

Comparing Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, and Emotional Intelligence Among Teachers in Public and Seventh-day Adventist Schools in Romania

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Abstract

Keywords:

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This paper examines levels of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and emotional intelligence among 269 K-12 teachers working in public schools and in Seventh-day Adventist schools in Romania during the 2024-2025 academic year. Emotional intelligence was evaluated using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form, which uses a 7-point Likert Scale. Job satisfaction was measured using the Job Satisfaction Survey, using a 6-point Likert Scale. Organizational commitment was measured using the Three-Component Organizational Commitment Scale, Revised Version, using a 7-point Likert Scale. In addition, demographic data were also collected. Of the 269 teachers in the study, 166 were from public schools and 103 from Adventist Schools. There was no statistically significant difference in the emotional intelligence of the teachers from public and from Adventist schools. However, job satisfaction and organisational commitment were significantly higher among teachers working in Adventist schools. The mean job satisfaction score was 4.194 for public school teachers and 4.653 for those working in Adventist schools. The mean organisational commitment score was 4.927 for teachers in public schools and 5.160 for teachers in Adventist schools. Future research could explore the reasons behind these differences, especially since pay in Adventist schools in Romania is equal to or lower than in public schools.

1. Introduction

This study aims to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference in the emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment of teachers working in public schools and Seventh-day Adventist schools in Romania in the 2024/2025 academic year.

This study is important because high teacher turnover rates are not a good thing for schools, and it is important to attempt to determine what can be done to facilitate teacher job satisfaction and teacher organisational commitment in order to ensure that a teacher will want to stay at a school. Finding teachers for certain subjects can be especially challenging for private Seventh-Day Adventist schools. There are several differences between public schools and Seventh-day Adventist schools in Romania and determining if job satisfaction is higher in one or the other can lead to examining the practices that influence the difference if one exists. No studies were found comparing these variables between these two types of schools in Romania and as such the study adds information to an area with important implications for both SDA and public schools.

The Seventh-day Adventist church is a global protestant Christian church with a worldwide membership of 23,684,237 as of 2024. The membership in Romania, as of the 30th of September 2024, is 61.207 baptized persons (Pârlitu, p. 11, 2024). This does not include people who visit the church or children who attend with their parents who are baptized. The Seventh-day Adventist church practices adult baptism meaning that the individual asks to be baptized. It encourages and invests in education and health. In the 2024/2025 academic year there were 55 Seventh-day Adventist educational institution in Romania. There were 5777 students, 733 teachers, and 314 auxiliary/ non-teaching staff. Some of the institutions mentioned are managed by SDA church, while others were initiated by Members of the Church though it is the usual practice in such cases to invited representatives of the church’s administration to join the board of directors or the school.

2. Theoretical foundation

2.1. Emotional intelligence



Emotional intelligence (EI) positively correlates to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as other workplace variables such as job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior, while negatively correlating with job stress (Doğru, 2022) turnover intention (Miao et al., 2017b), and burnout (Lee, 2018). Miao et al. (2017b) propose the inclusions of EI in training programs with the aim of increasing satisfaction among workers. EI could influence the interpretation and reaction of an employee to events at work which in turn, may affect their evaluation of their job.

There are three models of emotional intelligence: 1) the ability model, 2) the trait model, and 3) the mixed model. This research used the trait model. Petrides (2011) maintains that trait emotional intelligence is in the domain of personality and the ability model of EI is in the domain of cognitive ability and distinct from the Giant Three and Big Five personality models. This model includes variance related to emotions not explained by other trait taxonomies (Petrides et al., 2007).

High scores trait emotional intelligence have been correlate with higher “life satisfaction, less rumination of negative events, frequent use of adaptive and infrequent use of maladaptive coping strategies” (Petrides et al., p. 285, 2007). On the other hand, Petrides (2011) also claims that there is not an EI profile that enables a person to universally excel in any domain. High trait EI scores do not implicitly mean being more adaptive and low scores do not necessarily indicate maladaptation. Extreme high scores may reflect self-promotion. People scoring low on trait emotional intelligence are often more straightforward and not as concerned with self-verification as high scorers.

The instrument developed by Petrides for his research in trait emotional intelligence is called the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). It has shown strong predictive validity in research as well as reliable psychometric properties (Petrides, 2011).

The Petrides trait emotional intelligence model has four factors and fifteen facets. The factors are emotionality, self-control, sociability, and well-being. Each of these is a self-reported in the TEIQue as well as in the shorter version of the instrument, the TEIQue-SF. Emotionality reflects a person’s attunement with their own feelings and those of others. It encompasses emotional perception and expression; skills used to develop and maintain relationships. Self-control

reflects a person’s ability to control their urges, desires, impulses, and their capacity to effectively regulate stress and pressure. Sociability, as a factor, pertains to social relationships and influences. High scores indicate better social interactions, good listening skills, and clear and confident communication skills. “The focus is on the individual as an agent in social contexts, rather than on personal relationships with family and close friends” (Petrides, p. 10, 2009). Individuals with low scores often come across as shy, while those who score highly in well-being, the fourth trait EI factor, typically “feel positive, happy, and fulfilled. In contrast, individuals with low scores tend to have low self-regard and to be disappointed about their life as it is at present” (p. 11).

Miao et al. (2017b) suggest that EI contributes to greater job satisfaction by mitigating negative emotions, fostering positive affect, and enhancing job performance. Similarly, King (2019) emphasises the value of interventions that are designed to develop emotional intelligence with the goal of effectively managing workplace stress.

2.2. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a measure of how much someone likes their job (Spector, 1997) and is frequently studied in the context of organizations. Teacher job satisfaction and retention are related and job satisfaction warrants attention in light of the global teacher shortage issue according to Toropova et al. (2021).

Job satisfaction fosters positive emotional states that can improve performance and strengthen loyalty (Wicker, 2011). A study by Perrachione et al. (2008) involving elementary school teachers who had five or more years of experience, both satisfaction with the teaching profession and satisfaction with their specific school positively influenced teachers’ intention to remain in the profession. Teachers who held less favourable views on school policies “were less likely to remain in teaching” (p. 9). However, Jobs satisfaction in a given school year did not significantly influence retention.

Research in found that commitment to the SDA church was reason for the choice to work for and Adventist school but also that for males job satisfaction was highly related to being committed to the teaching profession. For females church organisation commitment was related to job satisfaction (Rutebuka, 2009).

2.3 Organizational Commitment

Over the past decades conceptualizations and measurements of organizational commitment have changed. One of the most frequently used models in the field was developed by Allen and Meyer. The three components of the model are: affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC), and normative commitment (NC). Together these attitudes comprise organizational commitment (Llobet & Fitó-Bertran, 2013).

Loyalty is likely to be fostered by job satisfaction (Wicker, 2011). According to Meyer et al. (1993) AC and NC positively correlated with good work experiences and this can lead to developing AC, as well as a feeling of obligation towards the organisation they are linked with.

A study involving 279 academic staff found organizational commitment to be positively influenced by components of total reward, such as recognition, opportunities for development, compensation, benefits, and performance management (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2018). A study involving 827 police officers found a positive correlation between affective organizational commitment and perceptions of organizational justice (Qureshi et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence (EI) has also been linked to stronger organizational commitment in a meta-analysis by Dođru (2022). Furthermore, EI was correlated with organizational commitment in research conducted by Miao et al. (2017b). On the other hand, a teacher with lower organisational commitment has a higher likelihood of leaving the profession (Chambers Mack et al., 2019).

People who want to stay with their employers due to high affective commitment generally surpass employees with lower affective commitment scores. Employees with high Normative Commitment scores usually surpass those who are low in NC and do have a sense of obligation. The effect is smaller on performance in this case compared to what is seen in the case of desire. Those who stay so they do not lose something often do little more than the minimum required to keep their current job (Meyer & Allen, 2004).

3. Research methodology

The study was conducted on K-12 teachers in Romanian working in the 2024/2025 academic year. It is a quantitative and correlational study, which made use of convenience sampling.

Not all the teachers in Adventist school are also members of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and it

is also highly likely that some of the teachers in state schools who responded to this questionnaire were members of the SDA church since the questionnaire was distributed among acquaintances as well. The religion of the participants was not asked for.

The instruments used were Romanian versions of the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form which has 30 items and is measured on a 7-point Likert scale (Petrides, 2002), the Job Satisfaction Survey which has 36 items and uses a 6-point Likert scale (Spector, 1994), and the Organizational Commitment Scale which has 18 items and uses a 7-point Likert scale (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). The questionnaire included items related to demographic data about sex, age, level of education, academic rank, years of teaching experience, number of years working at the current institution, and the type of school teachers were working at. The Initial dataset included other types of schools as well (Orthodox, and alternative educational systems).

Once the data was gathered, outliers with standardized residuals greater than 2 or less than -2 were removed and statistical analysis was performed.

4. Results

Of the 269 K-12 teachers included in the study, 236 were females and 33 were males. There were 166 teachers in public schools and 103 teachers from SDA schools. For the average age of the teachers and the average years of teaching experience, as well as average number of years of teaching at their current institution see Table 1. The results, including the mean of each variable can be seen in table 2 and statistics from the T-test can be seen in Table 3

Table 1

Average age, years teaching, and years at current institution

	Public school	Adventist School
Avg. age	44.1	40.5
Avg. teaching experience	17.5	9.8
Avg. nr. of years at current institution	11.8	6.2

The demographics data indicates that among those who responded teachers at SDA schools were, on average, approximately 3.4 years younger, had less years of total teaching experience, and had been working at their institution for less years than those who responded from public schools.

The results indicated no statistically significant difference between the emotional intelligence of

teachers at state schools, and at SDA schools. Teachers in Seventh-day Adventist schools reported higher overall teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment compared with teachers working in public schools. For a brief summary of key findings check Table 4.

Table 2
Mean results for each variable

	Institution type	N	Mean	Deviation	Standard error of the mean
Organisational Commitment	Public school	166	4.9274	.88498	.06869
	Adventist School	103	5.1602	.84546	.08331
Job satisfaction	Public school	166	4.1936	.74888	.05812
	Adventist School	103	4.6526	.74676	.07358
Emotional intelligence	Public school	166	5.4269	.74605	.05790
	Adventist School	103	5.4120	.64609	.06366

Table 3
T Test statistics

		Levene's test for equality of variances		t-test for equality of means		
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Sig. (bilateral)
Organisational commitment	Equal variances assumed	1.399	.238	-2.133	267	.034
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.156	223.869	.032
Job Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.108	.743	-4.892	267	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.895	216.822	.000
Emotional Intelligence	Equal variances assumed	2.589	.109	.168	267	.867
	Equal variances not assumed			.174	239.327	.862

Table 4
Average age, years teaching, and years at current institution

	Public school	Adventist School	Difference
Emotional intelligence	No statistically significant difference		
Job satisfaction (6-point Likert scale)	4.194	4.653	.459

Organizational commitment (7-point Likert Scale)	4.927	5.160	(approx. 10.4%) .233 (approx. 4.6%)
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5. Discussions

Our findings suggest that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are higher in the Adventist schools in this study than in the public schools. There was no statistically significant difference in the job satisfaction of the teachers in the study based on the type of school they worked at.

Limitations of this study where the convenience sampling method used. This means researchers had to rely on people reading the instructions and only replying to the questionnaire if they fit the target group. The original instruments were created in English, but they were used in Romanian. Care was taken to ensure that the items were easy to understand. Another possible limitation is that the instruments for job satisfaction and organisational commitment were not specifically designed for teachers, and while this may not be a very big limitation, there is a dimension of a teacher's work that can be seen as more of a calling than a career. The results cannot be generalised to all SDA and public schools in Romania, due to the convenience sampling method used in which responses were anonymous and not linked to a specific institution.

The implications of this research matter because it shows that within the same country it is possible to experience higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment in the same field of work based on the type of school at teacher is working in. Future research could seek to determine the reason for the differences in job satisfaction and organizational commitment between Seventh-day Adventist schools and public school. Once the factors contributing to higher job satisfaction are determined causally policy could be shaped on both national and institutional levels that would facilitate growth in teachers' job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Research could also be done to assess why, on average, teachers at SDA schools have less years of teaching experience at their current institution. Another area worth exploring is whether years of teaching experience is linked to job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

This research found no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of teachers based whether they worked at a public school or an SDA school, yet both

job satisfaction and organisational commitment were higher in SDA schools. Further research could determine if there is a difference in job satisfaction and organisational commitment within the same type of school based on teacher emotional intelligence. That is, for example, do teachers with higher emotional intelligence in public schools report higher levels of job satisfaction than teachers in the same school with lower emotional intelligence scores?

Stress is found to be correlated positively more frequently thinking about leaving the teaching profession (Tompkins, 2023). As such policy makers can also take steps to reduce stress or help teachers develop coping mechanisms.

6. Conclusions

Job satisfaction and organisational commitment should be of interest to policy makers and school administrators in both public and private schools. In this research the reason for the difference in levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment was not correlated to difference in trait emotional intelligence, which means that there were other factors involved that need to be discovered. School administrators need to continue creating environments which foster high levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment for the health of their organisations and the wellbeing of the teachers, which will hopefully translate into a greater ability to help students grow, the ultimate mission of a good teacher.

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Authors note:

Márk Szallós-Farkas is currently a doctoral student at Montemorelos University, Mexico. He has 14 years of teaching experience in the field of visual arts, and English. His interest in job satisfaction and organizational commitment developed while working as the vice principal of a private high school. Other

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Jorge Hilt holds a PhD in Educational Management and was rector of the Villa Regina Adventist Institute and the Mariano Moreno Adventist Institute, both in Argentina. He is currently a graduate professor in the Faculty of Education at Montemorelos University, Mexico. He is also an associate editor of the *International Journal of Studies in Education* (RIEE, rieel.um.edu.mx). His research focuses on educational leadership, loyalty in university students, and educational quality, with a special emphasis on technology addiction, a topic he addressed in his doctoral thesis. He has published several scientific articles on leadership, teacher performance, student satisfaction, as well as studies on mobile phone dependence and internet addiction. His career includes speaking at international events, most recently held in Medellín, Colombia, in May 2025, where he gave a presentation entitled "The Effect of Institutional Image on Student Identification and Loyalty: A Structural Model in an Adventist University Context."

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