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## Occupational Stress, Job satisfaction, and Self-efficacy among Indonesian and Chinese employees

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### Abstract.

*This survey aim to find out the influence of job satisfaction and self efficacy to occupational stress among employees in Surabaya and Hangzou. A person's work and occupational status play a critical role in an individual's sense of identity, self- esteem, and psychological well-being. Occupational stress is the combination of sources of stress at work, individual characteristics, and extra organizational stressors. Caring about employee welfare means saving business cost around billions of dollars. Besides the occupational stress will get to so many diseases, either physiological or psychological. This study was adopted descriptive design research and was conducted in quantitative manner. A quantitative approach was used to gather the data by distribution questionnaire to the sample. A total of 305 employees consist of 62 Indonesian employees and 243 Chinese employees participated to the study using the incidental sampling method. The data was analyzed by regression analysis. From the findings we hope that we can give some contribution to cross-cultural study and make suggestions for selection and recruitment of the new employees, as well as prevention and intervention (stress management).*

**Keywords:** *occupational stress, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, Indonesian and Chinese employees*

## INTRODUCTION

### Occupational Stress

Stress in the workplace costs a large amount of productivity and spend a lot of money. It is estimated by the International Labor Organization that stress on the job costs businesses over \$200 billion per year. These costs include salaries for sick days, cost of hospitalization and outpatient care, and cost related to decreased productivity (Greenberg, 2002). Keichel (1993) identifies occupational stress as one of the key problems in the workforce for the next century. One of the reasons that occupational stress has been receiving so much attention of late is that businesses are genuinely beginning to care about employee welfare. Other stress-related factors are catching the eyes of business leaders. For example, health-benefit cost to employers have increased dramatically. Employees trained over a long period of time, at great cost, may break down when stressed on the job. They may make poor decisions, miss days of work, begin abusing alcohol and other drugs, or die and have to be replaced by other workers who need training. All of this is costly.

The term stress is not uniformly defined in the literature. Occupational stress is an extremely difficult construct to define. Obviously, it is stress on the job, but stress on the job occurs in a person. Here is where we run into problems, since any worker brings to the job a level of predispositions to be stressed. Though psychologist cannot agree on one definition for the word stress (Greenberg, 2008; Sulsky & Smith, 2005 in Aamodt, 2010), it will be defined for the purpose of this research as *the psychological and physical reaction to certain life events or situations*, while occupational stress defined as the combination of sources of stress at work, individual characteristics, and extraorganizational stressors (Greenberg, 2002). Several sources of occupational stress (stressors) are intrinsic to the job, while some are related to the employee's role within the organization, some to career development, some to relationships at work, and some to the structure and climate of the organization. Below is the occupational stress model :

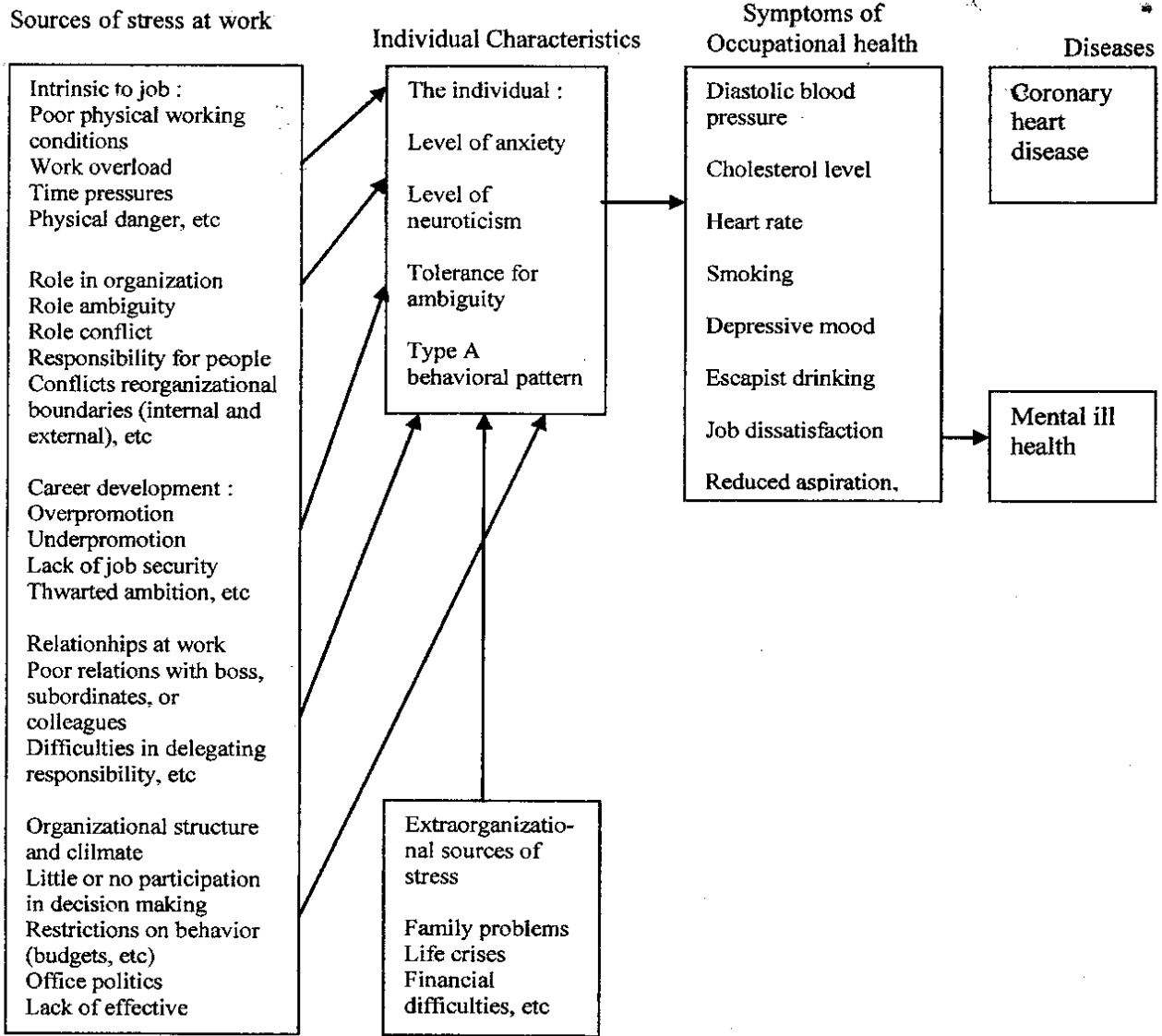


Figure 1 Occupational Stress Model  
Source : Greenberg, 2002, Comprehensive Stress Management, p.273

Occupational stress is often caused by such factors as changes in management, long working hours, barriers to career advancement, personal conflicts, work overload, and high pressure deadlines. Stress can manifest itself psychologically, physically, and in the behavior of the affected person. Psychological symptoms of stress can include anxiety, job dissatisfaction, anger, depression, and many others. Physical symptoms of stress include headaches, stomach aches (ulcers), chest pains, sweating, dizziness, and others. Behavioral manifestations include absenteeism, lower productivity, and turnover. At the extreme, behavioral responses to stress could include interpersonal aggression, hostility, complaining, sabotage, theft, and substance abuse (Greenberg, 2002).

a. Job Satisfaction : Locke ( 1969 ) defined job satisfaction as “ the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one ‘s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one ‘s job values †. “ Area conceptual

of job satisfaction is relatively broad , as it includes all the characteristics of the job itself and the environment perceived by the salesperson’s job to fulfill and satisfy or disappoint him. The degree of job satisfaction can range from very high to very low , and cover all of the characteristics of the job itself and the work environment . In addition to having certain feelings and beliefs towards the work itself as a whole , one can also have certain feelings and beliefs on various aspects of the job , such as the type of work performed , co-workers , superiors or subordinates,as well as their salaries , which is referred to as a facet in The Facet Model theory.

The facet model is one of the theories or models of job satisfaction that focus primarily on factors of work to sort out the situation of a job into component elements , called job facets, and see how satisfied employees in every facet of his . Employees can consider various aspects of the job while thinking about the level of job satisfaction . This model is useful because it can force managers and researchers to understand that the work may affect employees in a variety of ways . Some things to consider when using this model , among others, that



for a particular job facet may be a job that is not taken into account, but it gives a great effect for job satisfaction. Another thing you should also note is that some job facets may be perceived more important than the other job facets for certain employees. Family friendly policy, for example, may be seen as important by those with a family, but it does not really matter for those who are still single and want to keep living like that. Similarly, salary and security can be seen as very important for job satisfaction a single woman who had high extrinsic work values †, while for a 55-year-old military retiree who has a high intrinsic value, will be more in need of work after retirement that made †him feel useful, and provides an opportunity to achieve and be creative.

Job dissatisfaction is one of the psychological symptoms of stress. On the contrary job satisfaction can reduce the intensity of stress in the workplace. Metanalysis study indicate that satisfied employees tend to be committed to an organization (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and employees who are satisfied and committed are more likely to attend work (Hackett, 1989), stay with an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993), arrive at work on time (Koslowsky, Sagie, Krausz, & Singer, 1997), perform well (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001), and engage in behaviors helpful to the organization (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002 in Aamodt, 2010) than are employees who are not satisfied or committed. One of the factors (called antecedents) that influence levels of job satisfaction is our personal predisposition to be satisfied. Individual difference theory postulates that some variability in job satisfaction is due to an individual's personal tendency across situations to enjoy what she does. Thus, certain types of people will generally be satisfied and motivated regardless of the type of job they hold. Individual differences in genetic predispositions, core self-evaluations, culture, and intelligence assumed to affect job satisfaction. On the basis of their three studies, Arvey and his colleagues found that approximately 30% of job satisfaction appears to be explainable by genetic factors (Illies & Judge, 2003 in Aamodt, 2010). Locke and Durham (1997) have hypothesized that four personality variables are related to people's predisposition to be satisfied with life and with their jobs: emotional stability, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and external locus of control.

b. Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy is called by Bandura (1977, 1989 in George and Jones, 2002:169) as a concept

to demonstrate the function of cognitive mechanisms and personality changes. As part of the social learning theory of Bandura, the concept of self-efficacy is defined as "employee's belief in his or her ability to perform job-related tasks". According to Bandura, self-efficacy or ability to cope with specific situations assessed, affects several aspects of psychosocial functioning. Precisely the perception of self or self-efficacy can improve the activity of one's choice would do, how much effort they would do in the face of obstacles and frustrations, how long they will last in the face of difficult situations, and their emotional reactions before facing a task or when they are involved in it. In short, self-judged efficacy influence patterns of behavior, motivation, performance, and one's emotional reactions. Self-efficacy is important for the learning process in a variety of situations, especially when uncertainty is high, and influence the learning process in three ways, which affects the activities and goals chosen by the individuals themselves, affects learning by influencing the effort that individuals exert on the job, and affect the persistence with which a person tries to master new and sometimes difficult task. According to Bandura, people who have a strong sense of self-efficacy will make a stronger effort to overcome challenging tasks compared to those who doubted her abilities. So people who have high self-efficacy will usually show a high success, while enhancing self-esteem. Conversely those who have low self-efficacy are unconsciously expecting failure, so tend not to give success and self-esteem dropped. In the context of the world of work, self-efficacy refers to the belief of an employee will be its ability to perform certain tasks (George and Jones, 2002:168). Increased competence and confidence also improves the ability of self-adjustment (adaptability) employee, because he will be more able and willing to adapt to customer demand (Jones, 1986). Then Jones went on to develop self-efficacy scale designed to measure employee perceptions of job skills, abilities, qualifications, and his confidence.

The purpose of this study is to explore an employee's felt stress with a number of situational variables that have been identified as potential job stressors in the work environment. Job satisfaction as one of the psychological symptoms of stress and self-efficacy as the personality variables, will serve as the independent variables, so the proposed model of this study is as described below:

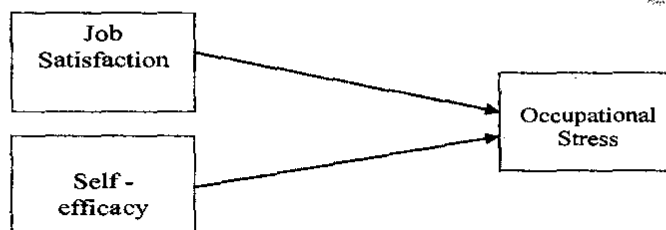


Figure 2 : Research model/framework

Several hypotheses are then proposed which stem from the theoretical underpinnings :

Major hypothesis (H1) : There is a significant relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy.

Minor hypothesis :

H2 : There is a negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction

H3 : There is a negative relationship between occupational stress and self-efficacy

## METHOD

This study was adopted descriptive design research and was conducted in quantitative manner. A self-administered questionnaire was designed to gather data from subjects on the studied variables. The questionnaire was divided into 4 section : section A contained the socio-demographic information, section B contained the measurement for occupational stress, section C was the measurement for job satisfaction, and section D was to measure self-efficacy. A total of 305 employees consist of 62 Indonesian employees and 243 Chinese employees participated to the study using the incidental sampling method.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Instrument

Tabel 1. Validity and Reliability Test

Variabel	Corrected item-total correlation	Koefisien Alpha Crombach
Occupational	0,248- 0,732	0,809
Job Satisfaction	0,338 -0,493	0,765
Self-efficacy	0,467 - 0,747	0,788

Assumption test is done by measuring the normality test and linearity test

Table 2. Normality Test

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Conclusion
Occupational Stress	0.684	0.737	p > 0,05 (normal)
Job Satisfaction	1.102	0.176	p > 0,05 (normal)
Self-efficacy	1.122	0.161	p > 0,05 (normal)

Tabel 3. Linearity Test

Variable	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Conclusion
Occupational stress - Self efficacy	0.737	p < 0,05 (linier)
Occupational stress - Job satisfaction	0.176	p < 0,05 (linier)

### Hypothesis testing

H1 : There is a significant relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy



**Table 4. The Relationship between Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Self-Efficacy**

Variable	R	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.	Conclusion
Self- efficacy, Job Satisfaction (IV) – Occupational Stress (DV)	0,375	0.111	4.827	0,011	Ho rejected; Ha accepted

**Table 5. The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress**

Variabel	r	Sig.	Keterangan
Job satisfaction (IV_2)– Occupational Stress (DV)	-0,366	0,003	Ho rejected; Ha accepted

**Table 6. The Relationship between Self-efficacy and Occupational Stress**

Variabel	r	Sig.	Keterangan
Self efficacy(IV_1) – Occupational stress (DV)	-0,277	0,029	Ho rejected; Ha accepted

The data supported the H1, that there is a significant relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy, baik pada karyawan Indonesia maupun pada Chinese employees. The influence of independent variables (self-efficacy and job satisfaction) to dependent variables (occupational stress) is 11,1 %. The rest of it (88,9 %) was the influence of other factors beside self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Using the occupational stress model (Greenberg, 2002) it might be another individual characteristics, such as the level of anxiety, neuroticism, tolerance for ambiguity, or type A behavioral pattern, which need further investigation. This model shows that individual characteristics have an important influence for the response to various stressors in the workplace. Self-efficacy and job satisfaction is one of the individual characteristics associated with levels of anxiety and tolerance for ambiguity.

Job dissatisfaction is one of the psychological symptoms of stress. On the contrary job satisfaction can reduce the intensity of stress in the workplace. Job satisfaction is a positive and convenient emotional state, which is able to reduce the negative effects of occupational stress . The positive effects of job satisfaction appear on commitment to the organization , reduced absenteeism , loyalty , good performance , and other behaviors that support the organization , as well as the positive effect to the self , such as overcoming the stress experienced . Based on facet theory , employees can consider various aspects of the work , while assessing the level of job satisfaction . Thus employees can understand that work can affect him in different ways . In general, those who have high job satisfaction will have a high life satisfaction too . As we can see in table 5 job satisfaction it self has a significant

negative relationship with occupational stress . The higher the job satisfaction, the lower job stress ; conversely , the lower the job satisfaction , the higher job stress.

The same thing happen to self-efficacy, which is an element of belief in our selves. Positive energy arising from the confidence will bring the employee to be able to overcome the negative effects of occupational stress. The independent variables altogether, job satisfaction and self-efficacy, are able to contribute by 11.1% affects the level of occupational stress experienced by employees. Separately as seen in table 6 there is a significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and job stress. The higher the job satisfaction the lower the job stress and vice versa, the lower the job satisfaction, the higher job stress. Locke and Durham (1997) have hypothesized that four personality variables are related to people's predisposition to be satisfied with life and with their jobs : emotional stability, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and external locus of control. Precisely the perception of self or self -efficacy can improve the activity of one's choice would do , how much effort they would do in the face of obstacles and frustrations ,how long they will last in the face of difficult situations ,and their emotional reactions before facing a task or when they are involved in it . In short , self - judged efficacy influence patterns of behavior , motivation , performance , and one's emotional reactions . self-efficacy. Employees with a high level of self-efficacy is likely to cope with the occupational stress. According to Bandura , people who have a strong sense of self-efficacy will make a stronger effort anyway to overcome challenging tasks compared to those who doubted her abilities . So people who have high self-efficacy will usually show a high success , while enhancing self-

esteem. Conversely those who have low self-efficacy are unconsciously expecting failure, so tend not to give success and self-esteem dropped. Increased competence and confidence also improves the ability of self-adjustment ( adaptability ) employee, because he will be more able and willing to adapt to customer demand ( Jones, 1986)

It is concluded then that job satisfaction and self-efficacy could give positive impact to prevent or

reduce the negative impact of occupational stress. At the same time the two independent variables could give the positive impact to increase the ability of coping stress and job performance.

Comparing the data from Indonesia and China employees population, we can see the similarities and differences between the two with each specific condition.

**Table 7. Frequency Distribution of Occupational Stress (Indonesian Respondent)**

Kategori	Internal Nilai	Frekuensi	Persentase
Sangat tinggi	X > 101	0	0
Tinggi	81,6 < X < 100,8	5	8,06
Sedang	62,4 < X < 81,6	23	37,10
Rendah	43,2 < X < 62,4	31	50,00
Sangat rendah	X < 43,2	3	4,84
Total		62	100
Mean = 62,6214			
SD = 11,9384			

**Table 8. Frequency Distribution of Occupational Stress (Chinese Respondent)**

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Very high	7	2,881	2,881
High	34	13,992	13,992
Moderate	122	50,206	50,206
Low	71	29,218	29,218
Very low	9	3,704	3,704
Total	243	100	100

Occupational stress between Indonesian employees in average is in low category (50 %), while about 45 % is in average and above. Table 11 shows that 50 % of Chinese employees felt moderate level of occupational stress, while almost 16 % felt the high and very high level of occupational stress. It is concluded that occupational stress between Indonesian employees is not too high compared to the one that perceived by Chinese employees. There are several sources of occupational stress (stressors), such as intrinsic to job (e.g work overload, time pressure), roles in organization (e.g. responsibility for people, conflicts), career development, relationships at work, organizational structure and climate, and extra organizational sources (e.f family problems, life crises, financial difficulties, etc). One limitation of this study is that it just trying to find out the level of occupational stress experienced by employees, without looking further at the stressors. Data regarding the stressor will provide a more detailed analysis of the causes of the difference between the

two populations. But overall it can be concluded, that the Chinese employees feel more stress than Indonesian employees. One of the main factors that differentiate the conditions overall is culture.

A country's culture has long been identified as a key environmental characteristic underlying systematic differences in human behavior. Cultural norms and beliefs are powerful forces shaping people's perceptions, dispositions, and behaviors (Aaker and Lee, 2001 in Dash, Bruning and Guin, 2007). Hofstede (1980) found differences in cultural values between the employees representing different countries within one organization. He established four dimensions of national culture, and added the fifth dimension in 1988, which are individualism, power distance, uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity/Feminity, and long term versus short-term orientation, otherwise known as Confucian dynamism (Dash, Bruning, and Guin, 2007).

An explanation of the influence of cultural values on different stress levels also requires further





research. Moreover, the Chinese people are known as a hard working society, historically and presently, with a daily life that is relatively hard anyway. Another explanation is by analyzing the condition of the country as a macro. As we have seen, China is in a very rapid development of the state in the last decade, especially from the economic point of view. Rapid development

means rapid changes, and rapid changes means potential stress for human being. Intense competition, higher demands, and the desire to maintain what had just been obtained, are varieties of conditions that inevitably also have an impact on human behavior, including affecting the working conditions of employees as a whole. However, this assumption also requires further research.

**Table 9. Frequency Distribution of Job Satisfaction (Indonesian Respondent)**

Kategori	Internal Nilai	Frekuensi	Persentase
Sangat tinggi	X > 26,4	30	48,39
Tinggi	20,8 < X < 26,4	15	24,19
Sedang	15,2 < X < 20,8	16	25,81
Rendah	9,6 < X < 15,2	1	1,61
Sangat rendah	X < 9,6	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
Mean = 26,597			
SD = 4,67			

**Table 10. Frequency Distribution of Job Satisfaction (Chinese Respondent)**

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Very high	19	7,819	7,819
High	95	39,095	39,095
Moderate	104	42,798	42,798
Low	22	9,053	9,053
Very low	3	1,235	1,235
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

From the two tables above, it can be concluded that the Indonesian employees have a higher job satisfaction (25.81% moderate, 73.58% high and very high) than Chinese employees (42.798% moderate, 46.9% of high and very high). This can be explained (again) from the cultural values †, including the specific values on Indonesian culture which is called “nrimo”, accept the

real condition sincerely, which have a greater impact in its level of gratitude, not too demanding, which affect the higher level of job satisfaction. Meanwhile Chinese cultures might be more competitive, more achievement oriented, and more higher in standard of satisfaction, either in job or in life. It would be interesting to investigate this phenomena in the next research.

**Table 11. Frequency Distribution of Self-efficacy (Indonesian Respondent)**

Category	Values internal	Frequency	Percentage
Very high	X > 16.8	29	46.77
High	13.6 < X < 16.8	31	50.00
Moderate	10.4 < X < 13.6	1	1.61
Low	7.2 < X < 10.4	1	1.61
Very low	X < 7.2	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>
Mean = 14,0645			
SD = 3,3036			



**Table 12. Frequency Distribution of Self-efficacy (Chinese Respondent)**

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Very high	9	3,704	3,704
High	81	33,333	33,333
Moderate	130	53,498	53,498
Low	19	7,819	7,819
Very low	4	1,646	1,646
Total	243	100	100

The Indonesian employees have a high and very high category of self-efficacy (96.77 %), while Chinese employees have a moderate (53.498 %) and high and very high (37,037 %) category of self-efficacy. We could say that Indonesian employees have more confidence in themselves compared to Chinese employees. The explanation again refers to cultural norms and beliefs, as well as the objective way of self-evaluation, included the possibility of over or under confidence in self-evaluation. According to Bandura, people who have a strong sense of self-efficacy will make a stronger effort to overcome challenging tasks

compared to those who have doubted her abilities. So people who have high self-efficacy will usually show a high success, while enhancing self-esteem, and vice versa. As a country we could see that China is in a rapid development regarding the physical building as well as the economic factors. Logically if the dominant level of self efficacy is moderate, it will need further research to answer why Chinese people can reach such a high achievement. Another factors besides the self-efficacy needs to be investigated.



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