

# Grit, Decision Making Style and Life Satisfaction: A Study on Emerging Adults

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## Abstract

Life satisfaction is the supreme and ultimate goal of our lives. It is measured by the positive evaluation of a person about the quality of his/her life. Life satisfaction is not inheritable hence must be acquired in every aspect of life. Hence, finding the factors that could enhance the life satisfaction is really important. Grit introduced in the past decade as a non-cognitive trait that is defined as continuous efforts of perseverance and passion for a specific long term goals which has been claimed to be a powerful motivation to achieve a goal. And also our decision making style highly affects the quality of our lives. The present study aimed at investigating the effect of grit and decision making style on life satisfaction among emerging adults. Purposive sampling technique was used on a mixed sample of 300 (131 males and 169 females) emerging adults from colleges and universities who fall under the age ranging from 18-25 years. The statistics applied is correlation and regression analysis. Findings revealed that grit positively and significantly predicted life satisfaction whereas decision making style (maximization) negatively predicts life satisfaction. Furthermore interventional approach can be implemented towards enhancing grit and satisficing (decision making style). More research on the topic would be recommended as the study was restricted to only emerging adults and sample was confined to the areas of Rajasthan.

**Keywords:** Grit, satisficing and maximizing decision making style, life satisfaction.

## Introduction

People throughout the world struggle to enhance the quality of their lives to gain a more satisfied life. The ultimate goal of every action of an individual is to attain satisfaction of their lives (St Andrew; 1974). Life sat-

isfaction has a larger extent than happiness; comparatively happiness is short-lived and rickety. Life satisfaction is defined as an overall positive evaluation of how content a person is with his/her life. Life satisfaction is one of the construct of subjective well-being. Life chances, the flow of events, experience, and life evaluation are all factors that contribute to life satisfaction (Veenhoven, 1966). Life satisfaction affects and is correlated with major parts of a person's life that includes health, quality of relationship and wealth. A recent past study has proclaimed that life satisfaction is strongly correlated with sleep problems, obesity, chronic illness, pain, anxiety, physical activity and smoking (Strine, Chapman, Balluz, Moriarty, & Mokdad, 2008; Ng, Tey & Asadullah, 2017) and fluctuations in life satisfaction can cause harm to longevity and health (Boehm, Winning, Kubzansky, & Segerstrom, 2015). There has been a worldwide debate about individual traits that contribute to life satisfaction.

Duckworth introduced grit in 2007, which is a non-cognitive personality trait and is defined as "the perseverance and passion for long-term goals." People high on grit seldom change their career options and also individuals high on grit have been found to be more successful than individuals high on IQ. Grit was found to be correlated with academic achievement and success (Wolters & Hussain, 2015; Rimfield et al., 2016). Abuhassan and Bates (2015) in a study claimed that grit predicts accomplishment of goal over and above personality and IQ. Duckworth and her colleagues also revealed that grit is vital to be successful in every field. Grit is highly correlated with courage (Brown, 2019), mental toughness and resilience. Researchers use mental toughness and grit vice-versa. Grit has also been found to predict increased goal attainment which in turn increases subjective well-being (Sheldon et al., 2015). Although to be grittier for an interest and leading to a satisfied life everything starts with taking a decision. And it has always been a question as to what sort of decision-making style can transpire into a more satisfied life. Barry Schwartz (2002) defined two facets of decision-making; Maximization which includes a tendency to seek for the best option through a profound search among the alternatives on the other hand Satisficing includes a tendency where individuals settle for good-enough options if not the best in all respects. He also declared that satisficers tend to be happier than maximizers. Despite the high efforts while making a decision, maximizers still regret about the decisions they make. A study revealed that self-reported maximizers avoid making decisions and depend on others for the same due to their tendency to regret (Parker, Bruin & Fischhoff, 2007).

Many studies indicate the relationship between grit, maximization and

life satisfaction. There are many studies showing strongly significant and positive relationship between grit and life satisfaction. Researchers have studied that, individuals high on grit show consistency of efforts with determination and motivation even after encountering failures. Being gritty requires strong willpower that sets you forth amidst challenges and setbacks (Duckworth & Gross, 2014; Brown, 2019). From past decade researchers are continuously studying grit with life satisfaction and well-being. Singh and Jha (2008) claimed grit to be highly correlated with life satisfaction and also subjective well-being. Along with Duckworth, other researchers like Reed, Pritschet & Cutton (2012) and Crede et al., (2016) also suggested grit to be positively correlated with life satisfaction and psychological well-being. On the other hand, according to research by Schwartz et al. (2002), maximizers are more likely than satisficers to have lower levels of happiness, life satisfaction, optimism, and self-esteem, and they also have a positive correlation with regret, perfectionism, and depression. Purvis, Howell and Iyer (2011) and Moyano-Diaz., Ponce & Martinez-Molina (2014) found that regret negatively mediates the relationship between maximization and life satisfaction. A study conducted on the individuals of US, Western Europe and china revealed that maximizers from US and Western Europe showed to have less well-being as compared to satisficers, whereas individuals of china showed no relation between maximization and well-being (Roets, Schwartz & Guan, 2012). Maximization also showed to be negatively correlated with subjective well-being in USA and Japanese population (Oishi et al., 2014).

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To study the relationship of grit and maximization with life satisfaction.
2. To study the effect of grit and maximization on life satisfaction among emerging adults.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There will be a positive relationship between Grit and Life Satisfaction
2. There will be a negative relationship between Maximization and Life Satisfaction
3. Grit will significantly predict Life Satisfaction
4. Maximization will significantly predict Life Satisfaction

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants of the study comprised of 300 emerging adults (131 males and 169 females) who were between the ages of 18-25 years from the areas of Rajasthan. The sampling method used was purposive sampling.

### **Procedure**

Data was gathered by the researcher from colleges and universities of Rajasthan. Approval was taken from the relevant institutions to carry out the survey. The Grit Scale (Duckworth et al., 2007), the Short form of the Maximisation Scale (Nenkov et al., 2008), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Pavot et al., 1991) were used to gather the data. To complete out the questionnaires, the respondents' consent was required. Prior taking the test, the participants received assurances on the confidentiality of their identities and responses.

### **Research Design**

The causal research method was utilized in the study to examine the relationship of grit and maximization with life satisfaction among emerging adults.

### **Instrument used**

#### **Grit Scale**

The Grit Scale, developed by Angela Duckworth in 2007, is a collection of tests meant to gauge a person's trait-level perseverance and passion for long-term objectives. It is a 12-item scale. The Cronbach  $\alpha$  coefficient of the Grit scale was 0.729, and split-half reliability was 0.784. The test retest reliability coefficient was 0.804 as reported by the author. The measure is a 12-item scale in which 1, 4, 6, 9, 10 and 12 measures perseverance and 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 11 measures passion where item ranges from "very much like me" (5) to "not at all like me" (1). Item 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 11 has reversed scoring.

#### **Maximization Scale**

Short form of the Maximization scale is a six-item scale by Nenkov et al.

(2008). Responses of the scale ranges from 1 (disagree completely) to 7 (agree completely). Possible scores ranges from 6 to 42 with higher scores reflective of high maximization.

### Life satisfaction Scale

The SWLS (Diener et al., 1985) measures life satisfaction as a whole. Participants answer questions on a five-item scale that ranges from strongly agree (7) to strongly disagree (1). Examples of such statements are “The conditions of my life are excellent” and “In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.” Higher scores indicate greater life satisfaction, which is measured by the mean score. Possible scores vary from 5 to 35, with higher scores indicating better levels of life satisfaction.

### Statistical Analysis

Correlation and regression was used to determine the relationship between the variables.

### Results

**Table I: Correlation between grit and life satisfaction among emerging adults (N=300)**

Variable	Life satisfaction
Grit	.117*

The correlation coefficient between grit and life satisfaction is significant  $r = .117^*$  at  $p < 0.05$  level. This implies that there is a significant positive relationship between grit and life satisfaction. This denotes that as the level of grit increases the level of life satisfaction also increases.

**Table II: Correlation between maximization and life satisfaction among emerging adults (N=300)**

Variable	Life satisfaction
Maximization	-.123*

The correlation coefficient between maximization and life satisfaction is significant  $r = -.123^*$  at  $p < 0.05$  level. This implies that there is a significant negative relationship maximization and life satisfaction. This denotes that

as the level of maximization increases the level of life satisfaction also decreases.

**Table III: Regression Analysis showing prediction of Life satisfaction from Grit**

Variable	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>Constant</b>	20.145	2.118		9.512	.000
<b>Grit</b>	1.049	.627	.096	1.673	.095

[NOTE: Fit for Model  $R^2 = .009$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .006$ ,  $F = 2.801$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ].

The regression analysis to predict Life satisfaction from Grit indicates 0.9% of the variance in Criterion variable (life satisfaction) is accounted for by Grit. It was found that grit significantly predicted life satisfaction ( $\beta = .096$ ,  $p < 0.001$  level).

**Table IV: Regression Analysis showing predictions of Life satisfaction from Maximization**

Variable	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>Constant</b>	27.592	1.582		17.444	.000
<b>Maximization</b>	-.150	.059	-.146	-2.555	.011

[NOTE: Fit for Model  $R^2 = .021$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .081$ ,  $F = 6.527$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ].

The regression analysis to predict Life satisfaction from Maximization indicates 2.1% of the variance in one's life satisfaction is caused by maximization style of decision making. It was found that the impact of maximization is significantly predicted on life satisfaction ( $\beta = -.146$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

## **Discussion**

Current study has emphasized on the importance of grit and decision making style in our lives. Although these variables (grit and maximization) have not thoroughly investigated with all the other possible variables, so establishing the concrete basis for these variables is still under progress. The prior reviews of the variables support the findings of the present study showing significantly positive relationship between grit and life satisfaction and significantly negative correlation between maximization and life satisfaction. Also grit positively predict life satisfaction and decision making (maximization) negatively predicts life satisfaction.

## **Conclusion**

The results of the study supports:

1. There is positive and significant correlation between Grit and life satisfaction.
2. There is negative and significant correlation between Maximization and life satisfaction.
3. Grit significantly and positively predicts life satisfaction.
4. Maximization significantly and negatively predicts life satisfaction.

## **Limitations**

1. The study was limited and restricted to emerging adults only.
2. Data was collected from limited geographical area.

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