

The Relationship Between Occupational Burnout, Resilience, and Career Commitment of Iranian EFL Teachers: The Big Five-Factor Model of Personality Traits in Focus

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Original Research Article

Date of Submission: 20 February 2025

Date of Acceptance: 14 May 2025

Abstract

Acknowledging humans' inter-individual differences is vital to understanding their experiences, and this holds true for teachers too, as it impacts both them and their students. The study examined the interplay between personality traits, occupational burnout, resilience, and career commitment, encompassing data from 220 Iranian EFL educators through four standardized questionnaires. The results showed notable correlations between the Big Five personality traits and the variables under scrutiny. Extraversion ($r = -0.282, p < 0.001$), conscientiousness ($r = -0.201, p = 0.003$), and agreeableness ($r = -0.193, p = 0.004$) were negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion, suggesting a potential shield against burnout. Conversely, neuroticism ($r = 0.182, p = 0.007$) was positively correlated with emotional exhaustion, necessitating these teachers' need for emotional support. No significant relationship was found between neuroticism and depersonalization ($r = 0.081, p = 0.234$), suggesting distinct causal factors for this burnout component. Extraversion ($r = 0.326, p < 0.001$) and conscientiousness ($r = 0.247, p < 0.001$) positively correlated with personal accomplishment, while neuroticism ($r = -0.197, p = 0.003$) showed a negative correlation. Resilience showed a strong negative correlation with neuroticism ($r = -0.397, p < 0.001$) and positive correlations with extraversion ($r = 0.364, p < 0.001$), agreeableness ($r = 0.225, p = 0.001$), conscientiousness ($r = 0.298, p < 0.001$), and openness ($r = 0.161, p = 0.045$), signaling their role in fortifying resilience. Career commitment was positively correlated with extraversion ($r = 0.275, p < 0.001$) and openness to experience ($r = 0.163, p = 0.015$). Neuroticism showed a negative correlation ($r = -0.218, p = 0.001$) with career commitment. No significant relationships were found between career commitment and agreeableness ($r = 0.041, p = 0.545$) or conscientiousness ($r = 0.119, p = 0.079$). Agreeableness was the most common personality trait, which was followed by conscientiousness. On the other hand, extraversion ranked lowest (11.4%), with neuroticism slightly higher (15.5%). These findings emphasize the vital impact of personality on job performance and the ability to tackle daily challenges in the teaching profession.

Keywords: agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience

1. Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) is impacted by many different influences, but teachers are at the heart of it. They don't just teach—they help students learn and grow (Ataboyev & Tursunovich, 2023). As stated by Xie (2021), the emotional and psychological state of teachers plays a vital role in shaping their professional effectiveness, especially in demanding EFL contexts where educators face persistent ups and downs. A universally agreed belief is that teaching is a demanding, if not burdensome, profession, especially if one intends to be good at it. In recent decades, 'burnout' has garnered increasing national and international attention, emerging as a pervasive concern (Aloe et al., 2014). This concept involves individuals' perceptions of unfulfilled needs and expectations, often showing as a triad of 'exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. A growing sense of cynicism accompanies these elements: adverse feelings of weariness, detachment, despondency, and diminished self-worth (Gold & Roth, 2005; Maslach et al., 1996; Steinhardt et al., 2011).

According to Rashtchi and Porkar (2023), personality traits have long been recognized as important influences on job performance. During the 20th century, there was a keen focus on exploring individual differences, leading to varied theories that delved into various aspects, including anxiety, gender, age, and attribution. Among these differences, personality frequently assumes a central role, encapsulating all the traits and behaviors that define individuals. Understanding one's personality and that of others can be invaluable for nurturing intrapersonal and interpersonal development. Recognizing someone's personality serves many uses in different organizations. It helps predict whether an employee is a good fit for specific jobs, fosters good relationships, evaluates how well a team can work together, and predicts future behavior (Barbian, 2001).

The idea of resilience, which is often discussed in positive psychology, focuses on how both people and organizations draw on their strengths and self-discipline to navigate unexpected challenges (Cooke et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2021). Resilience, as recovering and progressing after adversity (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001), implies the ability to adapt to challenging circumstances and improve one's handling of pressures and setbacks (Bobek, 2002). The suggestion that enhancing EFL teacher resilience through appropriate techniques is one of the most effective ways to reduce teacher turnover comes from Hong (2012). As Mansfield et al. (2016) elaborate, teacher resilience is an ongoing process that relies on internal and external resources, enabling educators to rebound from challenges, alleviate harmful stressors, and cope with complex incidents in the classroom. Furthermore, another crucial variable among teachers is their sense of commitment toward their careers since educational environments increasingly rely on not only hard-working but also dedicated teachers to achieve their goals (Vogel-Walcutt et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2021).

The current study explored the relationship between personality traits, burnout, resilience, and career commitment within the context of Iranian EFL teachers. While prior research has examined personality traits in relation to burnout, resilience, or career commitment individually, no study has explored all four variables together within the Iranian EFL teaching context. This study addresses that gap by investigating their combined relationships. The research intended to identify the specific personality traits prevalent among these teachers, as outlined by the Big Five-Factor Model, and understand how these traits correlated with resilience and burnout levels. Moreover, it aimed to study the correlation between personality traits and career commitment. By examining these relationships, this study aimed to provide comprehensive insights that benefit teachers regarding self-awareness, inform

educational institutions in creating supportive environments, and guide policymakers in crafting strategies to boost the dedication and quality of EFL education in Iran.

2. Literature Review

Teachers play a pivotal, if not unique, role in everyone's life. They shape future educators and influence people in all kinds of jobs. Teachers are more than just conveyors of knowledge; they are influencers of the future. It is essential to study teachers' experiences and challenges and appreciate the complex and complicated world of education.

2.1. Exploring Personality Dynamics: The Big Five Factor Model

The concept of personality is a quite complex field within psychology because it involves diverse definitions and perspectives. For instance, Phares (1991) defines personality as “an inborn temperament and features emerging in various situations, a blend of traits that set one individual apart from another” (p. 29). The NEO Five-factor Inventory (FFI), which was developed by Costa and McCrae in 1985, is a reliable tool to assess five key personality dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness (Rashtchi & Porkar, 2023). These dimensions often present contrasting concepts. Extraversion, which was primarily introduced by Carl Jung, indicates an orientation toward the external world, emphasizing traits associated with sociability. The trait of agreeableness involves cooperativeness, altruism, and a warm, trusting nature toward others. Conscientiousness points to self-control, careful planning, and organization. Neuroticism is linked to emotional instability, which covers negative emotions like anger, sadness, shame, and embarrassment. Openness to experience implies a receptivity towards unconventional thinking and behaviors, reflecting traits such as creativity, imagination, curiosity, and an appreciation for aesthetics.

The Big Five, which is a thorough framework for evaluating personality, has evolved over time. The search for a generally recognized personality taxonomy involved looking into natural language as a source of personality traits. The Five-Factor Model, or the Big Five, includes major personality traits: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability (or its negative counterpart, neuroticism). Over time, researchers have employed diverse labels to articulate the underlying factors influencing human behavior as they explore the details of personality traits. However, the prevailing trend in contemporary personality inventories involves incorporating the well-established designations of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability. (John & Srivastava, 1999).

2.2. Burnout Origins and Psychological Dimensions

Burnout is a multidimensional, long-term, and chronic phenomenon that results from the challenges and complexities individuals face at work (Maslach et al., 2015). Persistent exposure to work-related stress may result in burnout—a progressive condition that stems from ongoing job pressures and can eventually impair professional effectiveness (Herman et al., 2018). The notion of “burnout” made its debut in the 1970s, when clinical psychologist Herbert Freudenberger presented the term in 1974 while describing the experiences of volunteers at a drug addiction clinic. These individuals experienced a loss of commitment after a year of intense work, showing a state of decline, exhaustion, or weariness due to a great load on their energy, strength, or resources (Freudenberger, 1974). Maslach (1976)

analyzed the behaviors of human services workers, looking into the emotional challenges they faced. Her contributions culminated in the widely accepted definition of burnout, characterized by three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism or depersonalization, and reduced efficacy or personal accomplishment (Maslach, 2015).

Burnout is a gradual decline in initial excitement, energy, and motivation that workers might encounter in professions involving support services like teaching due to their working conditions. This depiction aligns with the World Health Organization's characterization of burnout as an "occupational phenomenon" rather than a medical condition (World Health Organization, 2019). Research has shown that individuals respond to challenging events under the influence of their unique personality traits (Kaplan, 1996). When assessing the predictive value of demographic variables, it becomes apparent that personality characteristics emerge as one of the most influential factors in the development of burnout (Kokkinos & Davazoglou, 2009). The three dimensions delineated in Maslach's burnout inventory offer additional insights. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are closely connected to environmental stressors, whereas personal accomplishment is primarily associated with personality variables (Kokkinos, 2007).

2.3. Resilience and Its Significance

Resilience is a complicated concept with various meanings within the literature. According to Stewart et al. (1997), resilience involves striking a balance between exposure to various life stressors and the presence of supportive factors that mitigate their harmful effects. It arises from the complex interaction between individuals' environment and specific inherent characteristics, evolving dynamically and coming to the forefront during life transition periods (Yılmaz & Sipahioğlu, 2012).

Previous research stresses the vitality of resilience in the lives of individuals. Li et al. (2019) assert that individuals with higher resilience levels exhibit more insensitivity to the problems they encounter and experience reduced levels of depression when confronted with hardship. According to Gu and Li (2013), the nature and sustainability of teachers' resilience are not innate qualities but are shaped by individual characteristics interacting with the contextual conditions in which their professional and personal lives are situated. In education, resilience has an even greater significance, particularly for teachers who encounter numerous obstacles in their professional lives. The teaching profession is filled with challenges and obstacles, often leading to stress and conflict. Educators are consistently presumed to perform their work effectively, irrespective of the difficulties they face. The quality of a teacher is closely tied to their resilience, problem-solving, guidance, responsibility, self-improvement, and ambition to excel in their role (Bagheri et al., 2024). However, negative situations within the education system and the school environment can hinder teachers from embodying these qualities.

2.4. Understanding Career Commitment

Teacher commitment refers to the extent to which educators are emotionally and professionally dedicated to their profession (McInerney et al., 2015). This deep-rooted dedication reflects one's mindset toward one's career path. It encapsulates their continuous drive to excel, evolve, and contribute meaningfully to their respective field of work, as Blau (1985) described. It is a profound motivation to dedicate oneself to a chosen profession, according to Carson and Bedeian (1994). At its core, career

commitment involves formulating personal career goals, a strong identification with these objectives, and an unwavering pursuit of professional aspirations.

Career commitment includes many dimensions, like occupational and professional career commitment. Researchers often use the terms interchangeably because these dimensions share similarities, as Mueller et al. (1992) suggested. Nonetheless, there is a persuasive argument for embracing the broader term “career commitment,” advocated by Aryee and Tan (1992). This decision shows inclusivity because the term "career" encompasses a greater range of occupations, while "professional" may unintentionally exclude some job categories.

Beyond these dimensions, career commitment greatly influences professional life by stimulating individual growth and development, guiding individuals toward their goals, and instilling a sense of purpose and direction in their career paths. Kalbers and Fogarty (1995) state that deep commitment to one's career often translates into increased pay and heightened self-esteem. Given today's competitive and ever-changing job market, career commitment is quite essential in providing occupational meaning and continuity, especially as organizations struggle with fluidity and reduced employment security.

3. Research Questions

The current study examined the most and least prevalent personality traits exhibited by Iranian EFL teachers and investigated their correlations with burnout, resilience, and career commitment. Unlike prior studies that often treat these factors separately or rely on limited datasets, this study offers a more thorough approach. By using four highly reliable and complementary questionnaires, the study ensures a nuanced and thorough understanding of these relationships. Additionally, with 220 participants, it provides larger, more reliable findings, offering deeper insights into the professional lives of EFL teachers. The study set out to answer the following key questions:

1. Is there a relationship between the Big Five personality traits and burnout among Iranian EFL teachers?
2. Is there a relationship between the Big Five personality traits and resilience among Iranian EFL teachers?
3. Is there a relationship between the Big Five personality traits and career commitment among Iranian EFL teachers?
4. What are the most and least prevalent personality traits exhibited by Iranian EFL teachers within the framework of the Big Five-Factor Model?

4. Method

4.1. Research Design and Variables

This descriptive study adopted a quantitative approach to investigate the relationship between burnout, resilience, and career commitment within the specific context of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. The core research questions were centered on identifying the most and least prevalent personality traits displayed by the teachers and examining whether these traits correlate with their levels of resilience and burnout, as well as determining which personality traits are associated with these teachers' sense of career commitment.

The variables in this study involved various personality traits, incorporating traits such as agreeableness and neuroticism, levels of burnout, resilience, and career commitment among Iranian EFL teachers. By exploring the relationship between these variables, the researcher sought to gain meaningful insights into how different characteristics may correlate with the aforementioned variables. The personality traits were scrutinized through the lens of the Big Five personality traits model. This model provided the framework for analyzing the distinctive personalities of Iranian EFL teachers, investigating the relationships between resilience and burnout, and determining which characteristics encourage their commitment to their work.

The current correlational study involved collecting and analyzing numerical data to address the research questions with precision and objectivity. The clear alignment between the research questions and the variables under scrutiny within the context of the Big Five-Factor model secured a focused exploration of the interconnected factors at play among Iranian EFL teachers.

4.2. Participants

This quantitative study included 220 participants from a variety of demographic backgrounds. The gender distribution showed a slightly higher proportion of female participants. The majority of participants fell into the 25–34 age range, followed by those in the 35–44 and 18–24 age ranges. Academically, most participants either held or were pursuing advanced degrees, such as master's or doctoral qualifications. A smaller group possessed undergraduate-level education or held alternative certifications. The participants' academic fields were largely centered on teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), though other areas such as translation, literature, linguistics, and various unrelated fields were also represented. In terms of professional experience, the sample involved a broad range of teaching backgrounds, from less than two years to over a decade, reflecting the heterogeneous nature of the participant pool.

4.3. Instruments

The researchers employed four well-established standardized instruments to explore and understand various dimensions of educators' personality traits, burnout experiences, resilience, and career commitment levels. The first instrument was the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI-10), which was adapted from Rammstedt and John (2007), a concise 10-item tool that assesses key personality traits in educators. A 5-point Likert scale evaluates extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience through statements reflecting typical behaviors and attitudes, such as “I see myself as someone who is generally trusting” (see Appendix A). The BFI-10 Scale had a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.86$.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES), developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986), was used to examine teacher burnout, including 22 items across three subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. These subscales measure feelings of tiredness, emotional fatigue, impersonal responses to students, and the sense of competence and satisfaction from professional achievements. For example, one item from the emotional exhaustion subscale states, “I feel emotionally drained from my work” (see Appendix B). Cronbach's alpha values were $\alpha = 0.93$ for emotional exhaustion, $\alpha = 0.87$ for depersonalization, and $\alpha = 0.85$ for personal accomplishment.

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10) was used to measure resilience levels. This 10-item scale assesses the ability to adapt, cope, and maintain a positive attitude when faced with challenges, employing a 5-point Likert scale. The scale's reliability has been validated across various studies and populations, making it a robust tool for assessing resilience levels. An illustrative item on the scale is, "I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life's challenges and difficulties" (see Appendix C). The CD-RISC-10 Scale had a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.83$.

Finally, the Career Commitment Scale (CCS), sourced from Blau (1985), measures educators' dedication to their profession. This scale consists of seven items and uses a 5-point Likert scale with positive and negative worded statements to enhance data reliability and accurately assess career dedication. For instance, one item on the scale is, "I enjoy my profession too much to give it up" (see Appendix D). The Career Commitment Scale had a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.88$. The instruments were selected for their demonstrated reliability and proven validity, ensuring trustworthy data collection.

4.4. Data Collection Procedure

The study was conducted during the winter of 2023, involving 220 EFL educators, and was carried out entirely online to accommodate their busy schedules and ensure flexibility in participation. Since four separate questionnaires were administered, it was vital to select inventories that, while offering high reliability and validity, were also manageable in terms of time and effort. This approach aimed to avoid participant burnout and overwhelming respondents, thus ensuring that the collected data would be robust and reliable despite educators' time and energy constraints.

Additionally, the four separate questionnaires were created using Google Forms to facilitate efficient data collection in this descriptive study. Understanding that educators often have multiple responsibilities, the online distribution method was chosen to enhance convenience and encourage higher response rates by allowing respondents to complete the surveys at their own pace. Platforms such as Telegram, which hosts dedicated channels and groups for educators, were used for outreach purposes. Within these online platforms, the questionnaire links were shared, followed by a concise overview of the study's purpose and explicit declarations of confidentiality and anonymity. In order to maintain participant anonymity, the researchers also intentionally eliminated personal information. The goal of this strategy was to minimize potential biases, fears of being judged, or self-censorship by fostering an atmosphere where participants felt at ease to respond. Partaking was encouraged solely by sharing questionnaire links, prioritizing voluntary engagement to ensure the integrity and reliability of the data collected, and fostering a sense of safety and confidentiality among participants throughout the study. The process spanned nearly two months, providing ample time for participants to complete the questionnaires. Despite an initial target of securing at least 100 responses, the outcome exceeded expectations, ultimately yielding 220 responses, more than double the initial goal. This extended approach enhanced the conclusiveness of the findings and allowed for a more comprehensive analysis.

4.5. Statistical Analysis

Before undertaking the primary analysis, the reliability of the inventories employed in the study was assessed for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The findings showed that all measured scales demonstrated high reliability and were therefore appropriate for further analysis.

In addition, the researcher used the skewness and kurtosis ratios to test for normality to see if the data conformed to the normality assumption. Descriptive statistics were calculated to answer

Research Question 1, which was whether the Big Five Personality Traits correlate to burnout. The variables for the components of burnout were found to be non-normal; therefore, the Spearman correlation formula was performed.

Research Question 2 explored the association between the Big Five personality traits and resilience. After confirming the normality of the data, Pearson's product-moment correlation was run to assess linear relationships, with descriptive statistics providing additional context.

Regarding the third research question, which delved into the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and career commitment, Pearson's correlation was employed, with checks for linearity and homoscedasticity.

Finally, to answer Research Question 4, which sought to identify the most and least prevalent personality traits among Iranian EFL teachers, the researcher used descriptive statistics, using frequency and percentage, to determine the distribution of dominant personality traits among the teachers.

5. Results

5.1. Reliability Statistics

The first research question examined whether there was a relationship between the personality traits within the Big Five-Factor Model and teachers' burnout. Spearman Correlation was run as the non-parametric alternative to Pearson's r . Four assumptions of interval data, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity, are necessary for the Pearson product-moment correlation (Field, 2009). The first assumption is met since the present data are measured on an interval scale. The second assumption concerns the normality of the data, which is tested through skewness (Table 1).

As seen in Table 1, occupational burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment do not have normal distribution as the ratios of skewness over their respective standard errors are beyond the range of ± 1.96 . Thus, the researchers performed a non-parametric Spearman correlation to analyze the data.

Table 1

Normality Tests of Skewness for Different Personality Traits and Burnout

Variable	Skewness	Std. Error	Skewness Ratio	Kurtosis	Std. Error Kurtosis	Kurtosis Ratio
Emotional exhaustion	0.791	0.164	4.823	-0.300	0.327	-0.919
Depersonalization	1.403	0.164	8.554	1.502	0.327	4.597
Personal accomplishment	-0.798	0.164	-4.867	0.041	0.327	0.126
Extraversion	-0.038	0.164	-0.232	0.007	0.327	0.022
Agreeableness	-0.312	0.164	-1.901	0.649	0.327	1.800
Conscientiousness	-0.262	0.164	-1.600	0.234	0.327	0.717
Neuroticism	0.138	0.164	0.838	-0.584	0.327	-1.787
Openness-to-experience	0.028	0.164	0.172	-0.351	0.327	-1.074

Table 2 summarizes the mean and standard deviation for the three occupational burnout components that is emotional exhaustion component ($M = 18.65$, $SD = 13.09$), depersonalization component ($M = 6.01$, $SD = 6.66$), personal accomplishment component ($M = 35.61$, $SD = 8.96$), and all five personality types, extraversion ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.61$), agreeableness ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.64$),

consciousness ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.42$), neuroticism ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.93$), and finally, openness to experiences ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.48$).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Different Personality Traits, Burnout, and its Components

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Emotional exhaustion	220	18.65	13.09	0.883
Depersonalization	220	6.01	6.66	0.449
Personal accomplishment	220	35.61	8.96	0.604
Extraversion	220	4.43	1.61	0.109
Agreeableness	220	5.30	1.64	0.110
Conscientiousness	220	5.46	1.42	0.096
Neuroticism	220	3.97	1.93	0.130
Openness to experience	220	5.08	1.48	0.100

Regarding the emotional exhaustion component of burnout (Table 3), the Spearman correlation found the strongest statistically significant relationship between emotional exhaustion, as one of the occupational burnout components, and personality type of extraversion ($r = -0.28$, $p < 0.001$), followed by conscientiousness ($r = -0.20$, $p = 0.003$), agreeableness ($r = -0.19$, $p = 0.004$), and finally neuroticism ($r = 0.18$, $p = 0.007$). However, the Spearman correlation failed to find any significant relationship between the emotional exhaustion component of burnout and openness to experience personality type ($r = -0.08$, $p = 0.22$). Besides, as the results of Spearman correlation showed (Table 3), the strongest statistically significant relationship was found between depersonalization and personality types of agreeableness ($r = -0.24$, $p < 0.001$, $p < 0.05$), followed by extraversion ($r = -0.22$, $p = 0.001$), conscientiousness ($r = -0.20$, $p = 0.002$), and finally openness to experience ($r = -0.19$). However, the Spearman correlation revealed no significant relationship between the depersonalization dimension of burnout and the neuroticism personality trait ($r = 0.08$, $p = 0.23$).

Table 3 also shows that the strongest statistically significant relationship existed between personal accomplishment and personality type of extraversion ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.05$), followed by conscientiousness ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$), neuroticism ($r = -0.20$, $p = 0.003$), and finally agreeableness ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.04$). However, there was no significant relationship between personal accomplishment component of occupational burnout and openness to experience personality type ($r = -0.10$, $p = 0.13$). As most of (four out of five) personality traits were significantly correlated with burnout components, it can be claimed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the personality traits within the Big Five-Factor Model and the occupational burnout experienced by Iranian EFL teachers.

Table 3*Spearman Correlation Between Different Personality Traits, Burnout, and its Components*

		Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to experience
Emotional exhaustion	Spearman Correlation	-0.282*	-0.193*	-0.201*	0.182*	-0.083
	Sig.	.000	0.004	.003	0.007	0.218
Depersonalization	Spearman Correlation	-0.222*	-0.238*	-0.204*	0.081	-0.190*
	Sig.	0.001	0.000	.002	0.234	0.005
Personal accomplishment	Spearman Correlation	0.326*	.148	0.247*	-0.197*	0.103
	Sig.	0.000	0.045	0.000	0.003	0.129

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.2. Research Question Two

The second research question intended to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between personality traits within the Big Five-Factor Model and the resilience of Iranian EFL teachers. Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to investigate this research question. The first assumption is met as the present data are measured on an interval scale. The second assumption, the normality of the data was checked through skewness. Table 4 shows that six sets of personality traits and resilience scores are normally distributed as the ratios of skewness over their respective standard errors are within the range of ± 1.96 .

Table 4*Normality for Different Personality Traits and Resilience Scores*

Variable	Skewness	Std. Error	Skewness Ratio	Kurtosis	Std. Error	Kurtosis Ratio
Resilience	-0.300	0.164	-1.829	0.082	0.327	0.250
Extraversion	-0.038	0.164	-.232	0.007	0.327	0.022
Agreeableness	-0.312	0.164	-1.901	0.649	0.327	1.800
Conscientiousness	-0.262	.0164	-1.600	0.234	0.327	0.717
Neuroticism	0.138	0.164	0.838	-0.584	0.327	-1.787
Openness-to-experience	0.028	0.164	0.172	-0.351	0.327	-1.074

The first assumption is not violated since the present data are measured on an interval scale. In fact, for both questionnaires: A) Big Five Personality Inventory: “0” point was given to “Strongly disagree” and “4” points for “Strongly agree,” and B) Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale: “0” point was given to “Not true at all,” and “4” points for “True nearly all the time.” Also, Bachman (2005, p. 236) states that the assumption of independence of subjects is met when “the performance of any given individual is independent of the performance of other individuals.” The third assumption is the normality of the data, which is tested through the ratios of skewness and kurtosis. The results of the normality test for classroom enjoyment scores are laid out in Table 5.

As observable in Table 5, the linear relationship between resilience and all five personality types, that is, extraversion scores ($F = 34.39, p < 0.001, p < 0.05$), agreeableness ($F = 11.43, p = 0.001, p < 0.05$), conscientiousness ($F = 20.93, p < 0.001, p < 0.05$), neuroticism ($F = 40.59, p < 0.001, p < 0.05$), and finally, openness to experiences ($F = 3.89, p = 0.04, p < 0.05$) was significant; thus the linearity assumption was met.

Table 5

Linear Relationship Between Different Personality Traits and Resilience Scores

Variable		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Extraversion*Resilience	Linearity	1340.573	1	1340.573	34.39	0.000
Agreeableness*Resilience	Linearity	512.687	1	512.687	11.43	0.001
Consciousness*Resilience	Linearity	899.322	1	899.322	20.93	0.000
Neuroticism*Resilience	Linearity	1600.611	1	1600.611	40.587	0.000
Openness-to-experiences*Resilience	Linearity	172.959	1	172.959	3.895	0.044

The descriptive statistics for the variables were calculated (Table 6) before explaining the results of inferential statistics. Table 6 summarizes the mean and standard deviation for resilience scores ($M = 26.37, SD = 6.80$) and all five personality types: extraversion ($M = 4.43, SD = 1.61$), agreeableness ($M = 5.30, SD = 1.64$), conscientiousness ($M = 5.46, SD = 1.42$), neuroticism ($M = 3.97, SD = 1.93$), and finally, openness to experiences ($M = 5.08, SD = 1.48$).

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Different Personality Traits and Resilience Scores

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Resilience	220	26.37	6.805	0.459
Extraversion	220	4.43	1.610	0.109
Agreeableness	220	5.30	1.638	0.110
Conscientiousness	220	5.46	1.422	0.096
Neuroticism	220	3.97	1.931	0.130
Openness to experience	220	5.08	1.481	0.100

As shown in Table 7, Pearson correlation found a statistically significant negative relationship between resilience and one of the personality types, neuroticism ($r = -0.40, p = 0.000, p < 0.05$), with high resilience levels correlated with low neuroticism levels. In addition, Table 7 shows that Pearson correlation detected a statistically significant positive relationship between resilience and the other four personality types: extraversion ($r = 0.36, p < 0.001$), agreeableness ($r = 0.22, p = 0.001$), conscientiousness ($r = 0.30, p = 0.001$), and finally, openness to experiences ($F = 0.16, p = 0.04$), with high levels of resilience correlated with high levels of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experiences; accordingly, the researcher could reject the second null hypothesis of the study therefore it can be declared that the personality traits within the Big Five-Factor Model and the resilience of Iranian EFL teachers significantly correlate.

Table 7*Pearson Correlation Between Different Personality Traits and Resilience*

		Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to experience
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	0.364*	0.225*	0.298*	-0.397*	0.161
	Sig.	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.045
	N	220	220	220	220	220

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.3. Research Question Three

The researchers ran a Pearson product-moment correlation to examine the third research question. The first assumption is met since the present data are measured on an interval scale. The second assumption concerns the data's normality, tested through the skewness (Table 8). As the results indicate, six sets of personality traits and career commitment scores meet the normality assumption. The ratios of skewness over their respective standard errors are within the ± 1.96 range.

Table 8*Normality for Different Personality Traits and Career Commitment Scores*

Variable	Skewness	Std. Error	Skewness Ratio	Kurtosis	Std. Error Kurtosis	Kurtosis Ratio
Career commitment	-0.576	0.364	-1.583	0.088	0.327	0.270
Extraversion	-0.038	0.164	-.232	0.007	0.327	0.022
Agreeableness	-0.312	0.164	-1.901	0.649	0.327	1.800
Conscientiousness	-0.262	0.164	-1.600	0.234	0.327	0.717
Neuroticism	0.138	0.164	.838	-.584	0.327	-1.787
Openness-to-experience	0.028	0.164	.172	-.351	0.327	-1.074

As outlined in Table 9, the linear relationship between career commitment and four out of five personality types, extraversion scores ($F = 17.77$, $p < 0.001$), conscientiousness ($F = 3.13$, $p = 0.04$), neuroticism ($F = 11.27$, $p = 0.001$), and, openness to experiences ($F = 6.29$, $p = 0.01$, $p < 0.05$) was significant except for agreeableness ($F = 0.37$, $p = 0.54$). Thus, the linearity assumption was met for these four out of five personality traits. To compensate for this shortage, the researcher reduced the alpha level from 0.05 to 0.01 for Pearson correlation analysis of agreeableness, as noted by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013, p. 120).

Table 9*Linear Relationship Between Different Personality Traits and Career Commitment Scores*

		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Extraversion*Commitment	Linearity	42.940	1	42.940	17.775	0.000
Agreeableness*Commitment	Linearity	.977	1	0.977	0.370	0.544
Conscientiousness*Commitment	Linearity	6.242	1	6.242	3.134	0.044
Neuroticism*Commitment	Linearity	38.842	1	38.842	11.267	0.001
Openness-to-experiences*Commitment	Linearity	12.837	1	12.837	6.290	0.013

The descriptive statistics for career commitment scores ($M = 18.44$, $SD = 5.73$) and all five personality types, extraversion ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.61$), agreeableness ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.64$), conscientiousness ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.42$), neuroticism ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.93$), and, openness to experiences ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.48$).

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Different Personality Traits and Career Commitment Scores

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error
Career commitment	220	18.44	5.735	0.387
Extraversion	220	4.43	1.610	0.109
Agreeableness	220	5.30	1.638	0.110
Conscientiousness	220	5.46	1.422	0.096
Neuroticism	220	3.97	1.931	0.130
Openness to experience	220	5.08	1.481	0.100

Table 11 indicates that the Pearson correlation failed to find any statistically significant relationship between career commitment and agreeableness ($r = 0.04$, $p = 0.54$) as well as the relationship between career commitment and conscientiousness ($r = 0.12$, $p = 0.08$). However, Pearson correlation (Table 11) found a statistically significant negative relationship between career commitment and one of the personality types, neuroticism ($r = -0.22$, $p = 0.001$), with high levels of career commitment correlated with low levels of neuroticism. Besides, Table 11 indicates that Pearson correlation detected a statistically significant positive relationship between career commitment and two out of the other four personality types, extraversion ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$) and openness to experiences ($F = 0.16$, $p = 0.01$) with high levels of career commitment correlated with high levels of extraversion and openness to experiences. Since the majority of (three out of five) personality traits had significant correlations with career commitment, leading to the conclusion that personality traits within the Big Five-Factor Model and the career commitment of Iranian EFL teachers correlate.

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Between Different Personality Traits and Career Commitment Scores

		Extraver.	Agreeable.	Conscientio.	Neurotici.	Openness.
Career commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.275*	0.041	0.119	-0.218*	0.163*
	Sig.	0.000	0.545	0.079	0.001	0.015
	N	220	220	220	220	220

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

5.4. Research Question Four

The fourth research question asked about the most and least prevalent personality traits exhibited by Iranian EFL teachers within the framework of the Big Five-Factor Model. To answer this research question, the highest score each person has gained in each personality type was considered one's preferred personality type. As a sample and to clarify the procedure, the scores obtained for each five-personality type for seven participants are reported in Table 12. For example, the preferred personality type for Participant 12, who acquired zero points on extraversion, eight on agreeableness,

four on conscientiousness, two on neuroticism, and finally, four on openness to experience, was agreeableness. The same method and procedure were pursued for the other 219 EFL teacher participants.

Table 12

Samples of Method for Participants' Preferred Personality Type Selection

ID	Extraver.	Agreeable.	Conscientious.	Neurotici.	Openness.	Preferred personality type
12	0	8	4	2	4	Agreeableness
24	3	4	6	5	4	Conscientiousness
58	4	6	5	4	3	Agreeableness
97	4	4	5	4	7	Openness-to-experience
140	6	5	5	4	5	Extraversion
185	4	7	5	1	4	Agreeableness
213	5	5	6	7	3	Neuroticism

Table 13 presents the frequencies and percentages for participants' preferred personality types, from the most to the least. As demonstrated in Table 13, agreeableness is the most prevalent personality trait ($f = 62/220$, $p = 28.2\%$) exhibited by Iranian EFL teachers within the context of the Big Five-Factor Model, followed by conscientiousness ($f = 57/220$, $p = 25.9\%$), openness to experience ($f = 42/220$, $p = 19.1\%$), Neuroticism ($f = 34/220$, $p = 15.5\%$), and finally, extraversion ($f = 25/220$, $p = 11.4\%$) as the least prevalent personality trait observed among Iranian EFL teachers.

Table 13

Frequencies and Percentages for EFL Teachers Preferred Personality Types

Personality type	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agreeableness	62	28.2	39.5
Conscientiousness	57	25.9	65.5
Openness to experience	42	19.1	100.0
Neuroticism	34	15.5	80.9
Extraversion	25	11.4	11.4
Total	220	100.0	

6. Discussion

This research studied the relationship between different personality traits and three critical aspects of the professional lives of Iranian EFL teachers: occupational burnout, resilience, and career commitment. The first research question examined the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and occupational burnout levels, focusing on three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The data showed that the extraversion and conscientiousness traits have significant negative correlations with emotional exhaustion. In other words, teachers who are sociable and organized are less likely to experience burnout. Furthermore, there was a negative correlation with the agreeableness trait, indicating that this aspect of burnout is less likely to occur in teachers who are more cooperative and sympathetic. Such a pattern aligns with earlier research showing that conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness protect against emotional

exhaustion (Roloff et al., 2022). However, neuroticism and emotional exhaustion were positively correlated, showing that teachers who exhibit higher levels of emotional instability are more likely to suffer from burnout stress. This finding is consistent with a study by Jeon et al. (2018), strengthening the need for personalized emotional support for teachers who are prone to extreme stress and anxiety. Also, the depersonalization component, which is characterized by a sense of detachment, showed a negative correlation with extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, suggesting the fact that unreserved, empathetic, and diligent teachers are less likely to experience depersonalization. The significant negative correlations with these traits indicate that social engagement and a strong work ethic could act as a shield against depersonalization. Surprisingly, whereas past researchers have found a significant positive correlation between neuroticism and depersonalization (Roloff et al., 2022), the absence of a significant relationship between these two variables in this study stands out. Since the trait of neuroticism is often associated with negative emotions, the lack of correlation with depersonalization is somewhat surprising and might suggest that this burnout component has underlying causes that are distinct and probably stem from factors beyond emotional instability. Moreover, extraversion and conscientiousness also show significant positive correlations with personal accomplishment, indicating these personality types tend to feel more achievement and fulfillment in their roles.

The negative correlation between neuroticism and personal accomplishment proves that teachers who are struggling with emotional instability may have a diminished sense of success, which is also supported by Mojsa-Kaja et al. (2015), proving that teachers with higher neurotic traits may feel less effective and satisfied in their roles. Therefore, teachers exhibiting higher levels of neuroticism tend to experience increased stress and diminished overall well-being; thus, it's no surprise that they also feel a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Gray et al., 2017).

Regarding the trait of openness, the findings revealed no significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. Depersonalization, however, had a significant negative correlation, indicating that teachers with high openness may feel less detached from their work, possibly as a result of their adaptability.

Athota et al. (2020) found that personality traits can have a strong influence on both resilience and performance, suggesting that some traits may act as protective factors, helping individuals cope better in difficult situations. Therefore, the present research also studied the relationship between personality types and resilience among Iranian EFL teachers. It showed significant correlations between resilience and all the Big Five traits, supporting the fact that personality influences an individual's capacity to cope effectively with a person's day-to-day setbacks. Unsurprisingly, a strong negative correlation between neuroticism and resilience suggests that individuals high in this trait may struggle more with life's challenges. This negative correlation's strength can highlight how critical it is to address neurotic tendencies with focused interventions. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that methods to lessen anxiety and mood swings can have a significant positive impact on an individual's resilience levels because high levels of neuroticism can seriously impair resilience.

On the other hand, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience are positively correlated with resilience. The correlation between extraversion and resilience suggests that social individuals are more likely to display resilience. This pattern of results aligns with prior research conducted by Deng et al. (2020), who found a similar positive correlation between extraversion and resilience among teachers. The finding emphasizes the importance of social interactions and a positive attitude in improving resilience. This insight could be especially useful for creating programs

that promote social engagement and support among teachers to strengthen resilience. The positive correlation between agreeableness and resilience proves that being cooperative, compassionate, and harmonious with others can enrich resiliency. This is an especially interesting finding, as it emphasizes the social nature of resilience. Individuals who maintain good relationships and are generally agreeable may find it easier to navigate stress and recover from setbacks due to their supportive social networks. Facilitating teamwork and creating a positive atmosphere of cooperation might lead to more resilience through these social dynamics. Conscientiousness was strongly correlated with resilience, proving that being disciplined and dependable can significantly enhance resiliency. The correlation between openness and resilience was small but still significant. This result is interesting because it shows that while being open to new experiences can enhance resilience, this trait is less important than others, like conscientiousness or extraversion, showing that resilience is more closely tied to stable, day-to-day behaviors and social interactions than a general openness to new ideas and experiences.

Furthermore, the relationship between personality traits and career commitment among Iranian EFL teachers was also examined in the study. It revealed a strong positive correlation between extraversion, openness, and career commitment, suggesting that teachers who possess these qualities are more likely to continue with their careers. For example, extraversion and career commitment had a remarkable positive correlation, hinting at the fact that teachers with higher levels of extraversion tend to be more committed to their careers. Openness was also correlated with career commitment, but not as strongly as extraversion. This shows that teachers who are open are more likely to engage in new teaching methods and ongoing professional growth, making them more dedicated to their careers. This finding aligns with Lobene and Meade (2013), who discovered that teachers with a strong sense of their career calling, often tied to higher openness, demonstrated better work results and a stronger commitment to their profession. Conversely, neuroticism negatively correlated with career commitment, indicating that teachers with higher neuroticism, prone to anxiety and mood swings, often show lower commitment levels. This finding supports Vergauwe et al. (2015), who suggest that people with higher neuroticism levels may struggle with emotional attachment to their roles and feel less compelled to remain in their positions. No significant relationship was found between career commitment and agreeableness or conscientiousness, implying the fact that these traits may not influence an educator's dedication in the Iranian EFL teaching environment. Instead, commitment appears more influenced by traits associated with enthusiasm (extraversion) and curiosity (openness to experience), possibly due to unique cultural or situational factors that are existent in Iran. Characteristics that encourage participation and flexibility might be more valuable, stressing the value of enthusiasm and openness. Therefore, while agreeableness and conscientiousness positively impact the work environment, they do not necessarily ensure job commitment.

Gaining a better understanding of these situational and cultural differences that one experiences can help better understand the elements that affect Iranian EFL teachers' commitment to their careers, highlighting the importance of qualities that foster curiosity and engagement. Furthermore, this study also explored the most and least common personality traits that exist among Iranian EFL teachers. According to the data, agreeableness was the most common trait, with 28.2% of the participants scoring the highest in this trait, characterized by kindness and cooperation. Following agreeableness, conscientiousness was identified as the second most widespread trait, with about 25.9% of the participants. Teachers who exhibit high levels of conscientiousness are generally said to be responsible and dedicated to their professional duties, which is evidently crucial for maintaining classroom

discipline. The third most common trait was openness, seen in 19.1% of the subjects, equating to 42 out of 220 teachers. This trait involves qualities such as curiosity and a willingness to welcome new ideas. Researchers found that neuroticism was present in 15.5% of the participants, but fortunately, it was less prevalent. Although it was less common, it emphasizes the importance of providing mental health resources focused on emotional resilience, ensuring teachers can perform their duties effectively without compromising their well-being. Furthermore, our research findings on personality traits align with those of Almutairi et al. (2022), particularly regarding the prevalence of conscientiousness and kindness (or agreeableness) among teachers being the most prominent. However, past researchers have found neuroticism to be the least prevalent trait among teachers. In contrast, our study, which revealed a different pattern due to having a much larger group of participants, found extraversion to be the least prevalent trait, with only 11.4% of the participants scoring the highest in this dimension. The lower prevalence may reflect and be interpreted through the cultural context of Iran, where modesty and restraint are highly valued, suggesting a cultural inclination towards introverted qualities.

7. Conclusions and Implications

The researchers argue that the EFL teaching context poses many psychological challenges and that to understand the root of the inconveniences, we need to recognize an individual's unique personality trait to comprehend the emotional obstacles. While some of the results were expected, most were not. Given neuroticism's connection to negative emotions, its lack of correlation with depersonalization might imply the fact that this burnout component has underlying causes that are different and may stem from factors beyond emotional instability, possibly situational stressors, institutional constraints, or even teaching-related fatigue that are not directly related to emotional tendencies. Or an instance like having traits of agreeableness or conscientiousness, although beneficial, may not necessarily guarantee a teacher's commitment to their profession.

Being a teacher means dealing with hundreds of different students; however, the findings presented the extraversion trait as the least common among Iranian EFL educators. This raises questions about whether the teaching environment suppresses extraverted tendencies or if cultural factors influence self-perceptions of extraversion. Due to the results, personalized support systems for emotional well-being are clearly a must. Human resources professionals should make sure that recruitment and training strategies are culturally sensitive and identify the diverse range of traits and strengths among teachers. Therefore, efforts should be made to appreciate a wide range of qualities, especially extraversion, which, despite being the least predominant trait, is ironically the most beneficial to possess due to the outgoing nature that is indeed demanded by this profession for long-term success. Given the observed benefits of extraversion, fostering teacher collaboration and communicative confidence may support professional growth in roles where sociability is essential. Additionally, a holistic approach to teacher development is essential. Given the impact of personality on burnout and resilience, training should address both instructional and emotional dimensions of teaching. Incorporating reflective practices, stress management techniques, and collaborative peer discussions could improve these programs further, making them more responsive to educators' internal experiences. These findings also offer valuable insights for curriculum developers and teacher training programs. Guiding trainees to reflect on how their personality traits relate to stress and coping may build self-awareness and early resilience. It might also be useful for policymakers and school leaders to take personality factors into account when hiring, as this could allow for more personalized support and mentoring that fits each teacher's specific needs. Cross-cultural comparisons of similar variables would be useful, especially in collectivist cultures where personality is shaped by social expectations. The limitation of this study lies in its quantitative approach, as all the data were collected through questionnaires. Additionally, since participants were recruited through Telegram and volunteered to participate, the sample may overrepresent teachers who are more digitally engaged or interested in the

research topic, limiting the generalizability of findings. The findings of such a study will be more persuasive if these variables are evaluated over an extended period or if individuals are interviewed to identify underlying factors for the given results, thus necessitating longitudinal and qualitative research methods for further studies.

Acknowledgment

We are grateful to the authors of the research articles and textbooks used in this study.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have conducted the study, collected data, analyzed and interpreted the data, and written up the manuscript.

Funding

The study did not receive any funding.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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Appendices

Appendix A: (BFI-10) Big Five Personality Inventory

Items:

1. I see myself as someone who is reserved.
2. I see myself as someone who is generally trusting.
3. I see myself as someone who tends to be lazy.
4. I see myself as someone who is relaxed, handles stress well.
5. I see myself as someone who has few artistic interests.
6. I see myself as someone who is outgoing and sociable.
7. I see myself as someone who tends to find fault with others.
8. I see myself as someone who does a thorough job.
9. I see myself as someone who gets nervous easily.
10. I see myself as someone who has an active imagination.

Appendix B: Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES)

Items:

- I feel emotionally drained from my work.
- I feel used up at the end of the workday.
- I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
- Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
- I feel burned out from my work.
- I feel frustrated by my job.
- I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
- Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
- I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
- I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal subjects.
- I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
- I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
- I don't care what happens to some students.

I feel students blame me for some of their problems.
I can easily understand how my students feel about things.
I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
I feel very energetic.
I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

Answer categories

never
a few times per year
once a month
a few times per month
once a week
a few times per week
every day

Appendix C: Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10)

Items:

I am able to adapt when changes occur.
I can deal with whatever comes my way.
I try to see the humorous side of things when I am faced with problems.
Having to cope with stress can make me stronger.
I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, or other hardships.
I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles.
Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly.
I am not easily discouraged by failure.
I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life's challenges and difficulties.
I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger.

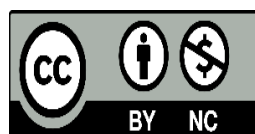
Answer categories

Not true at all.
Rarely true.
Sometimes true.
Often true.
True nearly all the time.

Appendix D: Career Commitment Scale

Items:

I would take a different job that paid the same.
I want a career in my profession.
If I could do it all over, I would not choose this profession.
If I had all the money I needed, I would still want to be in this profession.
I enjoy my profession too much to give it up.
This is my ideal profession for my life work.
I've been very disappointed ever since I entered this profession.



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