersonal relationships and Salary and Welfare.

Table 6: Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) result.

Latent variables	Total effects (Importance)	Index value (Performance)
CD	0.273	66.903
IR	0.256	73.399
JI	0.370	61.406
SAW	0.254	70.593

5. Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to explore how job resources affect employee satisfaction (ES) and to further analyze the role of mediating played by Job involvement. Specifically, the research focused on two core questions: first, whether Job involvement significantly influences employees' perception and evaluation of job resources; second, whether employees' satisfaction with job resources mediates the relationship between Job involvement and job satisfaction. Based on this logical pathway, a corresponding structural model was constructed and empirically tested.

From the empirical results, the first hypothesis received significant support.The results indicate that Job involvement not only directly affects ES ($\beta = 0.370$, $p < 0.001$) but is also closely related to employees' positive cognition of job resources. Specifically, whether it's career development, interpersonal relationships, or Salary and Welfare, all can further enhance employees' perception of satisfaction by stimulating their engaged behavior at work. This result is highly consistent with the mechanism of "engagement stimulates effort" emphasized by Schön Persson et al. (2018), reflecting that when employees perceive positive resources provided by the organization, they tend to invest more emotion and energy into their work. This engagement is not only an attitudinal response but also reflects the role of the “psychological contract” (Robinson & Wolfe Morrison, 2000), meaning that when employees perceive their efforts and organizational support as reciprocal, they are more willing to commit and contribute continuously.

The findings also validated the second hypothesis, namely the mediating role of Job involvement on employee satisfaction. Analysis results showed that all three indirect paths reached significant levels: Career Development ($\beta = 0.109$, $p = 0.001$), Interpersonal Relationships ($\beta = 0.073$, $p = 0.009$), and Salary and Welfare ($\beta = 0.073$, $p = 0.006$) all exerted an indirect influence on employee satisfaction through Job involvement. This indicates that job resources not only have a direct effect but can also enhance satisfaction by stimulating employees' sense of engagement. This mechanism aligns with the "Resource → Motivation → Attitude" pathway assumption in the JD-R model. Furthermore, it suggests that employees' perception of job resources is not merely a feedback reaction to "benefits" but is more about their psychological feelings regarding self-growth, value realization, and role identification within the organization.

Although the mediating effects were significant, their strength was relatively limited. This indicates that while Job involvement is important, it is not the sole mechanism through which resources influence satisfaction. It also implies that employees may consider other dimensions such as fairness, sense of achievement, or organizational belonging when judging satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Wirawan et al (2020) view that satisfaction is not fully mediated, emphasizing the irreplaceability and multi-dimensional influence of the resources themselves.

6. Conclusion

Grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, this study examined how interpersonal relationships, compensation and benefits, and career development influence employee satisfaction, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating role of job involvement. By incorporating job involvement as a motivational mechanism, the study constructed and validated a three-stage pathway of "Resources → Motivation → Satisfaction," thereby extending the explanatory boundary of the JD-R model in the Chinese organizational context.

The findings underscore that employee satisfaction is not simply the result of material resource allocation but also depends on employees' subjective engagement and identification with their work. In line with Psychological Contract Theory, satisfaction is shaped by employees' emotional investment and sense of reciprocity rather than resource provision alone. Job involvement thus emerges as an active behavioral mechanism that bridges job resources and satisfaction, offering a fresh perspective to prior research that treated involvement as a mere outcome variable.

From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that human resource management should move beyond static resource allocation towards dynamic activation. Interpersonal relationships, compensation, and career development each contributed to enhancing employee satisfaction, but their impact was amplified when employees reported higher levels of job involvement. Notably, importance–performance analysis indicated that while job involvement exerted the strongest effect, its performance level lagged, signaling a critical area for managerial attention. Organizations are therefore encouraged to design growth opportunities, strengthen feedback mechanisms, and foster cultural resonance that stimulate engagement, rather than relying solely on material incentives.

Despite its contributions, the study is subject to several limitations. The reliance on self-report, cross-sectional data restricts the ability to infer causal dynamics, highlighting the need for longitudinal or multi-source designs in future research. Additionally, the model emphasized core job resources but did not account for potential moderators such as organizational culture, job demands, or leadership style, which may alter resource–satisfaction linkages. Furthermore, the sampling was limited to employees in China, and future studies should employ cross-regional and cross-industry comparisons to test the model's broader applicability.

Overall, this study contributes to organizational behavior literature by demonstrating that the pathway from job resources to satisfaction is contingent upon employees' motivational states. It reinforces the importance of job involvement as a psychological driver of satisfaction and offers actionable insights for managers seeking to build sustainable employee well-being and organizational performance.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

All data were collected and reported with full transparency, ensuring clarity and minimizing any ethical concerns. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted full voluntary and consent provided on the questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the Declaration of Helsinki.

Acknowledgement

Part of this article was extracted from a master thesis submitted to Universiti Teknologi MARA.

Funding

This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

References

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *22*(3), 309–328. https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115

Brunetto, Y., Shacklock, K., Teo, S., & Farr-Wharton, R. (2014). The impact of management on the engagement and well-being of high emotional labour employees. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *25*(17), 2345–2363. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.877056

Cavapozzi, D., & Dal Bianco, C. (2021). The effect of work disability on the job involvement of older workers. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *192*, 724–739. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2021.10.021

Costen, W. M., & Salazar, J. (2011). The Impact of Training and Development on Employee Job Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Intent to Stay in the Lodging Industry. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *10*(3), 273–284. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332845.2011.555734

Dawis, R. V., & Lofquist, L. H. (1984). *A psychological theory of work adjustment: An individual-differences model and its applications*. University of Minnesota Press.

Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-Determination Theory in Work Organizations: The State of a Science. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *4*(1), 19–43. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *86*(3), 499–512. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499

Diefendorff, J. M., Brown, D. J., Kamin, A. M., & Lord, R. G. (2002). Examining the roles of job involvement and work centrality in predicting organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *23*(1), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.123

Frone, M. R. (2000). Work–family conflict and employee psychiatric disorders: The national comorbidity survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*(6), 888–895. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.85.6.888

Frone, M. R., & Major, B. (1988). Communication Quality and Job Satisfaction Among Managerial Nurses: The Moderating Influence of Job Involvement. *Group & Organization Studies*, *13*(3), 332–347.

https://doi.org/10.1177/105960118801300306
Gagné, M., & Deci, E. L. (2005). Self-determination theory and work motivation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *26*(4), 331–362. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.322
Hackett, R. D., Lapierre, L. M., & Hausdorf, P. A. (2001). Understanding the Links between Work Commitment Constructs. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *58*(3), 392–413. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2000.1776
Hair Jr., J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2021). *Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using R: A workbook*. Springer Nature.
Hair, J., Hollingsworth, C. L., Randolph, A. B., & Chong, A. Y. L. (2017). An updated and expanded assessment of PLS-SEM in information systems research. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, *117*(3), 442–458. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMDS-04-2016-0130
Hair, J., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (Third edition). SAGE Publications, Incorporated.
Hallberg, U. E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). "Same Same" But Different?: Can Work Engagement Be Discriminated from Job Involvement and Organizational Commitment? *European Psychologist*, *11*(2), 119–127. https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040.11.2.119
Harrison, D. A., Newman, D. A., & Roth, P. L. (2006). How Important are Job Attitudes? Meta-Analytic Comparisons of Integrative Behavioral Outcomes and Time Sequences. *Academy of Management Journal*, *49*(2), 305–325. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.20786077
Henseler, J., Hubona, G., & Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: Updated guidelines. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, *116*(1), 2–20. https://doi.org/10.1108/imds-09-2015-0382
Homburg, C., & Stock, R. M. (2004). The Link Between Salespeople's Job Satisfaction and Customer Satisfaction in a Business-to-Business Context: A Dyadic Analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *32*(2), 144–158. https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070303261415
Janssen, O. (2003). Innovative behaviour and job involvement at the price of conflict and less satisfactory relations with co-workers. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *76*(3), 347–364. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317903769647210
Judge, T. A., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D. (2012). Job Attitudes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *63*(1), 341–367. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-120710-100511
Kao, F.-H. (2023). Do interpersonal resources improve your job performance? Scale development of interpersonal resources and the moderated mediation model of group harmony. *Work*, *76*(3), 1177–1191. https://doi.org/10.3233/WOR-220664
Lawler, E. E., & Hall, D. T. (1970). Relationship of job characteristics to job involvement, satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *54*(4), 305–312. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0029692
Lee, C. H., & Bruvold, N. T. (2003). Creating value for employees: Investment in employee development. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *14*(6), 981–1000. https://doi.org/10.1080/0958519032000106173
Li, X., Yuan, Y., & He, X. (2024). The role of job satisfaction and organizational culture match in the relationship between pay satisfaction and turnover intention: A moderated mediation model. *International Social Work*, *67*(6), 1377–1391. https://doi.org/10.1177/00208728241255310
Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.),

Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology (pp. 1297–1349). Rand McNally.

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). Work Motivation and Satisfaction: Light at the End of the Tunnel. *Psychological Science*, *1*(4), 240–246. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1990.tb00207.x

Luo, M. S., & Chui, E. W. T. (2020). Will material interest make social workers quit their job? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Social Work*, *20*(3), 340–364. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017318814761

Matagi, L., Baguma, P., & Baluku, M. M. (2022). Age, job involvement and job satisfaction as predictors of job performance among local government employees in Uganda. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *9*(3), 489–505. https://doi.org/10.1108/joepp-06-2020-0099

Matzler, K., & Renzl, B. (2006). The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, and Employee Loyalty. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, *17*(10), 1261–1271. https://doi.org/10.1080/14783360600753653

Mazzola, J. J., & Disselhorst, R. (2019). Should we be "challenging" employees?: A critical review and meta-analysis of the challenge-hindrance model of stress. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(8), 949–961. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2412

Miao, C., Humphrey, R. H., & Qian, S. (2017). A meta-analysis of emotional intelligence effects on job satisfaction mediated by job resources, and a test of moderators. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *116*, 281–288. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.04.031

Mor Barak, M. E., Nissly, J. A., & Levin, A. (2001). Antecedents to Retention and Turnover among Child Welfare, Social Work, and Other Human Service Employees: What Can We Learn from Past Research? A Review and Metanalysis. *Social Service Review*, *75*(4), 625–661. https://doi.org/10.1086/323166

Morin, A. J. S., Gillet, N., Blais, A.-R., Comeau, C., & Houle, S. A. (2023). A multilevel perspective on the role of job demands, job resources, and need satisfaction for employees' outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *141*, 103846. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2023.103846

Netemeyer, R. G., Maxham, J. G., & Pullig, C. (2005). Conflicts in the Work–Family Interface: Links to Job Stress, Customer Service Employee Performance, and Customer Purchase Intent. *Journal of Marketing*, *69*(2), 130–143. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.69.2.130.60758

Paullay, I. M., Alliger, G. M., & Stone-Romero, E. F. (1994). Construct validation of two instruments designed to measure job involvement and work centrality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *79*(2), 224–228. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.79.2.224

Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*(4), 698–714. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.698

Rigby, C. S., & Ryan, R. M. (2018). Self-Determination Theory in Human Resource Development: New Directions and Practical Considerations. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *20*(2), 133–147. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422318756954

Robertson, R., Gockel, C., & Brauner, E. (2012). Trust your teammates or bosses? Differential effects of trust on transactive memory, job satisfaction, and performance. *Employee Relations*, *35*(2), 222–242. https://doi.org/10.1108/01425451311287880

Robinson, S. L., & Wolfe Morrison, E. (2000). The development of psychological contract breach and violation: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*(5), 525–546. https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379(200008)21:5<525::aid-job40>3.0.co;2-t

Savickas, M. L. (2002). Career Construction: A Developmental Theory of Vocational Behavior. *Career Choice and Development*, 149–205.

Schaufeli, W. B., & Salanova, M. (n.d.). *The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach*. Unpublished manuscript.

Schön Persson, S., Nilsson Lindström, P., Pettersson, P., Nilsson, M., & Blomqvist, K. (2018). Resources for work-related well-being: A qualitative study about healthcare employees' experiences of relationships at work. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, *27*(23–24), 4302–4310. https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.14543

Sluss, D. M., Klimchak, M., & Holmes, J. J. (2008). Perceived organizational support as a mediator between relational exchange and organizational identification. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *73*(3), 457–464. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2008.09.001

Sutanto, E. M., Sigiols, P. J., & Wijaya, E. N. (2024). Work-life balance, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and employee performance: A study of Indonesian employees. *International Journal of Business and Society, 25*(3), 832–851. https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.8355.2024

Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2013). The impact of job crafting on job demands, job resources, and well-being. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *18*(2), 230–240. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032141

Törnroos, M., Jokela, M., & Hakulinen, C. (2019). The relationship between personality and job satisfaction across occupations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *145*, 82–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.03.027

Wang, E., Zheng, Z., Sui, X., Yi, Z., Liu, H., Luan, W., Meng, Y., Shi, B., & Chen, L. (2021). For money or identity—or both? Which could promote the retention of social workers in China? *The British Journal of Social Work*, *51*(2), 524–544. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa200

Weng, Q., & McElroy, J. C. (2012). Organizational career growth, affective occupational commitment and turnover intentions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *80*(2), 256–265. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.014

Weng, Q., McElroy, J. C., Morrow, P. C., & Liu, R. (2010). The relationship between career growth and organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *77*(3), 391–400. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.05.003

Wirawan, H., Jufri, M., & Saman, A. (2020). The effect of authentic leadership and psychological capital on work engagement: The mediating role of job satisfaction. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *41*(8), 1139–1154. https://doi.org/10.1108/lodj-10-2019-0433

Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Work engagement and financial returns: A diary study on the role of job and personal resources. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *82*(1), 183–200. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317908x285633

Xia, Y., Zhang, L., & Zhao, N. (2016). Impact of Participation in Decision Making on Job Satisfaction: An Organizational Communication Perspective. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology*, *19*. https://doi.org/10.1017/sjp.2016.56