

# Gender Differences on grit and self-discipline: A comparative study

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## ABSTRACT

Grit is the consistency of efforts in attaining long term goals and does not feel afraid from hardships and obstacles whereas Self-discipline is that the ability to push yourself forward, stay motivated, and takes action, no matter how you are feeling ,psychologically, physically or socially. The main aim of the present study is to assess the gender difference on the dimension of grit and self-discipline among participants. A sample of 160(80 males, 80 females) participants belonging to age group 15-35 years were taken from Delhi-NCR region. Data was analyzed by independent sample t-test. Short Grit Scale by Duckworth, A.L. & Quinn, P. (2007) and Self-discipline Scale derived from the 25 International Personality Item Pool HEXACO scales (Ashton, Lee, & Goldberg, 2007).The results showed marked gender difference on the dimension of grit but not on the dimension of self-discipline.

**Keywords:** Grit, Self-discipline, Gender Difference

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## INTRODUCTION

Grit means perseverance and keenness to realize long-term goals (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007). Sometimes you'll hear grit mentioned as mental hardness. Duckworth, A. (2004) a researcher at the University of Pennsylvania, suggests that grit could be a robust predictor of success and skill to succeed in one's goals.

Accomplishments in life depends on our grit i.e. our passion and perseverance for major future goals. There are other factors also aside from grit which plays a crucial role in our lives. As Duckworth, A. says, "We all face limits – not just in talent, but in opportunity. The limit that we face are mostly self imposed and driven by us .We try, fail, and conclude we've bumped our heads against the ceiling of possibility. To be gritty is to grab things before others. To be gritty is to carry fast to a stimulating and purposeful goal. To be gritty is to subside seven times, and lift eight. The desire to persevere, and to stay trying is more indicative of an honest student than one who shows promise, fails once, then gives up soon after or stops trying. Those that possess grit are able to self-regulate and postpone their need for positive reinforcement while working diligently on a task. They exerting on their project until the achievement.

Duckworth and Quinn (2009) argued that grit is more effective than intelligence scores for explaining the success. There are studies defending the grit's relation with self-arrangement, self-discipline and goal tendency and therefore the grit's importance in explaining these concepts (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Duckworth& Quinn, 2009). In these researches the grit means whatever happens, the goal activity is sustained. Also Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews and Kelly (2007) defined the grit as continuity in attitudes and determination for while goals. although an individual faces troubles and stressful situations, this resistance carries on as a private power and an attempt puts forward to succeed in goals (Singh & Jha, 2008). Despite difficulties and unwanted judgments, the grit goes on as a continuing energy. The person with high grit never feels tired and features a tendency to struggle with situations given up by others. Determined people can behave more flexible and tolerant and also they will affect problems with analytical view (Wilis, 2008). The grit seen as a necessary feature to skip difficulties is defined also as a continuing effort against complex missions (Ayres, Cooley & Dunn, 1990; Rudkin, 2003).Studies done by Jaeger et al., 2010; Rojas 2012; Christensen 2014; Cross 2014 found that females are significantly more likely to be grittier than males.

Self-discipline has received considerable attention within the scientific literature as a sub-facet of the conscientiousness personality trait (Poropat, 2009). The construct is conceptualised as an individual's capacity to suppress or inhibit prepotent or dominant responses in favour of an alternate action that's strategic and services a long-term or higher-order goal (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004; Allom, Panetta, Mullan, & Hagger, 2016). Self-discipline is closely aligned with similar constructs like trait self-control (Duckworth & Kern, 2011; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2014; Dumfart & Neuberger, 2016).

From a mechanistic perspective, individuals with high self-discipline are expected to be ready to effectively manage conflicts between momentary impulse-driven goals with small, gratifying short-term gains and long-term goals with larger gains that need greater effort and persistence (Gottfredson & Hirsch, 1990; Tangney et al., 2004; Duckworth & Gross, 2014). People with high self-discipline also are ready to employ variety of strategies to assist them manage situations where they'll succumb to impulse-driven responses (Trobe & Fishbach, 2000; Quinn, Pascoe, Wood, & Neal, 2010 Frieze, Hofmann, & Wiers, 2011).

The benefits of being self-disciplined are, one is able to gain self-reliance, bring about improvements in terms and relationships with others, bring about improvements in skills and abilities, take out time for leisure and relaxation activities, generate the feelings of pleasure and contentment and reinforce one's future plans and form new goals. Finally, it can be stated, implementing self-discipline will contribute effectually in enriching the lives of the individuals. A study done by Duckworth, A.L and Martin E. P. Seligman University of Pennsylvania (2006) found that girls were more self-disciplined in comparison to boys on every measure.

### **Objective of the study**

To study gender differences in participants on the dimension of Grit and Self-discipline

### **Hypothesis**

There will be a significant gender difference on the dimension of grit and self-discipline.

### **Research Design**

It is a two group design study where both the groups were compared and assessed on the variables of Grit and Self-discipline.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Participants**

The sample of present study consists of 160 (80 males and 80 females) belonging to age group of 15-35 year taken from Delhi-NCR region.

### **Instruments Used**

#### **Short Grit Scale**

It was created by Duckworth, A.L. & Quinn, P. (2007) to assess the perseverance of effort and consistency of interests. The scale has an excellent overall internal consistency ( $\alpha=.90.85$ ), as well as for each of the dimensions; Consistency of Interest,  $\frac{1}{4}$  0.84; Perseverance of Effort,  $\frac{1}{4}$  0.78 (Duckworth et al., 2007). Short Grit Scale is a sub set of Grit-O. Total 12 items were rated on a 5 point likert scale ("very much like me, mostly like me, somewhat like me, not much like me, not at all like me"). The maximum score on this scale is 5 (extremely gritty) and minimum score on this scale is 1 (not at all gritty).

#### **Self-discipline Scale**

A 10 item scale designed to measure self-discipline among participants and self-discipline scale derived from the 25 International Personality Item Pool HEXACO scales (Ashton, Lee, & Goldberg, 2007). Participants answer each item on a 5- Point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### **Procedure**

For the gathering of the data, all the participants were individually contacted and rapport was established with the participants by making them feel comfortable. After the establishment of rapport, the questionnaires were mailed to the participants. After the completion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked for the cooperation. The data was analyzed with the assistance of parametric test (t-test) for independent sample.

### Statistical Analysis

For the attainment of the objective, data was analyzed with the help of Parametric test (t-test) for independent sample would be used in the present study.

## RESULTS

**Table1: Descriptive statistics mean (SD) and t-value on grit and self-discipline**

Variable	Gender	df	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.(2 tailed)
GRIT	Male	158	80	3.3369	.49227	2.652*	0.009
	Female		80	3.5700	.61303		
SELF-DISCIPLINE	Male	158	80	32.2857	5.11932	1.657	0.100
	Female		80	33.6857	5.55888		

**p<0.05**

Table 1 indicates the obtained value for mean and SD for male and female participants on Grit and Self-discipline. On grit dimension, male participants scored a mean of 3.3369 (SD=.49227), whereas, females of the same age group scored a mean value of 3.5700 (SD=.61303). On the other hand, on self-discipline dimension, male participants obtained a mean score of 32.2857 (SD=5.11932), and mean value obtained by female participants is 33.6857 (SD=5.55888).

## DISCUSSION

To review the gender differences on grit and self-discipline t-test was computed. On grit, t-value (2.652  $p \leq .05$ ) was found significant; it means that males and females differ on grit. Similar results were found by previous researches (Jaeger et al., 2010; Rojas 2012; Christensen 2014; Cross 2014). They are more assiduous and show more efforts in doing their work or in performing their duties. Their interest doesn't change frequently and most importantly setbacks don't discourage them. The trait of perseverance is more in females in comparison to males. Grit is also about perseverance. To persevere means to stay with it; to continue working hard even after experiencing difficulty or failure. And the passion to achieve a long term goal is more in females in comparison to males. The trait of courage is additionally more in females and despite of being confronted with hardships and obstacles they continue to pursue their goals.

Although on the dimension of self-discipline no significant gender differences were found which is in contrast with the study of Duckworth, A.L. (2006) & Seligman, M.E.P. (2006). Who found that females were more self-disciplined in comparison to males.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Present study shows that it's the primary to review effect of gender on the dimensions of grit and self-discipline within the Indian context. There is a significant gender difference exists on the dimension of grit and therefore the trait of grit is found to be more in females in comparison to males. But no significant gender difference exists on the dimension of self-discipline. 12-item grit scale were employed, which may be beneficial for future research to validate the usage of this instrument within Indian cultural context.

## LIMITATIONS

It was a really small study; the sample taken was very small.

Some other variables would have been taken as rural or urban background of the sample for study to make the comparison.

The data collection was entirely based on self-report which may have inflated or deflated the results due to various biases.

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