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A Review on the correlates and predictors of Grit

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Abstract

Grit is defined as a higher order construct in psychology. Grit is the need as perseverance and passion for long-term goals. It is the predictor of performance and success. In this paper author presents how the grit is constructed using two facets perseverance of effort and consistency of interest. Relation of grit with other variables like performance, cognitive ability, conscientiousness will also be presented. Grit is perseverance and passion for longtime commitment in achieving goals. The present paper aims to review grit and also find out various correlates and build associations with other variables. It aims to review the definitions of grit. The conclusions can be made after reviewing the literature were in terms of the higher order construct of grit and what correlations were found with grit. Various correlates of grit such as psychological well-being, self –esteem and conscientiousness were also explored. It showed strong correlation and also predictors of the variable of grit. Peterson, Duckworth, Kelly & Matthews in 2007 found out that there is an increase in the variables related to individual excel and success. It is compared to the ones that equals to intelligence and IQ

Keywords: *grit, perseverance, conscientiousness*

Introduction

Human is a species which is playing a dominating role on earth. The wonders which it has created in form of science, technology, arts, architecture, philosophy etc are matchless. No other species comes closer to humans in comparison. The ability and capacity of human brain is responsible for this difference. Humans inherit several traits because of this extraordinary capacity of human brain. According to modern science human brain has very unique capacity of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thoughts, experience and senses. This ability is called cognition. Humans' traits can be used as variables in theoretical modeling in psychology. Interest is non cognitive variable which is related to academic performance. Another non cognitive variable, which is now acknowledged as important parameter in predicting success and performance, is called grit (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Grit is perseverance and passion for longtime commitment in achieving goals. Grit is perseverance and passion for longtime commitment in achieving goals. Grit includes both resilience in case of failure and long time uncompromising commitment for achieving the goal. Grit is higher order construct as it is composed of two lower order variables a) perseverance of efforts, b) Consistency of efforts. For abbreviation we can write them as perseverance and consistency. Duckworth (2013a) has

concluded that cognitive ability is comparatively poor predictor of success than grit. Duckworth et. al. argue that some individuals with higher grit perform better than others even they have same abilities and intelligence. In case of highly accomplished people the grit is an important factor for the performance and success. Grit is emerging as a good predictor of performance but there are theoretical and empirical reasons which force to inquire about (i) Whether grit is a higher order construct or not (ii) Is grit is a warranty of performance and success. The literature on grit rapidly growing and it will shed light on these questions. Galton (1982) collected biographical data on eminent professionals such as scientists, poets, judges etc and concluded that not only academic excellence but also their passion and perseverance contributed to their success and also helped them achieve their long term goals. Grit is defined as consistency of interest and perseverance.

Perseverance is often studied as an outcome than as a predictor. It has served as a dependent variable in studies about self efficacy, goal orientation and self control resources (Bandura 1977 and Seligman, 1986).

Duckworth et al. (2007) defined grit as “perseverance and passion for long term goals”. It was found in his research that individuals high on grit have higher IQ levels as it shows passion to excel. Duckworth defined this perseverance as relentless and it entails working strenuously towards challenges, maintain effort and interests over years, despite of any adversity, failure and hindrances in the way.

Grit is a higher order construct with two lower order facets continuity of interest and perseverance in efforts. These two factors are indicators of success. Perseverance means not becoming discouraged when one faces the setbacks, difficulties and turmoils. Perseverance is needed for the mastery in any held since if one left the goal after encountering difficulties then his chance of succeeding become very less (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). Similarly if one is not consistent in his efforts and if he changes his goals very frequently then also his chance of attaining success will become less. In psychology scientists make theoretical models and try to evaluate numerical estimates. They try to fit data and compare it with theoretical models. In these theoretical models they take facets as variables and use this model to fit the data. The theoretical model which the data better is accepted as a better model. Lower (first) order variables are combined to form a new higher (second) order variable. In some theoretical models only first order variables are taken and in some other models first and second order variables are taken together. In case of Grit, interest and persistency are considered as two first order variables and grit is considered as second order variable. Second order construct is possible only when (i) if it is possible to combine these first order variables to construct the second order variable (ii) if this second order variable gives better prediction than other order variables. Some models use only first order variables and other use mixed first and second order variables. Some scientists have given arguments that mixing first order and second order variables do not construct the second order model (Chang, 2014).

Grit and Success/Performance

Grit has been looked upon with two views. The first view is grit is a variable which is a very good indicator of academic performance and success (Duckworth et al. (2007)). The other view is grit is not very strong predictor. Some of the researchers found that those people who are having same level of intelligence and ability but higher level of grit perform better. In literature, researchers (Howe, 1999) noticed importance of grit in success of many successful individuals. Some researchers have found that grit boost sustained deliberative practice (Krampe & Ericsson, 1996). The grit-performance level becomes moderate due to some factors. It was found that grit strongly favors the performance when task is difficult (where long time efforts and persistence of interest is needed to overcome the difficulties). If task is well then also grit is very good indicator of performance. Grit reacts in success if it is supported by several other aspects a) ability b) skills c) adaptive learning and self regulation (Zimmerman, 1990). If person has high grit but lacking in these abilities then his performance level will not be high. Sometimes grit itself reduce the performance level if person is not having appropriate skills and he still remains adamant to perform the job without taking any help from expert. This behavior also hurt or slow down the performance level. If an individual keep on doing efforts too long to solve difficult problem, he may not concentrate more on realm of solvable problems and this will results in delay in success and performance. The relation between grit and performance can be seen while looking over the life of accomplished scientists. Einstein kept on doing efforts in formulating the Field equations in general theory of relativity

but he succeeded only when he consulted the mathematicians Marcel Grossman and (later) David Hilbert (Earman & Glymour, 1978). This suggests that sometimes grid itself becomes a hurdle in performance. Persistence in efforts in this case results in failure. Hence having more grit does not warrant for success and performance. In conclusion we can say that many scientists support the grit - success co-relation while others give arguments that grit-success co-relation is not too strong.

Grit and Psychological Well-Being

Salles, Cohen and Mueller (2014) found out that grit is a predictor of Psychological Well-Being.

Vainio and Daukantaite (2016) conducted a study and stated that grit is highly and significantly correlated with Psychological Well-Being. Research on subjective well-being has linked overall grit to life satisfaction, happiness, positive effect, and lower distress (Salles et al., 2014; Vainio and Daukantaite, 2016). Akbag & Ümmet (2017) conducted a study on 348 young adults from universities on Istanbul and found out that a significant positive relationship between the satisfaction of three basic needs ,namely, autonomy, competence and relatedness and the tendency to be consistent and passionate (grit). A very recent study conducted by Disabato, Goodman, and Kashdan (2019) in an attempt to find out whether grit is relevant to wellbeing or not and found out that the facets of grit are related to Psychological Well-Being.

Grit and Self esteem

Self esteem is defined as the attitude and judgment of a person towards oneself. It is in terms of self-worth and in a great way reflects the subjective evaluations of oneself (Rosenberg, 1986). The stimulation of high self esteem is reference to one's potential and in-turn it also enhances the initiative (Weisskirch, 2016). The reduction of the consistency of social norms or the increase in the crime rate is determined by the weakened relationship of an individual with the society (Hirschi,1969). In the ongoing and previous researches , grit has been shown to have strong correlation effect on grit. The definition of grit of persistency and consistency , it indeed shows how well do one hinks of themselves. It is Enhnaces on'es self concept and also brings clarity t one's potential (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). The refelection of grit towards the concept of motivation and future induces a sense of hope and also triggers a positive self concept (Kleiman, Adams, Kashdan, & Riskind, 2013).

Grit and Conscientiousness

The word which scientist refers as grit (perseverance and consistency) is not new to psychology. There are many attributes like tenacity, persistence of motives, strong will power in psychology which are already known since more than 80 years (Ryans, 1939). Now the question arises: whether grit is the same attribute as other attributes like will power, persistence of motives or it is something different? If one has to establish the validity of grit one has to differentiate it with earlier studied attributes in psychology. Definition of self discipline is very close to definition of grit. Meta analytic study of the literature can help to conclude weather the grit- conscientiousness relation is strong or weak. Stronger co-relation indicates that they are the same thing with different names. Weak co-relation indicates that they are two different attributes.

Grit and Cognitive Ability

Grit is considered different from Cognitive ability (Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Duckworth found that there is a negative relation between grit and cognitive ability which means gritty people on average are slightly less talented. The fact that grit is different from cognitive ability suggests that interventions designs to enhance grit can increase performance. Admission tests are used as proxy to the cognitive ability. It is found that there is very weak relation between grid scores and admission test scores. This fact establishes that grit and cognitive ability can be considered as independent attributes.

The nomothetic networks are a tool to construct validation of psychological measures or variables. What position grit holds in this homological network can be understood by studying the relation of grit with other attributes like optimism, psychological well-being, suicide ideation, intended persistence in

Conclusion

After reviewing the literature on grit the following conclusions emerge out that firstly the proponents of grit asserted that grit is indeed a good measure for performance and success. Secondly, a lot of emphasis has been upon the fact that grit is a higher order construct consists of perseverance and consistency. Thirdly, many current evidences do not support this assumption. Fourthly, if one combines two rest order facets to form the grit as higher order construct then these results in loss in ability to predict performance.

It can be very well said that Perseverance is better predictor of performance than consistency in efforts and overall grit .Overall Grit has stronger co-relation with conscientiousness. The co-relation between overall grit and consistency is relatively weak. Interventions used to enhance the grit have very weak action on performance and success. Having in precise, grit is based on two sub-concepts namely passion and perseverance. Passion means the consistency of interests while perseverance means the consistency of efforts. Grit has been a strong predictor of success that also includes academic success , as it is known that these qualities takes whatever it needs for to complete the task. It has also demonstrated predictive power. Grit is not a cognitive aspect that has received an enormous amount of attention and it has played a very significant role in the field of psychological research and also o the field of education. A lot of primary findings showed that grit shows a weak prediction and less correlated with a lot of educational variables and correlate positively to variables such as family relationships.

Hope and positive affect. In 2017, a study conducted by Hawg, Lim and Ha in a co relational study stated that grit is a strong predictor o academic achievement, conscientiousness and self control. Grit is also closely related to academic achievement and also predicts academic productivity (Hodge Wright & Bennet, 2017)

A study conducted in 2016, examined three variables, grit, hope and academic self efficacy and it was found out that grit did not predict both the variables (Dixon, Worrell, Olszewski-Kubilius, Subotnik, 2016)

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