

University of Central Florida

**STARS**

---

Honors Undergraduate Theses

UCF Theses and Dissertations

---

2017

## A Survey of the Big Five Personality Traits Among Elementary Teachers

Afrina R. Rohani

*University of Central Florida*



Part of the [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the UCF Theses and Dissertations at STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact [STARS@ucf.edu](mailto:STARS@ucf.edu).

---

### Recommended Citation

Rohani, Afrina R., "A Survey of the Big Five Personality Traits Among Elementary Teachers" (2017). *Honors Undergraduate Theses*. 257.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis/257>

A SURVEY OF THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS AMONG  
ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

by  
AFRINA ROHANI

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Bachelor of Science  
in the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership  
in the College of Education and Human Performance  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Fall Term, 2017

Thesis Chair: Dr. Sherron Killingsworth Roberts

## **Abstract**

This research examined the possibility that personality traits play a part in career longevity and job satisfaction in the education field. The current study examined trends among the Big Five personality traits (Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) and their relation to job satisfaction in the elementary classroom. This researcher hypothesized that some common personality traits that are shared by teachers who persist in the classroom for five or more years, who are satisfied with their jobs and do not intend to leave. This researcher hypothesized that more experienced teachers would be high in Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness. This researcher hypothesized that less experienced teachers would have Big Five personality scores that are more diverse than those of experienced teachers and that are more representative of the personalities of the general population. This researcher also hypothesized that teachers who score higher in the areas of Neuroticism and lower on Conscientiousness and Extraversion, would be dissatisfied with their jobs. The survey was completed by 202 participants. Experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for five or more years), and less experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for four years or less) completed the Big Five personality survey, along with additional survey questions that assess job satisfaction, and intent to leave.

This research found no trend among personality traits in experienced teachers compared to inexperienced teachers. There was, however, a correlation between intention to leave and Neuroticism as well as a correlation between job satisfaction and Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Conscientiousness.

## Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Chapter Two: Literature Review .....	3
Personality and the Big Five Personality Inventory .....	6
Job Satisfaction .....	9
Teacher Attrition and Retention .....	11
Chapter Three: Methods .....	14
Population .....	14
The Survey Instrument .....	14
Institutional Review Board Approval .....	16
Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion .....	18
Limitations .....	18
Findings .....	19
Research Question number one: Do elementary classroom teachers who have been in the profession for 1-4 years have different personality profiles than people who have been teaching for 5-10 years, 11-14 years, and 15+ years? .....	20
Research question number two: Does personality predict job satisfaction? .....	23
Research Question Number Three: Does a personality trait within the Big Five Inventory predict intention to leave? .....	27
Discussion .....	29
Chapter Five: Educational Significance and Concluding Remarks .....	32
Retention in Schools .....	32
Impact on Students .....	34
Teacher Educators and Preservice Teachers .....	35
References .....	38
Appendix A: Big Five Personality Inventory and Additional Items .....	43
Statement of Consent: .....	44
Big Five Personality Inventory, Additional Survey Questions, and Survey Scoring Formula .....	44

Appendix B: Permission to Use the Big Five Personality Inventory.....	51
Permission to Use the Big Five Personality Inventory .....	52
Appendix C: Institutional Review Board Letter of Exemption .....	54

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

A concern in the field of teacher education is, based on research from the National Center for Education Statistics (1999) it has been found that many highly prepared teachers abandon the classroom in their first five years of teaching. This research has examined the possibility that personality traits play a part in career longevity and job satisfaction in the education field. This researcher has examined trends among the Big Five personality traits (Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) and their relation to job satisfaction in the classroom in an attempt to support all teachers and to decrease attrition rates within the first four years.

This research hypothesized that some personality traits are shared by teachers who persist in the classroom for five or more years, who are satisfied with their jobs, and do not intend to leave. This research hypothesized that more experienced teachers would be high in Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness. This research hypothesized that less experienced teachers would have Big Five personality scores that are more diverse than those of experienced teachers and that are more representative of the personalities of the general population. This research hypothesized that teachers who score higher in the areas of Neuroticism and lower on Conscientiousness and Extraversion, would be dissatisfied in their jobs. Experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for five or more years) and less experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for four years or less) completed the Big Five personality survey, along with additional survey questions to assess job satisfaction and intent to leave. This study sought to add to the body of knowledge about the broad personality descriptions of those entering the field, as well as those who persist past four years. This study may benefit our educational

systems by shedding light on and contributing to a solution for high turnover among new teachers. It may also be helpful to preservice teachers and teacher educators in the process of training new teachers. This research has the potential provide teacher educators with a basis for scaffolding their classrooms to accommodate for various personality differences and help better prepare those preservice teachers who require more support to resist becoming overwhelmed or burnt-out in the classroom. This research may inspire more support for teachers throughout their careers in an effort to increase job satisfaction and retention.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Research has shown that attrition rates among teachers within their first five years in the classroom are surprisingly high:

...22% of new teachers across the nation leave the profession within the first three years.

The teacher dropout rate climbs as high as 50% after the first five years, with higher rates in impoverished communities. In addition, only 11% of public school teachers report being satisfied with their jobs (NCES, 1999).

Considering these statistics, it is valuable to examine why these numbers are so high. This thesis attempted to examine the possibility that personality traits play a part in career longevity and job satisfaction in the education field. The current study examined trends among the Big Five personality traits (Tupes & Christal, 1961) (Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) and any correlation these trends may have to job satisfaction in the classroom and intention to leave the profession, in an attempt to support all teachers and to decrease the rates of attrition within the first four years. The following review of literature will address the Big Five personality theory and Personality Inventory, job satisfaction in the teaching profession, and teacher attrition and retention.

The Big Five Personality Inventory contains 50 statements, ten questions that address each personality factor, and each response is indicated on a five-point Likert scale which ranges from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” This test scores each factor on a scale of 0 to 40.

This researcher hypothesized that some personality traits that are shared by teachers who persist in the classroom for five or more years, who are satisfied with their jobs, and who do not intend to leave. Experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for five or more years),



and less experienced teachers (those working in the classroom for four years or less) were asked to complete the Big Five Personality Inventory, along with five additional questions that assessed job satisfaction and intent to leave.

Marlow (1996) suggested that “Dissatisfaction in this area (professional prestige) is one that approximately two-thirds of teachers and former teachers cite as a reason for leaving the teaching profession.” (p. 8). Marlow (1996) also indicated that the following were possible factors that contributed to teacher attrition:

Student discipline, students' lack of motivation, and poor attitudes; emotional factors such as lack of fulfillment, boredom with the daily routine, stress, and frustration; lack of respect from community, parents, administrators, and/or students; difficult working conditions; and low salaries (p. 1).

This researcher, however, did not find any existing research that indicates that strengths in certain personality traits, or trends among personality, lead teachers to be more satisfied with their jobs or to be less likely to leave the field of teaching.

The cost of teacher turnover and attrition has been estimated:

Using a U.S. Department of Labor formula, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) released a national analysis of teacher attrition costs, which estimated the cost of replacing public school teachers who leave the profession at \$2.2 billion per year, and when the cost of replacing teachers who transfer schools is added, that number rises to approximately \$4.9 billion per year (Shockley, Guglielmino, & Watlington, 2006, p. 111).

Shockley et al. (2006) looked specifically at two Florida school districts to estimate the costs associated with replacing a teacher:

In the St. Lucie County School District, the costs associated with replacing a teacher were \$4,631 per teacher. The district had a turnover of 320 teachers out of a total of 1,952 teachers in the school system, for a turnover percentage of 16.4%. In the study of teacher retention conducted by Shockley et al. (2005), in which all teachers new to the school district in the 2000–01 school year were tracked over a period of four years, the school district had a retention rate of 45%. In the Broward County School District, the costs associated with replacing a teacher were \$12,652 per teacher. The district had a turnover of 1,206 teachers out of a total of 16,648 teachers in the school system, for a turnover percentage of 7.25%. In the Shockley et al. study (2005), the school district had a retention rate of 73% after four years (Shockley et al., 2006, p. 112).

These numbers demonstrate that the higher cost of replacing a teacher is associated with lower turnover and higher retention while the lower cost of replacing a teacher is correlated with higher turnover. This is due to the fact that, in the districts studied by Shockley et al. (2006), the

infrastructure investment that the Broward County School System is making in its teacher induction/support program. This program is called the New Educator Support System (NESS), and it represents a significant investment and commitment by the school district to support and retain teachers. Given these expenditures, the costs associated with replacing a teacher were significantly higher in Broward than in St. Lucie (Shockley et al., 2006, p. 112-113).

Support for teachers helps them feel that they are valued in their classrooms and that they are not easily replaceable, but instead are members of a team working toward a goal (in this case, educating students). Shockley et al., (2006) demonstrated that the more support that teachers receive, and the more districts invest in their teachers; the more likely teachers are to persist in the classroom.

### **Personality and the Big Five Personality Inventory**

The American Psychological Association defines personality as “individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving”

(<http://www.apa.org/topics/personality>). Personality research has shown it to also be consistent across time. Individuals who have certain personality profiles in childhood generally have very similar profiles in adulthood. There are generally some changes in adolescence and young adulthood as individuals begin to solidify their identities and strengthen certain aspects of their personalities (Wan, 2011). According to Wan (2011), individuals tend to become more dominant, conscientious, interpersonally sensitive, and emotionally stable across time.

Researchers have attributed this development simply to maturation and the process of becoming a functioning member of society.

The Big Five Personality Inventory measures five factors of personality (Tupes & Christal, 1961). They are Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (OCEAN). Each of these factors is scored out of 40 to give a personality picture. Some versions of the test include six facets which explain each factor in more detail. These facets and the factors they describe are: Openness to experience (imagination,

artistic interests, depth of emotions, willingness to experiment, intellectual curiosity, and tolerance for diversity), Conscientiousness (sense of competence orderliness, sense of responsibility, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberateness), Extraversion (warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity level, excitement seeking, and positive emotions), Agreeableness (trust in others, sincerity altruism, compliance, modesty, and sympathy), and Neuroticism (anxiety, angry hostility, moodiness/contentment, self-consciousness, self-indulgence, and sensitivity to stress). These facets are also scored on a scale of 1-100. These facets help to define and expand on each factor and provide a fuller picture of the individual's personality. However, for ease of analysis, these facets will not be dealt with in this study.

According to 123test, a website which provides an extended version of the Big Five Personality Inventory (<https://www.123test.com/big-five-personality-theory/>, n.d.) the factors are defined as follows:

**OPENNESS TO EXPERIENCE:** People with high Openness to experience are people who like to learn new things and have new experiences. Those who score highly in this factor display traits such as imagination, artistic interests, depth of emotion, willingness to experiment, intellectual curiosity, and tolerance for diversity. Low scorers in this factor are often described as traditional, down to earth, conservative, and practical.

**CONSCIENTIOUSNESS:** High Conscientiousness is identified in people who are reliable and prompt. Individuals who score highly in this factor are often described as disciplined, efficient, well organized, and having a strong sense of duty. Low scorers can be described as spontaneous, disorganized, preferring flexible plans, and disliking precise details.

**EXTRAVERSION:** Those who score highly in Extraversion are defined as those who get energy from interacting with others; while those who score low (introverts) get energy from themselves. Extraverts are described as outgoing, friendly, assertive, like working with others, and enjoy leadership roles. Introverts are described as those who are reserved, formal, serious, quiet, prefer working alone, and avoid leadership roles.

**AGREEABLENESS:** Agreeableness is defined as individuals who are friendly, cooperative, and compassionate. These individuals may also be described as warm, eager to please, and good-natured. Those who score low on this factor may be described as more distant, hard-headed, skeptical, competitive, and proud.

**NEUROTICISM:** The final factor is Neuroticism. Neuroticism is related to the individual's emotional stability and degree of negative emotions. People who score high in this area can be described as prone to worry, easily upset, and experiencing negative emotional reactions and feelings of anxiety. Those who score low on this factor may be described as relaxed, resilient, calm, and not easily upset in stressful situations.

The above definitions of these factors and facets demonstrate that the factors may have different definitions from those that are used in the common vernacular. None of these traits are negative traits, including Neuroticism, although some may seem to have a negative connotation this is not, in fact, true, each factor has value within the individual's personality. While scoring highly in Neuroticism may seem like a negative outcome, high Neuroticism may be beneficial and necessary in certain situations. These scores help the individual, and those providing the test, to understand the "individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving" (<http://www.apa.org/topics/personality/>).

Career professionals and psychologists use the information learned from the Big Five test for recruitment and candidate assessment. These results allow them to identify the applicant who best fits the position that they are looking to fill (Ravi, 2016, p. 38). This test is also used for personal reflection and development, and for team building exercises. This research hypothesized that some personality traits are shared by teachers who persist in the classroom for five or more years, who are satisfied with their jobs, and do not intend to leave. This research hypothesized that more experienced teachers would be high in Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness. This research hypothesized that less experienced teachers would have Big Five personality scores that are more diverse than those of experienced teachers and that are more representative of the personalities of the general population. This research hypothesized that teachers who score higher in the areas of Neuroticism and lower on Conscientiousness and Extraversion, would be dissatisfied in their jobs.

## **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined as “the level of contentment a person feels regarding his or her job” (Boundless, 2016). Job satisfaction is important within the teaching profession, and particularly in this study. Looking for correlations between job satisfaction and personality traits allows this researcher to see more clearly if a trend exists among teachers who remain in the field for longer than four years. According to Kim and Loadman who studied 2054 practicing teachers, selected from the graduation lists of 10 universities working at private and public schools in rural and urban areas (1993) “Some indicators of job satisfaction have been stated to

be: a sense of efficacy, positive relationships with colleagues, satisfactory working conditions, the leadership style of principals, and the prestige and esteem associated with teaching” (p. 4).

Lester (1987) found similar results in a study of elementary, high school, and middle school teachers who were randomly chosen from 8 New York school districts. “The different factors which might account for teacher job satisfaction were identified as: advancement, autonomy, colleagues, creativity, pay, recognition, responsibility, school policies, security, supervision, work itself, and working conditions” (p. 3). This indicates that, most often, job dissatisfaction is not based solely on the work itself, or the students, but rather on other factors which can be adjusted and are not inherent to the work of teaching.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) stated “Teacher self efficacy is associated with student achievement and motivation, and teacher job commitment and job satisfaction” (p. 741). This indicates that self-efficacy, (defined in Klassen and Chiu’s (2010) research as “the beliefs teachers hold about their capability to influence student learning” (p. 741)) job satisfaction and job commitment are all related to one another and they have an impact, not only on the teachers but also on the students’ achievement and motivation to learn. If teachers have low job satisfaction and job commitment it could be detrimental to their students. Thus, the current study seeks to consider job satisfaction and intent to leave in an effort to contribute to the education of students. Analyzing trends between job satisfaction and personality would allow administrators and those involved in training and supporting teachers, especially in their first years in the classroom, to look for ways to increase job satisfaction where it might be low which would, in turn, contribute to an increase teacher retention.

## **Teacher Attrition and Retention**

High job satisfaction leads to teacher retention. Teacher retention refers to teachers remaining in the classroom from year to year. Teacher attrition refers to teachers who voluntarily leave the teaching profession. According to Inman and Marlow (2004) past research has examined demographics, teacher background, professional environment, and lack of support systems as factors which contributed to teacher retention and attrition. Inman and Marlow (2004) also stated “The reasons teachers provided for leaving (in the past) were less often due to insufficient salaries than to a lack of professionalism, collegiality, and administrative support” (p. 606). Some other reasons which were given by teachers as reasons for attrition were retirement and reduction of school staff, personal circumstances, family, job dissatisfaction, disruptive students, uninvolved parents, and invasive bureaucracy.

Kim and Loadman (1993) stated “Estimates are that approximately one of every four students who completes a teacher training program never enters teaching or leaves a teaching position within the first five years” (p. 2).

Goldring, Taie, and Riddles (2014) stated:

About 51% of public school teachers who left teaching in 2012–13 reported that the manageability of their workload was better in their current position than in teaching. Additionally, 53% of public school leavers reported that their general work conditions were better in their current position than in teaching” (p. 3).

This indicates that teachers are not necessarily leaving because of qualities inherent to their jobs, but are leaving because they do not have the appropriate support to help them manage their workload. Stating that their working conditions are better in their new jobs than they were in



teaching is also something which could be addressed and would, most likely, not only decrease rates of teacher attrition, but also improve the classroom environment for students and benefit them.

The cost of replacing teachers who leave the classroom has been estimated as well:

Using a U.S. Department of Labor formula, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) released a national analysis of teacher attrition costs, which estimated the cost of replacing public school teachers who leave the profession at \$2.2 billion per year, and when the cost of replacing teachers who transfer schools is added, that number rises to approximately \$4.9 billion per year (Shockley, Guglielmino, & Watlington, 2006, p.111).

This data shows us that along with teacher attrition being detrimental to students' education, and teachers being difficult to replace, it also costs quite a bit of money to replace them. According to Billingsley (2004), "Increasing teachers' job satisfaction is one of the most important ways to reduce attrition, because job satisfaction and attrition are strongly linked in studies of career intentions (e.g., Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Billingsley et al., 1995; Brownell, Smith, et al., 1997; Cross & Billingsley, 1994; Gertsen et al., 2001; Singh & Billingsley, 1996; Westling & Whitten, 1994; Whitaker 2000)" (p. 50).

Feelings of ineffectiveness in a classroom lead to dissatisfaction which, in turn, leads to teacher attrition. Providing teachers, particularly inexperienced teachers, with an appropriate support system that helps them feel more effective and allows them to acclimate to the profession more readily, will lead to higher job satisfaction. A support system that increases job satisfaction can help increase teacher retention. Gersten et al. (as cited in Billingsley, 2004) found:

Satisfaction reflects greater differences between those intending to stay and those intending to leave than other factors... Paying attention to creating supportive relationships with teachers and principals, reducing stress, clarifying roles, and providing professional support should help teachers derive more satisfaction from their work (p. 50).

Gertsen et al.'s research (as cited in Billingsley, 2004) demonstrates that low job satisfaction does indeed contribute to high teacher attrition and intent to leave the classroom. However, there is hope "For teachers, the combination of successful past experience; verbal support from principals, students, peers, and parents; and opportunities for observation of successful peers builds self-efficacy for teaching (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998)." (in Klassen & Chiu, 2010, p. 742). The next chapter will focus on the research design and methodology of the study. Then, Chapter Four and Five will highlight findings, discussion, and the educational significance of this study.

## **Chapter Three: Methods**

This research examined the possibility that personality traits play a part in career longevity and job satisfaction in the education field. To identify any trends among personality traits, this researcher compared the Big Five personality traits between elementary school teachers who have been in the classroom for varied numbers of years. This section will examine the methods used in this study, the demographics of the study, and details about the instrument used to survey these teachers.

### **Population**

The population surveyed for this research was Orange County Public School elementary school teachers who are a part of the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association, as well as Orange County classroom teachers from an area Orange County elementary school. The sample size for this survey is 202 participants. The survey was sent to 60 teachers at the elementary school, and 4,712 teachers in the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association. The survey was open and accepting responses from Thursday at 8:00 A.M. until Friday at 7:00 P.M. The response rate for this survey was 4.2%. Although this response rate is low, this researcher believes that if the survey had been open longer, or open on a weekend, there would likely be a higher response rate from the teachers in the population.

### **The Survey Instrument**

This study surveyed teachers primarily using the Big Five Personality Inventory (see Appendix A) and included additional questions that address intent to leave the education field and job satisfaction. There are ten items to address each of the Big Five personality traits. These

include “I am the life of the party” and “I feel comfortable around people” to measure Extraversion, “I am interested in people” and “I sympathize with others’ feelings” to measure Agreeableness, “I am exacting in my work” and “I follow a schedule” to measure Conscientiousness, “I get stressed out easily” and “I worry about things” to measure Neuroticism, and “I have a rich vocabulary” and “I have a vivid imagination” to measure Openness to Experience. In the current study, the following two items will be used to measure job satisfaction: (a) “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work,” and (b) “I feel good at work.” These two items were used in a study by Klassen and Chiu (2010) to measure job satisfaction and had previously shown reliability and validity in Caprara et al.’s (2006, p. 481) study on teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs.

The survey began with a statement of consent which asked participants to agree or disagree with the following statement “Please read the following statement of consent prior to completing the survey. I understand that my completion and submission of this survey indicates my consent to participate in this study. I understand that this information is anonymous and private. I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time prior to my submission of this survey.” If participants agreed with this statement they were directed to the next item of the survey. If participants disagreed with this statement they were taken straight to the end of the survey and thanked for their time. Each question was scored using a one to five-point Likert scale. This survey, consisted of 66 items, was distributed using the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association email distribution listserv to home email addresses provided by teachers within that organization. It was also distributed to 60 teachers in kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms at an area elementary school in Orange County. The results were examined to

look for personality trends across groups, among all participants, less experienced and more experienced, and compared them using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Linear regressions were conducted to examine the effects of personality on job satisfaction and intention to leave the field.

This survey was created using Qualtrics software. Each personality question was scored on a five-point Likert scale with options ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”

The survey contained two items which were used to measure job satisfaction. They are as follows: (a) “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work,” and (b) “I feel good at work.” These two items were used in a study by Klassen and Chiu (2010) to measure job satisfaction. These two items had also been previously used and shown to possess reliability and validity in Caprara et al.’s (2006) study on teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs. These two questions were scored on a five-point Likert scale with options ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” The survey also contained an item that addressed classroom teachers’ intent to leave with the question “How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?” which was also scored on a five-point Likert scale as well with options ranging from “often,” “sometimes,” “occasionally,” “rarely,” and “never.” Additionally, the survey, distributed to current classroom teachers, included basic demographic questions about gender, years teaching in the classroom, and grade level in which the teacher is currently teaching. Permission to use the Big Five Personality Inventory can be found in Appendix B.

### **Institutional Review Board Approval**

Due to the fact that this study involves human participants, this research was required to gain approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), to ensure that the research study was

ethical. This researcher received an IRB certification and information about the procedures of this study, as well as the statement of consent which was positioned at the beginning of the survey were send to the IRB for approval. This researcher also informed the participants that the data was anonymous and would not be identifiable and would only be shared in aggregate. This study was given exempt status by the IRB. The letter of exemption from the IRB can be found in Appendix C.

This survey was distributed via email to elementary school teachers in the Orange County Public School district, specifically, an area elementary school and the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association. This survey received 202 responses from teachers. The results were collected anonymously through Qualtrics and analyzed. The results will be shared and discussed in the Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion. Limitations and educational significance will be discussed in Chapter Five.

## **Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion**

This study aimed to examine if there were trends among the Big Five personality traits in teachers who persist in the field, are satisfied with their jobs, or intend to leave. Findings in these areas can add to the body of knowledge around the way that certain personalities approach the classroom, strategies that teacher educators can teach in their classrooms to help preservice teachers prepare for, and deal with, classroom stress, supports that could be added to encourage retention of teachers, and impact of teacher turnover on students.

The following section will discuss the limitations of this study, along with the research questions and findings of this study. Chapter Five will discuss the educational significance of this study.

### **Limitations**

In examining the results of the survey completed, one limitation of this research is that this study does not take into account the number of schools in which teachers may have worked. Teachers who have worked in multiple schools in a short period of time may have done so because they were dissatisfied, which could affect the results. This survey also does not look at teachers who have already left the teaching profession.

Another possible limitation of this research is that there may be personality traits which are particularly common to teachers who joined the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association. Those teachers who seek out the support and help from their peers may score higher on a certain personality trait than those who do not. Further research would be needed to know for sure.

Out of the 202 respondents to this survey, only 24 of them were male, and only 7 of those 24 men filled out the survey in its entirety which demonstrates a missing response bias, also referred to in some literature as missingness, is present in the survey in which the non-responders have shared traits. As a result, the predictive validity for the male population is limited. When filling out this survey 34 respondents did not reply to the question “How many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?” These 34 individuals also did not indicate what grade they teach. Therefore, there may be bias in this survey that led these individuals not to indicate the grade that they teach, or these may be special area teachers (Physical education, music, art, etc.) who do not only teach one grade and thus, were unable to respond to this question. Notably, eight respondents of these did not reply to the questions which asked about gender, years teaching, or which grade they currently teach.

Another limitation of this study is that the responses did not yield not an approximately equal number of respondents in each bracket of years of tenure. There were only 39 teachers who had been teaching for one to four years, but 121 teachers responded that they had been teaching for five years or more. This small sample cell size for the less experienced teachers may have affected the results found in this research. Further research with a stratified sample would be needed to have a more representative sample which might give the results a more robust level of validity.

## **Findings**

This survey received 202 responses out of a possible 4,772, giving this online survey a 4.2% response rate. Certain respondents to this survey did not answer every question, as a result



of this, some responses had to be excluded because they did not contain the necessary data. The research questions that were analyzed are as follows:

1. Do elementary classroom teachers, who have been in the profession for 1-4 years have different Big Five personality profiles than people who have been teaching for 5-10 years, 11-14 years, and 15+ years?
2. Do any of the Big Five personality traits predict elementary teacher satisfaction?
3. Does a personality trait within the Big Five Inventory predict intention to leave?

**Research Question number one: Do elementary classroom teachers who have been in the profession for 1-4 years have different personality profiles than people who have been teaching for 5-10 years, 11-14 years, and 15+ years?**

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare personality profiles with the years of teaching provided by respondents. Through this statistical analysis, it was discovered that there is no significant personality trend among teachers that correlates to any level of experience. Personality traits were evenly distributed across teachers with all levels of experience in this study of 202 classroom teachers.

The breakdown of years of teaching for these 202 teachers surveyed is shown in Figure 1 shown below.

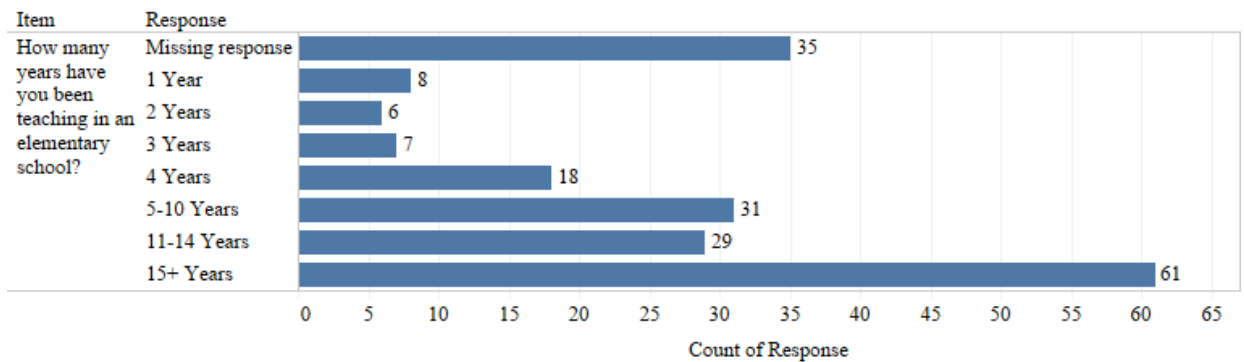


Figure 1: Response count for “How many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?”

The following figure shows the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) which was performed to compare the years of teaching experience to the Big Five personality traits of these 202 teachers surveyed. This data shows no significance in any of the five personality trait areas. This study hypothesized that more experienced teachers (those who had been teaching five or more years) would be highly conscientious and Agreeable, while less experienced teachers (those who had been teaching for four years or fewer) would display a diversity of Big Five personality traits without any significant association.

		ANOVA				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Extraversion	Between Groups	541.248	6	90.208	1.319	.252
	Within Groups	10464.527	153	68.396		
	Total	11005.775	159			
Agreeableness	Between Groups	176.536	6	29.423	.686	.661
	Within Groups	6565.208	153	42.910		
	Total	6741.744	159			
Conscientiousness	Between Groups	364.757	6	60.793	1.621	.145

Neuroticism	Within Groups	5737.218	153	37.498	1.016	.417
	Total	6101.975	159			
	Between Groups	437.877	6	72.979		
	Within Groups	10984.898	153	71.797		
	Total	11422.775	159			
	Between Groups	164.031	6	27.339		
Openness	Within Groups	5708.944	153	37.313	.733	.624
	Total	5872.975	159			

Figure 2. A summary of the data from the one-way ANOVA which compared personality traits to years teaching. This data shows no significance in any of the five personality trait areas.

The following section shows the data in response to the question “How many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?”

***Respondents to the question “How many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?”***

The following data dissects the responses received based on years of teaching experience and gender of the respondents.

	1 year teaching	2 years teaching	3 years teaching	4 years teaching	5-10 years teaching	11- 14 years teaching	15+ years teaching	Total respondents
Total respondents	8	6	7	18	20	28	60	147
Gender	7 female 1 male 0 prefer not to answer or other	6 female 0 male 0 prefer not to answer or other	6 female 0 male 1 no response 0 prefer not to answer or other	17 female 1 male 0 prefer not to answer or other	14 female 5 male 1 prefer not to answer 0 other	25 female 2 male 1 prefer not to answer 0 other	52 female 8 male 0 prefer not to answer or other	127 female 17 male 2 prefer not to answer 1 no response

Figure 3: Breakdown of the respondents to the question “How many years have you been teaching in elementary school ?”

The survey question “How many years have been you been teaching in an elementary school?” received 160 total responses. Of the respondents, 8 had been teaching for one year, 6 had been teaching for two years, 7 teachers had been teaching for three years, 18 teachers had

been teaching for four years, 20 respondents had been teaching for five to ten years, 28 respondents had been teaching for 11 to 15 years, and 60 respondents had been teaching for 15 years or more. Surprisingly, 34 respondents did not answer the survey question “how many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?”. Of the responses to this item 17 were men; 2 respondents stated they prefer not to answer when asked their gender, 1 respondent did not state their gender. The gender ratios presented in these numbers are representative of the average population of elementary school teachers.

Therefore, in terms of research question one, the data shows no significance between years of teaching experience and any of the Big Five personality traits. We also see that the responses were representative of the gender distribution within the profession.

### **Research question number two: Does personality predict job satisfaction?**

The two items used to measure job satisfaction in this survey were “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work.” and “I feel good at work.” These two items were used in a study by Klassen and Chiu (2010) to measure job satisfaction and had previously shown reliability and validity in Caprara et al.’s (2006, p. 481) study on teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs. The following two sections will address the results found when these items were correlated with the Big Five personality traits.

#### ***“I am satisfied with what I achieve at work.”***

The following figure, figure 4, displays the results of a correlation run between the Big Five Personality traits and the job satisfaction item “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work.” When the item “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work” is correlated with the Big Five

personality traits, Conscientiousness is significantly correlated, and Extraversion is nearly significant.

		Correlations					
		Job Satisfaction: I am satisfied with what I achieve at work	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Pearson Correlation	Job Satisfaction: I am satisfied with what I achieve at work.	1.000	.154	.109	.240	.180	.018
	Extraversion	.154	1.000	.274	-.004	.236	.266
	Agreeableness	.109	.274	1.000	.160	.232	.368
	Conscientiousness	.240	-.004	.160	1.000	.188	.124
	Neuroticism	.180	.236	.232	.188	1.000	.050
	Openness	.018	.266	.368	.124	.050	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Job Satisfaction I am satisfied with what I achieve at work	.	.016	.066	.000	.006	.401
	Extraversion	.016	.	.000	.478	.000	.000
	Agreeableness	.066	.000	.	.013	.001	.000
	Conscientiousness	.000	.478	.013	.	.004	.042
	Neuroticism	.006	.000	.001	.004	.	.244
	Openness	.401	.000	.000	.042	.244	.
N	Job Satisfaction I am satisfied with what I achieve at work	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Extraversion	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Agreeableness	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Conscientiousness	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Neuroticism	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Openness	194	194	194	194	194	194

Figure 4: “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work” job satisfaction correlated with personality.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.639	.652	2.515	.013
	Extraversion	.022	.012	.139	.066
	Agreeableness	.007	.016	.449	.654
	Conscientiousness	.045	.014	.224	.002
	Neuroticism	.015	.011	.100	.177
	Openness	-.014	.017	-.844	.400

Figure 5: The figure above displays the results of a correlation between the item “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work” which measures job satisfaction, and the Big Five personality traits. When this item is correlated with personality, Conscientiousness is significantly correlated.

A regression analysis was done to examine the possibility of an interaction between personality and job satisfaction, as assessed by the question “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work” on a one to five-point Likert scale ranging from “disagree” to “agree.” There is a significant association between Conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.240$ ) in response to the question “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work” (Beta weight = 0.224, sig. = 0.002).

It is also noteworthy that, when correlated with this job satisfaction item, Extraversion has a beta weight of 0.139 ( $r = 0.154$ ) and a nearly significant significance = 0.066. This interaction effect pertaining to Extraversion is worth investigating in future studies.

***“I feel good at work.”***

The following figure, figure 6, displays the results of a correlation run between the Big Five Personality traits and the job satisfaction item “I feel good at work.” When the item “I feel good at work” was correlated with the Big Five personality traits, Extraversion and Neuroticism were significantly associated.

		Correlations					
		Job Satisfaction I feel good at work.	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Pearson Correlation	Job Satisfaction I feel good at work.	1.000	.163	-.016	.138	.212	.009
	Extraversion	.163	1.000	.274	-.004	.236	.266
	Agreeableness	-.016	.274	1.000	.160	.232	.368
	Conscientiousness	.138	-.004	.160	1.000	.188	.124
	Neuroticism	.212	.236	.232	.188	1.000	.050
	Openness	.009	.266	.368	.124	.050	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Job Satisfaction I feel good at work.	.	.012	.415	.028	.001	.449
	Extraversion	.012	.	.000	.478	.000	.000
	Agreeableness	.415	.000	.	.013	.001	.000
	Conscientiousness	.028	.478	.013	.	.004	.042
	Neuroticism	.001	.000	.001	.004	.	.244
	Openness	.449	.000	.000	.042	.244	.
N	Job Satisfaction I feel good at work.	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Extraversion	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Agreeableness	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Conscientiousness	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Neuroticism	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Openness	194	194	194	194	194	194

Figure 6: “I feel good at work” job satisfaction item correlated with personality traits.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	2.267	.669		3.389	.001
	Extraversion	.026	.012	.156	2.063	.040
	Agreeableness	-.024	.017	-.115	-1.460	.146
	Conscientiousness	.025	.015	.125	1.729	.085
	Neuroticism	.028	.012	.179	2.405	.017
	Openness	-.003	.017	-.015	-.190	.849

Figure 7: The figure above displays the results of a correlation between the item “I feel good at work.” Which measures job satisfaction, and the Big Five personality traits. When this item is correlated with personality, Extraversion and Neuroticism are significantly correlated.

A regression analysis was run to examine the possibility of an interaction between personality and job satisfaction, as assessed by the question “I feel good at work” on a one to five-point Likert scale ranging from “disagree” to “agree.” There is a significant association between Extraversion ( $r = 0.163$ ) and job satisfaction in response to the question “I feel good at work” (Beta weight = 0.156, sig. = 0.040). Neuroticism is also strongly associated ( $r = 0.212$ ) with this question (Beta weight = 0.179 sig. = 0.017).

It is also noteworthy that, when correlated with this job satisfaction item, Conscientiousness has a beta weight of 0.125 ( $r = 0.138$ ) and a nearly significant sig. = 0.085. This interaction between Conscientiousness and job satisfaction is worth investigating in future studies.

### **Research Question Number Three: Does a personality trait within the Big Five Inventory predict intention to leave?**



**Correlations**

		How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Pearson Correlation	How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?	1.000	-.018	-.003	.066	.173	.026
	Extraversion	-.018	1.000	.266	-.004	.234	.256
	Agreeableness	-.003	.266	1.000	.159	.233	.380
	Conscientiousness	.066	-.004	.159	1.000	.188	.123
	Neuroticism	.173	.234	.233	.188	1.000	.053
	Openness	.026	.256	.380	.123	.053	1.000
	How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?	.	.399	.481	.179	.008	.360
Sig. (1-tailed)	Extraversion	.399	.	.000	.477	.000	.000
	Agreeableness	.481	.000	.	.013	.001	.000
	Conscientiousness	.179	.477	.013	.	.004	.043
	Neuroticism	.008	.000	.001	.004	.	.231
	Openness	.360	.000	.000	.043	.231	.
	How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?	.195	.195	.195	.195	.195	.195
N	Extraversion	195	195	195	195	195	195
	Agreeableness	195	195	195	195	195	195
	Conscientiousness	195	195	195	195	195	195
	Neuroticism	195	195	195	195	195	195
	Openness	195	195	195	195	195	195

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.473	.597	2.467	.015
	Extraversion	-.009	.011	-.061	.431
	Agreeableness	-.010	.015	-.055	.493
	Conscientiousness	.006	.013	.033	.656
	Neuroticism	.026	.010	.191	.013
	Openness	.009	.015	.048	.543

Figure 8: Dependent Variable: “How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?”

A significant association was found between Neuroticism and question “How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?” ( $r = 0.173$ ) (Beta weight = 0.191, Sig. = 0.013).

## Discussion

The current research found no correlation between any of the Big Five personality traits and career longevity with this particular population of highly involved elementary teachers. This study found that Neuroticism corresponds with intention to leave, and Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Neuroticism correspond with job satisfaction. This is supported by the research of Richardson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 323) which is linked to numerous similar studies and states that:

a growing body of evidence indicates that a correlation exists between dispositions and job satisfaction (Kokkinos, 2007; Teven, 2007; Thornton, Peltier, & Hill, 2005). Mood instability is a trait of teachers who experience emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment, often resulting in burnout (Cano-Garcia, Padilla-Munoz, & Carrasco-Ortiz, 2005; Kokkinos, 2007).

The association between Neuroticism and job satisfaction in response to the item “I feel good at work.” could be because those who score high in Neuroticism tend to put a great deal of effort into small details and strive for perfection. They are prone to worry which may cause them to work hard for their students and feel proud of their work at the end of the day, while extraverts enjoy being around others, working with others (in this case students and other teachers), and being in leadership roles. These hallmarks of Extraversion are well suited for a classroom and explain why teachers who are highly Extraverted would feel good at work.

Conscientiousness is also associated with job satisfaction in response to the item “I am satisfied with what I achieve at work.” Those who score highly in Conscientiousness can be described as disciplined, efficient, well organized, liking detail, and having a strong sense of duty. These qualities are fitting in a classroom setting and would lead a teacher to feel satisfied with what is achieved at school.

Neuroticism also corresponds with intention to leave. Individuals who score highly in Neuroticism tend to be anxious and view everyday frustrations as substantial problems. They have strong emotional responses to events that may not bother others. These strong reactions are caused by a diminished ability to cope effectively with stress and can lead to exhaustion and burnout. These individuals tend to worry, be intense, shy, pessimistic, self-critical, anxious, and be prone to discontent. These qualities may lead them to be more stressed in the classroom, when dealing with other teachers in a team, or when interacting with parents. This stress and frustration can lead to exhaustion and burnout and lead highly Neurotic teachers to leave the education field. However, this tendency to worry, be anxious, and self-critical, likely also leads

these teachers to put intensive time and effort into their work, leading them to feel satisfied with their jobs.

In the current study, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion are all linked with job satisfaction and lead teachers to feel good at work and contented with their accomplishments at work. Neuroticism is also linked with intentions to leave which may be a result of exhaustion and burnout. The following chapter will address the educational significance of this study with regard to the possible causes of teacher turnover in schools, the impact of teacher turnover on students, and the significance for teacher educators and preservice teachers.

## **Chapter Five: Educational Significance and Concluding Remarks**

Research has also shown “Teachers just entering the classroom experience ‘classroom or reality shock’ and often mistake the uneasiness they feel as an indication that they have made a mistake in their choice of profession” (Inman & Marlow, 2004). Research also tells us “New teachers are twice as likely to leave teaching after three years if they have not participated in some type of mentoring program” (Bobek, 2002, p. 203). Bobek (2002) also noted that the primary reason many teachers give for leaving is poor administrative support (p. 203). The current study could aid in the redesign and development of teacher education programs as well as teacher support systems, that keep personality traits in mind and seek to support those traits that may lead some teachers to feel unsatisfied and unsupported. This targeted development and support could increase retention rates of qualified and effective teachers.

### **Retention in Schools**

The current study has found a correlation between Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and job satisfaction, as well as, Neuroticism and intention to leave. Turnover intentions are worthy of consideration because, unsurprisingly, they are negatively correlated with commitment and strongly positively correlated to actual turnover (Jaros, 1991). Turnover intentions often predict actual future turnover. The correlation between turnover intentions and actual turnover leads this researcher to believe that if all teachers, but specifically those who score high in Neuroticism, which is correlated with high intention to leave, received stronger support, retention would increase among teachers. This is supported by Inman and Marlow

(2004) in their research which stated that the profile of the teachers most likely to be retained is “Experienced early childhood, or elementary females whose employment factors are perceived to be supportive, and who indicate that the professional prestige of their chosen field is positive” (p. 611).

The theory that teachers who are supported will have higher rates of job satisfaction and retention is buttressed by the research of Shockley et al. (2006) which looked at two Florida school districts to estimate the costs associated with replacing a teacher. Shockley et al. (2006) compared St. Lucie County school district and the Broward County school district. St. Lucie County had a lower cost associated with replacing teachers than did Broward County, but St. Lucie County also had a lower retention rate over four years than Broward County. Shockley et al. (2006) also found:

“infrastructure investment that the Broward County School System is making in its teacher induction/support program. This program is called the New Educator Support System (NESS), and it represents a significant investment and commitment by the school district to support and retain teachers. Given these expenditures, the costs associated with replacing a teacher were significantly higher in Broward than in St.

Lucie” (Shockley et al., 2006, p. 112-113).

Reduced investment in teachers within the St. Lucie County school district likely leads teachers to feel less supported and less satisfied with their jobs. It doubtless also leads to stress, overwork, and burnout among teachers which increases the frequency of their thoughts related to leaving the profession. According to Betoret (2006), “teacher stress is considered to have a negative effect on several dimensions. These include psychological (e.g., job dissatisfaction),

physiological (e.g., high blood pressure), and behavioural (e.g., absenteeism) dimensions.”

(Betoret, 2006, p. 520)

Thus, added support for teachers in schools, specifically for highly Neurotic teachers, particularly in the first four years of their careers could possibly decrease their physiological and psychological stress, job dissatisfaction, thoughts of leaving, and attrition rates.

### **Impact on Students**

According to the research of Kane and Staiger (2008); Levy, Jablonski, and Fields (2006); Levy, Joy, Ellis, Jablonski, and Karelitz (2012); Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005); Ronfeldt et al., (2013), “Schools that experienced high mobility (teachers moving to different schools) or high attrition (teachers leaving the public school system), particularly urban schools and schools with a high share of students eligible for the school lunch program, appear to have lower student achievement in reading and math” (Lochmiller & Muller, 2016, p. 1). In light of Lochmiller and Muller’s (2016) research, one would believe that high rates of attrition and turnover are causing student education to suffer. An assumption which is buttressed by Ronfeldt et al.’s (2011) research which found “Results demonstrate that teacher turnover has a significant and negative effect on student achievement in both math and ELA (English Language Arts). Moreover, teacher turnover is particularly harmful to students in schools with large populations of low-performing and black students” (p. 17).

While it could be argued that teacher turnover is beneficial at times because it brings in new teachers with fresh ideas, Ronfeldt et al. (2011) found this was untrue and stated:

Although this study finds evidence that changes in teacher quality explain some of the effect of turnover on student achievement, the results suggest there may be disruptional

effects of turnover beyond these compositional effects. First, results show that turnover has a harmful effect on student achievement, even after controlling for different indicators of teacher quality, especially in lower-performing schools. Also, we find that turnover negatively affects the students of stayers – those who remain in the same school from one year to the next as well the students in the classrooms of new teachers. Thus, turnover must have an impact beyond simply whether incoming teachers are better than those they replaced – even the teachers outside of this redistribution were somehow harmed by it (p.17-18).

Teacher supports systems could be developed to help increase and retain quality teachers. Through the implementation of teacher support systems to address the needs of Neurotic, Extraverted, and Conscientious teachers, job satisfaction, teacher retention, and student achievement could be increased. These support systems could include team building activities to encourage strong positive relationships between teachers, not only within teacher teams, but among all teachers. They could also look like relaxation activities, like meditation, mindfulness, or art projects, which would help relax those who are prone to stress and anxiety.

### **Teacher Educators and Preservice Teachers**

This current research can help teacher educators to recognize Neurotic, conscientious, and Extraverted characteristics in preservice teachers at a university level. The current study gives teacher educators a basis for scaffolding their classrooms to address and accommodate for Neurotic students, as well as those who display introverted traits and low Conscientiousness, who may be prone to struggle or be dissatisfied in their future classrooms. This recognition and awareness that certain traits, such as Neuroticism, lead preservice teachers to be more likely to



leave the profession could allow teacher educators to teach strategies to their students that will help them to be flexible once they get into the classroom. Such strategies may help preservice teachers to deal with anxiety, and stress during intense moments in their future classrooms. These strategies could look like teaching pre-service teachers relaxation techniques to help them deal with stress, intentionally putting pre-service teachers into stressful or overwhelming situations to help prepare them for circumstances in a classroom. This could be done in an engaging and memorable way through providing pre-service teachers with relaxation and emotional regulation techniques, then allowing pre-service teachers complete obstacle courses or a series of puzzles and riddles as teams. This could teach them to work together to be cooperative, but also to think quickly and clearly under pressure, and to manage stress through the implementation of relaxation and emotional regulation techniques. Preservice teachers could also perform skits in which they act out stressful situations that could arise in a classroom, then talk through their thought processes in these situations for their classmates. They would then receive feedback from their professor or an expert in emotional regulation, and advice on ways to manage stress and regulate emotions in high pressure situations.

The Big Five personality traits tell us about personality and how strengths in certain areas effect our interactions with the world around us. We can see from this research that individuals who are highly Extraverted, Conscientious, and Neurotic tend to be satisfied with their jobs. We can also see that those who are highly Neurotic tend to consider leaving more often than those who are not. These trends have an impact on our education system, our students, and our teachers who have stayed in the field, as well as those who have left. Certainly continuous

research regarding career longevity for elementary teachers is an important area of inquiry for our educational system.

## References

- Betoret, F. D. (2006). Stressors, self-efficacy, coping resources, and burnout among secondary school teachers in Spain. *Educational Psychology*, 26(4), 519-539.
- Big Five Factor Definitions* (n.d.) retrieved October 16, 2017 from,  
<https://www.123test.com/big-five-personality-theory/>
- Billingsley, B. S. (2004). Special education teacher retention and attrition: A critical analysis of the research literature. *The Journal of Special Education*, 38(1), 39-55.
- Billingsley, B. S., & Cross, L. H. (1992). Predictors of commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to stay in teaching: A comparison of general and special educators. *The Journal of Special Education*, 25, 453-471.
- Billingsley, B., Pyecha, J., Smith-Davis, J., Murray, K., & Hendricks, M. B. (1995). Improving the retention of special education teachers: Final report (Prepared for Office of Special Education Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, under Cooperative Agreement H023Q10001). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED379860)
- Bobek, B. L. (2002). Teacher resiliency: A key to career longevity. *The Clearing House*, 75(4), 202-205.
- Boundless (2016, May 26). Defining Job Satisfaction - Boundless Open Textbook, from  
<https://www.boundless.com/management/textbooks/boundless-management-textbook/organizational-behavior-5/drivers-of-behavior-44/defining-job-satisfaction-231-7247/>

- Brownell, M. T., Smith, S. W., McNellis, J., & Miller, M. D. (1997). Attrition in special education: Why teachers leave the classroom and where they go. *Exceptionality*, 7, 143–155.
- Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006, September 5). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology*, XX, 473-490
- Cross, L. H., & Billingsley, B. (1994). Testing a model of special educators' intent to stay in teaching. *Exceptional Children*, 60, 411–421
- Gersten, R., Keating, T., Yovanoff, P., & Harniss, M. K. (2001). Working in special education: Factors that enhance special educators' intent to stay. *Exceptional Children*, 67, 549–567.
- Goldberg, L. R. (1992). The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure. *Psychological assessment*, 4(1), 26.
- Goldring, R., Taie, S., & Riddles, M. (2014). *Teacher Attrition and Mobility: Results from the 2012-13 Teacher Follow-Up Survey. First Look*. NCES 2014-077. City, ST: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Inman, D., & Marlow, L. (2004). Teacher retention: Why do beginning teachers remain in the profession? *Education*, 124(4), 605-615.
- Jaros, S. J. (1997). An assessment of Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organizational commitment and turnover intentions. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 51(3), 319-337.
- Kim, I., & Loadman, W. E. (1994). ERIC - Predicting Teacher Job Satisfaction., 1994. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED383707>

- Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010). Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: Teacher gender, years of experience, and job stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 102*(3), 741-756. doi:10.1037/a0019237
- Lester, P. E. (1987). Development and Factor Analysis of the Teacher Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (TJSQ). *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 47*(1), 223-233. doi:10.1177/0013164487471031
- Lochmiller, C. R., Sugimoto, T. J., & Muller, P. A. (2016). Teacher Retention, Mobility, and Attrition in Kentucky Public Schools from 2008 to 2012. REL 2016-116. *Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia*.
- Marlow, L., Inman, D., & Betancourt-Smith, M. (1996). *Teacher job satisfaction*. Natchitoches, LA: Northwestern State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED393802)
- NCES: National Center for Education Statistics. (1997). *The condition of education*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1-32.
- Personality Definition* (n.d.). Retrieved March 2, 2017, from <http://www.apa.org/topics/personality/>
- Ravi, V. (2016). *Advanced Educational Psychology* (First ed.). India: Laxmi Book Publication, 1-108.
- Richardson, D., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Attitudes toward dispositions of teachers. *Academic Exchange Quarterly, 8*(3), 31-36.

Ronfeldt, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). *How Teacher Turnover Harms Student Achievement*. [electronic resource]. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Shockley, R., Guglielmino, P., & Watlington, E. J. (2006). *A national crisis in teacher education: What are the costs?*  
[http://www.pearsonschool.com/live/assets/200727/2006\\_11ShockleyGuglielminoWatlington\\_558\\_1.pdf](http://www.pearsonschool.com/live/assets/200727/2006_11ShockleyGuglielminoWatlington_558_1.pdf)

Shockley, R., Watlington, E., Carlstrom, D., Huie, K., Morris, J.D., & Lieberman, M. (2005). The relationships between demographic variables and teacher retention: A longitudinal study. *Paper presented at the Florida Educational Research Association (FERA)*, November 2005.

Singh, K., & Billingsley, B. (1996). Intent to stay in teaching: Teachers of students with emotional disorders versus other special educators. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17, 37–47.

Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research*, 68(2), 202-248.

Tupes, E. C., & Christal, R. E. (1961). *Recurrent personality factors based on trait ratings* (No. ASD-TR-61-97). Lackland AFB, TX: Personnel Research Lab.

Wan, K. E. (2011, March). Does Personality Remain Stable Or Change Over Time? Retrieved from <https://www.cscollge.gov.sg/Knowledge/Pages/Does-Personality-Remain-Stable-Or-Change-Over-Time.aspx>

- Westling, D. L., & Whitten, T. M. (1996). Rural special education teachers' plans to continue or leave their teaching positions. *Exceptional Children*, 62, 319–335.
- Whitaker, S. D. (2000). Mentoring beginning special education teachers and the relationship to attrition. *Exceptional Children*, 66, 546–566.

## **Appendix A: Big Five Personality Inventory and Additional Items**



**Statement of Consent:**

Please read the following statement of consent prior to completing the survey.

I understand that my completion and submission of this survey indicates my consent to participate in this study. I understand that this information is anonymous and private. I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time prior to my submission of this survey.

**Big Five Personality Inventory, Additional Survey Questions, and Survey Scoring Formula****Instructions**

In the table below, for each statement 1-50 mark how much you agree with on the scale 1-5, where

1=disagree, 2=slightly disagree, 3=neutral, 4=slightly agree and 5=agree

I...

1. Am the life of the party.

2. Feel little concern for others.

3. Am always prepared.

4. Get stressed out easily.

5. Have a rich vocabulary.
6. Don't talk a lot.
7. Am interested in people.
8. Leave my belongings around.
9. Am relaxed most of the time.
10. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
11. Feel comfortable around people.
12. Insult people.
13. Pay attention to details.
14. Worry about things.
15. Have a vivid imagination.
16. Keep in the background.
17. Sympathize with others' feelings.
18. Make a mess of things.
19. Seldom feel blue.

- 20. Am not interested in abstract ideas.
- 21. Start conversations.
- 22. Am not interested in other people's problems.
- 23. Get chores done right away.
- 24. Am easily disturbed.
- 25. Have excellent ideas.
- 26. Have little to say.
- 27. Have a soft heart
- 28. Often forget to put things back in their proper place.
- 29. Get upset easily.
- 30. Do not have a good imagination.
- 31. Talk to a lot of different people at parties.
- 32. Am not really interested in others.
- 33. Like order.
- 34. Change my mood a lot.

- 35. Am quick to understand things
- 36. Don't like to draw attention to myself.
- 37. Take time out for others.
- 38. Shirk my duties.
- 39. Have frequent mood swings.
- 40. Use difficult words
- 41. Don't mind being the center of attention.
- 42. Feel others' emotions.
- 43. Follow a schedule.
- 44. Get irritated easily.
- 45. Spend time reflecting on things.
- 46. Am quiet around strangers.
- 47. Make people feel at ease
- 48. Am exacting in my work.
- 49. Often feel blue.

50. Am full of ideas.

$$E = 20 + (1) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (6) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (11) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (16) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (21) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (26) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (31) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (36) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + \\ (41) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (46) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

$$A = 14 - (2) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (7) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (12) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (17) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (22) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (27) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (32) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (37) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + \\ (42) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (47) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

$$C = 14 + (3) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (8) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (13) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (18) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (23) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (28) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (33) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (38) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + \\ (43) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (48) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

$$N = 38 - (4) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (9) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (14) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (19) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (24) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (29) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (34) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (39) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (44) \\ \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (49) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

$$O = 8 + (5) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (10) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (15) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (20) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (25) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } - (30) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (35) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (40) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + \\ (45) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } + (50) \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ }$$

The scores you calculate should be between zero and forty. Below is a description of each trait.

- Extraversion (E) is the personality trait of seeking fulfillment from sources outside the self or in community. High scorers tend to be very social while low scorers prefer to work on their projects alone.

- Agreeableness (A) reflects much individuals adjust their behavior to suit others. High scorers

are typically polite and like people. Low scorers tend to 'tell it like it is'.

- Conscientiousness (C) is the personality trait of being honest and hardworking. High scorers

tend to follow rules and prefer clean homes. Low scorers may be messy and cheat others.

- Neuroticism (N) is the personality trait of being emotional.

- Openness to Experience (O) is the personality trait of seeking new experience and intellectual

pursuits. High scores may daydream a lot. Low scorers may be very down to earth.

(Goldberg, 1992)

#### Job Satisfaction Questions

1=disagree, 2=slightly disagree, 3=neutral, 4=slightly agree and 5=agree

1. "I am satisfied with what I achieve at work,"

2. "I feel good at work."

#### Intent to Leave Question

"How often have you thought about leaving the teaching profession?"

5 = often, 4 = sometimes, 3 = occasionally, 2 = rarely, and 1 = never

#### Years in the classroom question

1. How many years have you been teaching in an elementary school?

-1 year

-2 years

-3 years

-4 years

-5-10 years

-11-14 years

-15+ years

2. What grade level do you currently teach?

-Kindergarten

-1<sup>st</sup> grade

-2<sup>nd</sup> grade

-3<sup>rd</sup> grade

-4<sup>th</sup> grade

-5<sup>th</sup> grade

3. Gender

-Female

- Male

- Other

-Prefer not to answer

## **Appendix B: Permission to Use the Big Five Personality Inventory**



## Permission to Use the Big Five Personality Inventory

<https://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~johnlab/bfi.htm>

Berkeley Personality Lab

Director: Oliver P. John

Home

People

Research

Measures

Contact

The Big Five Inventory

Frequently Asked Questions

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions. It is quite brief for a multidimensional personality inventory (44 items total), and consists of short phrases with relatively accessible vocabulary.

Is the Big Five Inventory (BFI) in the public domain and available for use?  
I hold the copyright to the BFI and it is not in the public domain per se. However, it is freely available for researchers to use for **non-commercial research purposes**. Please keep us posted on your findings.

Where do I get the Big Five Inventory (BFI)?  
If you are interested in taking the BFI yourself, please visit [this](#) website, where you can take an online version of the scale that gives you instant feedback.

If you are interested in using the BFI for commercial purposes, please submit a request to [ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com](mailto:ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com). At this time, the BFI is for non-commercial uses only.

If you are interested in using the BFI for research purposes, please click [\[here\]](#), which will direct you to the BFI download page. We are trying to create a database for BFI users of publications, relevant findings, and translations of the BFI in an effort to make the scale more useful for users. Thus, before downloading a copy of the BFI and the scoring instructions, please complete a short survey to let us know a little more about who you are and why you want to use the measure. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

[How should I reference the BFI?](#)

Copyright © 2007-9 Berkeley Personality Lab | Designed by edg3.co.uk | Managed by

<https://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~johnlab/contact.htm>

Berkeley Personality Lab

Director: Oliver P. John

Home

People

Research

Measures

Contact

Contact Information

Are you requesting permission to use the Big Five Inventory (BFI)?  
Visit our [BFI Download page](#) and complete a short survey on how you plan to use it.

Oliver P. John, Director  
Institute of Personality & Social Research  
4140 Tolman Hall #5050  
Berkeley, CA 94720  
Office: (510) 642-2178  
Fax: (510) 643-9334  
[ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com](mailto:ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com)

Copyright © 2007-09 Berkeley Personality Lab | Designed by edg3.co.uk | Managed by

## Berkeley Personality Lab

Director: Oliver P. John

[Home](#)

[People](#)

[Research](#)

[Measures](#)

[Contact](#)

### The Big Five Inventory

#### Download Page

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions. It is quite brief for a multidimensional personality inventory (44 items total), and consists of short phrases with relatively accessible vocabulary.

To learn more about the BFI, click [\[here\]](#)

#### Where do I get the Big Five Inventory (BFI)?

If you are interested in taking the BFI yourself, please visit [this](#) website, where you can take an online version of the scale that gives you instant feedback.

If you are interested in using the BFI for commercial purposes, please submit a request to [ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com](mailto:ucbpersonalitylab@gmail.com). At this time, the BFI is for non-commercial uses only.

If you are interested in using the BFI for research purposes, please complete the following form. We are trying to create a database for BFI users of publications, relevant findings, and translations of the BFI in an effort to make the scale more useful for users. Thus, before downloading a copy of the BFI and the scoring instructions, please complete a short survey to let us know a little more about who you are and why you want to use the measure. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Your name:

Your e-mail address:

Copyright © 2007 Berkeley Personality Lab | Designed by [edg3.co.uk](#) | Managed by

## **Appendix C: Institutional Review Board Letter of Exemption**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### **Determination of Exempt Human Research**

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Afrina R. Rohani and Co-PI: Sherron E Roberts**

Date: **November 17, 2017**

Dear Researcher:

On 11/17/2017, the IRB reviewed the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Project Title: Exploring personality traits and trends among elementary teachers who persist in the field  
Investigator: Afrina R. Rohani  
IRB Number: SBE-17-13455  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

This letter is signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gillian Morien".

Signature applied by Gillian Morien on 11/17/2017 12:45:53 PM EST

Designated Reviewer