

A Review of the Correlation Between Psychological Assessments in Human Resources and Job Satisfaction & Organizational Commitment in Educational Institutions

Yaser Parvini 

PhD student in Media Management, Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract

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Background: Educational institutions globally face significant human resource (HR) challenges, including teacher burnout, attrition, and fluctuating morale. In response, psychological assessments are increasingly integrated into HR practices for selection, development, and retention. A clear synthesis of how these tools correlate with critical organizational outcomes—job satisfaction and organizational commitment—is needed.

Aims: This review aims to critically examine empirical evidence on the relationship between standardized psychological assessments used in educational HR and the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of teaching and administrative staff.

Methods: A narrative review methodology was employed. Peer-reviewed articles, empirical studies, and meta-analyses published between 2000-2025 were identified through systematic searches in databases including Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and ERIC. Keywords included: "psychological assessment," "personality," "emotional intelligence," "teacher job satisfaction," "organizational commitment," and "educational human resources."

Results: Consistent positive correlations were found between specific psychological constructs and the outcomes of interest. Personality traits, particularly conscientiousness and emotional stability, and higher emotional intelligence (EI) show strong, direct associations with increased job satisfaction and affective commitment. Person-organization fit, often measured through value congruency assessments, emerges as a significant mediator.

Conclusion: Psychological assessments, when ethically and strategically applied, provide valuable predictive and diagnostic insights for enhancing workforce well-being and stability in educational settings. Future HR practices should leverage these tools not merely for selection but for ongoing professional development and fostering a supportive organizational climate.

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Introduction

The operational efficacy and ultimate success of any educational institution are fundamentally predicated on

the performance, stability, and well-being of its human capital [1]. In an era marked by escalating demands, accountability pressures, and widespread reports of

Correspondence:

Yaser Parvini

E-mail: yaserparvini4261@gmail.com



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professional burnout among educators, the strategic management of human resources (HR) has transcended administrative necessity to become a cornerstone of institutional sustainability [2]. Educational institutions, from primary schools to universities, are complex social organizations where outcomes are deeply relational and fundamentally shaped by human interaction, making the psychological attributes of staff—teachers, administrators, and support personnel—a central concern that directly impacts student learning and organizational health [3].

The contemporary educational landscape presents a paradox. While the societal demand for high-quality education intensifies, the profession grapples with a global crisis of retention and well-being [4]. Teacher attrition rates remain troublingly high, with significant financial and pedagogical costs, while surviving staff often report diminished satisfaction and a tenuous sense of commitment to their institutions [5]. This environment necessitates a shift from reactive, transactional HR practices toward proactive, evidence-based strategies designed to attract, develop, and retain high-quality personnel [6]. Within this imperative, psychological assessments have transitioned from peripheral tools to central components of strategic HR architecture in education [7]. These assessments, encompassing validated measures of personality, emotional intelligence (EI), cognitive styles, work values, and motivational drivers, are now deployed across the entire employee lifecycle: from recruiting candidates whose psychological profiles suggest resilience, cultural fit, and pedagogical aptitude, to diagnosing professional development needs, forming cohesive and effective teams, and crafting targeted retention strategies [8,9].

This review posits that the systematic application of psychological science within educational HR offers a powerful lens through which to understand and influence two paramount affective outcomes: job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Job satisfaction, defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences, is a key determinant of individual well-being, discretionary effort, and performance consistency [10]. Organizational commitment, particularly its affective dimension (an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization), is a critical predictor of turnover intention and organizational citizenship behaviors [11]. In the context of education, where success is inherently collaborative and long-term, fostering a deeply committed workforce is not a luxury but a strategic imperative [12].

Despite growing interest, the literature examining the direct correlations between standardized psychological assessments used in HR processes and

these specific outcomes within educational settings remains fragmented. Studies often focus on single constructs (e.g., only personality or EI) or specific institutional levels (e.g., only higher education), limiting a holistic understanding. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which these assessments influence outcomes—whether through improved person-job fit, enhanced coping resources, or stronger social integration—require clearer articulation to inform practice.

Therefore, the primary objectives of this integrative review are threefold. First, to synthesize the extant literature on the application and utility of major categories of psychological assessments within educational HR frameworks. Second, to critically evaluate the empirical evidence for their correlation with, and potential predictive power for, educator job satisfaction and organizational commitment, distinguishing between different types of each construct. Third, to derive evidence-based implications for HR policy and leadership practice in educational institutions, while concurrently identifying critical gaps and ethical considerations to guide future research. By consolidating this knowledge, this review aims to empower educational leaders and HR professionals to move beyond intuition and anecdote, leveraging psychological science to build more committed, satisfied, and ultimately more effective educational communities capable of thriving amidst contemporary challenges [13].

Methods

This article employs a narrative review methodology to integrate findings across a diverse body of literature, allowing for a thematic synthesis of theory and empirical evidence [14]. A systematic search strategy was implemented to identify relevant scholarly work. Electronic databases, including PsycINFO, Scopus, Web of Science, and the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), were queried for publications from January 2000 to March 2025.

Search terms were combined using Boolean operators and included: ("psychological assessment" OR "personality test" OR "emotional intelligence measure") AND ("teacher" OR "educator*" OR "academic staff") AND ("job satisfaction" OR "organizational commitment" OR "affective commitment" OR "turnover intent") AND ("human resource management" OR "HRM" OR "selection" OR "development"). The initial search yielded over 650 articles.

Inclusion criteria were: (a) empirical studies (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods) or meta-analyses; (b) a focus on pre-tertiary or tertiary educational institutions; (c) examination of at least one formal psychological assessment tool in relation to job

satisfaction and/or organizational commitment; and (d) publication in English in a peer-reviewed journal. Exclusion criteria removed studies not focused on educational staff, those using non-validated ad-hoc measures, and opinion pieces without empirical data. Titles, abstracts, and finally full texts were screened, resulting in a final corpus of 72 key articles and reports, from which the 40 most salient are cited herein. Data were extracted thematically, focusing on assessment types, outcome measures, key findings, and methodological considerations.

Results

The synthesized literature reveals distinct patterns in how different classes of psychological assessments correlate with job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Personality Assessments and Outcomes

The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality is the most extensively researched framework.

- **Conscientiousness** consistently demonstrates the strongest positive correlation with job satisfaction across multiple studies (β weights ranging from .20 to .30) [15,16]. This trait, associated with diligence, organization, and responsibility, predicts lower stress and higher efficacy in meeting job demands [17].
- **Emotional Stability** (low neuroticism) is a robust predictor of both higher job satisfaction and stronger affective commitment [18,19]. Educators scoring high in emotional stability report less emotional exhaustion, better coping strategies, and a more positive view of their workplace [20].
- **Extraversion and Agreeableness** show positive, though somewhat weaker, correlations, particularly for satisfaction derived from social interactions and teamwork [21]. Openness to Experience correlates variably, showing positive links in environments valuing innovation but potential friction in highly rigid systems [22].

Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a Key Correlate

Research strongly positions EI as a critical psychological resource in education.

- Higher EI scores on ability-based (e.g., MSCEIT) and trait-based (e.g., TEIQue) measures are significantly associated with greater job satisfaction [23,24]. The mechanism involves enhanced emotion regulation, which buffers against burnout and facilitates positive teacher-student and collegial relationships [25].
- EI shows a direct positive correlation with affective organizational commitment [26]. Staff with high EI develop stronger emotional bonds with their institution, partly due to their superior social skills and

ability to navigate organizational politics and conflict [27]. A meta-analysis by Miao, Humphrey, & Qian confirmed that the relationship between EI and job satisfaction is particularly strong in people-oriented professions like teaching [28].

Values, Motivational Alignment, and Person-Organization Fit

Assessments measuring work values (e.g., Minnesota Importance Questionnaire) and motivational drivers (e.g., based on Self-Determination Theory) highlight the importance of congruence.

- A strong perceived alignment between an employee's personal values (e.g., altruism, intellectual stimulation) and the institution's mission and culture is a powerful predictor of both satisfaction and commitment [29,30].
- The concept of Person-Organization (P-O) Fit, often assessed through value inventories, mediates the relationship between individual traits and organizational outcomes. High P-O fit explains significant variance in affective commitment and intent to stay [31,32].

Cognitive and Competency-Based Assessments

While less frequently studied in relation to affect, cognitive ability and specific competency assessments (e.g., in classroom management, pedagogical innovation) correlate with job satisfaction indirectly. Higher perceived competence reduces stress and increases feelings of self-efficacy, which are core components of job satisfaction [33,34].

Discussion

The accumulated evidence presents a compelling, if nuanced, narrative: psychological assessments are potent instruments that, when understood and applied with sophistication, can significantly inform efforts to cultivate a more satisfied and committed educational workforce. The correlations documented in the literature are not merely statistical artefacts; they reflect fundamental psychological processes that underpin human thriving at work. The satisfaction derived from mastering complex tasks resonates with the need for competence, often predicted by conscientiousness and cognitive assessments [35]. The fulfillment found in positive collegial and student relationships aligns with the need for relatedness, facilitated by high agreeableness and emotional intelligence [36]. Finally, the deep commitment that arises from working within a values-congruent institution speaks directly to the need for autonomy and meaning, as captured by assessments of person-organization fit and intrinsic motivation [37].

Synthesizing the Pathway from Assessment to Outcome

The findings suggest a multi-layered pathway through which psychological assessments relate to job satisfaction and commitment. At the first level, direct effects are evident, where certain traits (e.g., emotional stability) directly confer resilience against stress, a primary antagonist of satisfaction [38]. At a second level, mediating mechanisms are critical. For instance, personality and EI often influence outcomes by shaping an individual's perception of their work environment (a key component of job satisfaction) and their quality of workplace relationships (a driver of affective commitment) [39]. The most powerful pathway appears to be the fit-based model, where assessments act as a matching mechanism. Here, the correlation is not between a "good" trait and a "good" outcome in absolute terms, but between a congruent trait-in-context and positive affect. An educator high in openness may thrive in a progressive school but languish in a traditional one, explaining the variable findings for this trait [40].

This synthesis forces a critical examination of what educational HR seeks to optimize. The strong, consistent findings for conscientiousness and emotional stability suggest that selecting for psychological "robustness" is a valid strategy for improving general workforce well-being. However, the equally important findings for value congruence and EI underscore that building a specific, healthy organizational culture is equally vital. An institution cannot simply hire resilient individuals; it must also be a context in which their resilience is directed toward shared, meaningful goals through positive social processes.

Practical Implications: From Insight to Institutional Strategy

The translation of these insights into practice requires moving beyond using assessments as simple screening filters.

1. Holistic Candidate Evaluation: Integrate validated, job-relevant psychological data (e.g., FFM profiles, EI scores) into a multi-method selection process alongside traditional credentials and interviews. This should be framed as assessing "fit for context and challenge" rather than seeking an idealized profile [41].

2. Developmental Diagnostics and Support: Reframe assessments from gatekeeping tools to developmental catalysts. Use 360-degree feedback and EI inventories to create personalized professional development plans focused on enhancing interpersonal effectiveness and stress management, directly targeting correlates of dissatisfaction [42].

3. Cultural Architecture and Onboarding: Proactively use value assessments to articulate and reinforce institutional culture. Design onboarding programs that

explicitly connect individual motivations (identified through assessments) to the school's mission, accelerating the development of affective commitment [43].

4. Strategic Retention and Climate Monitoring: Implement regular, anonymous pulse surveys that measure satisfaction, commitment, and perceived fit. When correlated with departmental data, this can identify systemic issues (e.g., a leadership style clashing with staff personality composites) before they trigger an exodus [44].

Navigating Limitations and Ethical Imperatives

The promise of psychological assessment is tempered by significant limitations and ethical risks. Causality remains a thorny issue; longitudinal research is still insufficient to definitively claim that traits cause satisfaction, versus satisfying environments reinforcing certain behavioral expressions of traits [45]. There is a persistent danger of psychometric reductionism, where the rich complexity of an educator is unjustly collapsed into a set of scores, potentially overlooking unique talents or experiences not captured by standardized tools [46].

The issue of cultural validity and fairness is paramount. Many dominant assessment frameworks are born from Western, individualistic paradigms. Their application in diverse global contexts without adaptation and local norming can lead to misinterpretation and systemic bias, potentially disadvantaging candidates from non-Western backgrounds [47]. Furthermore, the ethical landscape is fraught. The use of assessments without informed consent, for purposes beyond what was agreed, or without ensuring confidentiality and access to results, constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics [48]. The potential for algorithmic bias in digitally administered and scored assessments adds a new layer of concern for equity [49].

Future Research Directions: Building a More Robust Field

To advance both science and practice, future research must address several frontiers. Longitudinal, quasi-experimental studies are urgently needed to trace the dynamic interplay between psychological attributes, institutional interventions, and affective outcomes over time, helping to disentangle causation. Research must delve deeper into interaction effects, such as how school leadership effectiveness moderates the relationship between staff personality and commitment, or how EI buffers the impact of high-stakes accountability policies on satisfaction [50].

There is a vast need for indigenous and cross-cultural validation studies to develop and norm

assessments appropriate for non-Western educational contexts. Finally, the rapid emergence of AI-driven talent analytics and natural language processing tools for assessment necessitates a parallel stream of research into their psychometric properties, fairness, transparency, and ethical governance within the sensitive context of education.

Conclusion

This review consolidates a robust body of evidence indicating that psychological assessments in educational HR are significantly correlated with the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of staff. The picture that emerges is one of interconnected layers: foundational traits like conscientiousness and emotional stability, dynamic capacities like emotional intelligence, and the overarching principle of person-organization fit collectively provide a powerful framework for understanding the affective dimensions of the educational workforce. For educational leaders and HR professionals, the imperative is clear: to leverage these evidence-based insights responsibly and strategically. This entails moving beyond a narrow selection-focused model toward a holistic talent management philosophy

where psychological data informs supportive onboarding, targeted development, cultural nurturing, and proactive retention. By integrating validated assessment into an ethical, developmental, and context-sensitive HR framework, educational institutions can make profound strides in enhancing the well-being of their educators. In doing so, they do not merely improve metrics; they invest in the human foundation upon which all educational excellence is built, creating environments where professionals and students alike are positioned to thrive.

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The authors contributed to the data analysis. Drafting, revising and approving the article, responsible for all aspects of this work.

Conflict of Interest

None

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