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Migrant Teachers**

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**The Impact of Leadership on the Grit of International Migrant Teachers**

*Over the past decade, the teaching profession has become increasingly borderless due to the international migration of teachers. Grit and leadership directly affect teachers' motivation, which in turn influences job satisfaction and the school's performance. The purpose of this study was to determine the perceived impact of leadership on migrated teachers' grit and job satisfaction. The study was exploratory in nature with a quantitative research method. Homogeneous purposive sampling was used and existing structured questionnaires were implemented, after which descriptive and inferential statistics were applied. Significant differences were found in the following: how teachers with different years of experience viewed grit, how different qualification groups viewed grit and leadership and lastly how teachers in different subject areas viewed grit. Grit mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and leadership in a statistically significant manner. The research might contribute to the leadership of international schools and to understanding the effect of leadership styles on the grit of migrated teachers. It could also shed light on leadership and its implications for the grit of teachers in the international school environment, with specific reference to the challenges that migrated teachers experience in their everyday lives.*

**Keywords:** *Grit, International schools, Leadership, Migrant teachers, Job satisfaction*

## **Introduction**

Over the past decade, the teaching profession has become increasingly borderless, leading to a proliferation of international schools worldwide (Mizzi, 2021:01). Deciding to migrate is often a difficult and life-changing choice. Migrant teachers (educators who have been trained in their native countries, but are employed at schools over the globe) acquire valuable skills within these multicultural settings, boosting their hire-ability for future endeavours (Mizzi, 2021:02).

There is a great deal of empirical evidence of the challenges educators face globally such as access, accountability and children's rights, to name but a few (Zajda, 2020:201). It could be argued that international teachers encounter additional difficulties, such as the culture shock of adjusting to a new country as well as trying to integrate into a new educational system. Therefore, they have the dual challenge of assimilating both socially and professionally (Galamba, 2021:346).

It is inevitable that during teachers' professional careers they will report to a person in a higher position. Schools need effective leadership to prevent high rates of teacher turnover and to increase student achievement (Johnson & Voelkel, 2021:313). Khany and Ghasemi (2021:514) point out some of the most desired characteristics of leaders, namely communicating effectively, building trusting relationships and articulating a clear vision for the school. Schimschal and Lomas (2019:1449) found that leadership correlated positively with the successful management of educational organisations.

Hwang and Lee (2020:8314-8316) refer to the influence of leaders on the grit of migrant teachers and define grit as passion and perseverance for long-term goals. Grit is the mental stamina that allows an individual to persist in a long-term endeavour even in the face of setbacks and lack of positive results. Lee (2022) found that grit was associated with enhanced organisational performance and that leadership could strengthen the grit of employees. Organisations marked by gritty employees are likely to perform better; additionally, when the organisation has a supportive organisational climate and is led by transformational leaders, it is apt to show a strong relationship between grit and job satisfaction. Rego (2021) found a positive relationship between grit and job satisfaction among child care teachers. According to Rego (2021), gritty employees are more likely to experience job satisfaction and thrive in their positions.

Limited research has been done on leadership and its impact on the grit and therefore the job satisfaction of employees.

The main purpose of this study was to determine the perceived impact of leadership on the grit and job satisfaction of migrant teachers in international schools and job satisfaction among teachers in selected international schools.

## **Research Problem**

The “high stress” nature of the teaching profession has been well documented by various education experts (Camacho & Parham, 2019:160). Teachers are accountable not only for the academic achievement of their students but also for their socio-emotional wellbeing (Camacho & Parham, 2019:160), in addition to coping with stressful situations, staying up to date with current teaching methodologies and adapting to the ever-changing landscape of global challenges (Zeng & Luo cited in Xu et al., 2021:335).

Numerous factors in the learning environment can either hinder or aid teachers in fulfilling their professional duties and responsibilities. Effective leadership has a direct impact on teachers’ motivation and capacities, as well as the overall school environment (Pont, Moorman & Nusche, 2008:9). A longitudinal study in the United States by Grissom et al. (2021:222) found that high-quality school leaders were an accurate predictor of the overall success of schools.

The effective management of schools has a substantial impact on teachers’ job satisfaction (Grissom et al., 2021:223), as lower teacher turnover is reported among skilled teachers and in poor schools where there are highly capable principals. Leadership holds the key to a school’s overall success (Cansoy, 2019:02), therefore the factors identified in this research – grit and job satisfaction – may contribute to how adept leaders are perceived. Moreover, gritty leaders could be seen to be more satisfied with their jobs, which in turn could make them better leaders.

Grit has received much attention in recent research as it has been an accurate predictor of success in various endeavours; however, the link between grit, job satisfaction and leadership has not been explored. Moreover, grit – a non-cognitive construct – could be an accurate predictor of teachers’ aptness to remain in their positions for longer periods versus those who possess lower levels of grit. Therefore, researching the link between grit, job satisfaction and leadership could provide key insights into what makes teachers more resilient in their positions and whether possessing grit makes for better leaders in schools.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for this study was the human relations theory of Elton Mayo (1953). This management approach emphasises the importance of social and psychological factors in the workplace. The theory is based on the humanistic way of managing people in an organisation. It holds the belief that valuing employees’ feelings, emotions, needs and attitudes; teamwork; employee participation; non-directive supervision; and good relationships between managers and workers are key to employee motivation and productivity in the whole organisation.

## **Literature Review**

### *Migration*

Migration, the process whereby individuals leave their country of residence to relocate to another country (Ennerberg & Economou, 2021:591), is often a difficult and life-changing choice for any professional. In some instances, professional teachers can migrate to other countries after they have secured a job (Akavalou, 2020:9) or registered with the local teaching authority (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2022; BridgeUSA, 2022). The increased movement of people across borders has led to the proliferation of international schools worldwide (Mizzi, 2021:01). Countries like Sweden have special programmes designed to help migrant teachers by offering training courses to combat the shortage of trained teachers in the country (Ennerberg & Economou, 2021:588). It has been estimated that in 2017 there were roughly 8000 international schools worldwide with at least 420 000 international teachers, with the number of schools expected to double over the next ten years (Wechsler, 2017).

### *International Schools*

An international school is defined as a school which is “independent of any national system of education and offers a curriculum that is different from that in the host country” (Ennerberg & Economou, 2021:588). The curriculum focuses on international education, while meeting the requirements of the host country’s ministry of education. The school is usually, but not always, located overseas from a student’s country of citizenship. There is a multinational and multilingual student body, with either bilingual instruction or English as the language of instruction. Some international schools have local students from the host country whose parents pay high tuition fees so that their children have exposure to international education, learn in the language of the international school and obtain the qualifications necessary for applying for higher education studies overseas (Van Rompay-Bartels & Geessink, 2021:04).

Many countries, like Indonesia, Sweden and some East Asian countries (Kim, 2020:67), promote multiculturalism as a way to foster tolerance and embrace diversity in students and ultimately cultivate good citizens (Jayadi et al., 2022:04). One way of achieving this is by employing international teachers and encouraging multicultural education concepts to be transferred to the host country’s curriculum. For teachers, moving to a new geographical location means a new backdrop against which to reflect on what is normal and to explore traditions and habits that deepen understanding of pedagogical contexts and systems on the part of the migrant teacher (Enneberg & Economou, 2021:588).

*Grit*

Southwick et al. (2020:01) and Arli et al. (2020:1270) define grit as continued passion and perseverance for long-term goals, with Duckworth et al. (2019:23499) adding that the personal significance of the goals plays an important role. As a non-cognitive trait, grit comprises a set of abilities that enables an individual to overcome obstacles and tackle long-term goals with a zeal that sets it apart from other traits that predict success and personal accomplishment (Arli et al., 2020:1271). Opengrowth (2022) suggests that there are five characteristics of grit, namely courage, conscientiousness, perseverance, resilience and passion. Medina-Craven et al. (2021:01) state that grit comprises two dimensions – passion and perseverance – and that passion is the inclination to invest time and energy into activities judged to be important. Southwick et al. (2020:2) add that the individual's tendency to remain devoted to the same goal over a long period should be considered when defining grit. Craven et al. (2021:03) describe perseverance as continuous effort over longer periods even when faced with setbacks or obstacles, while Southwick et al. (2020:02) maintain that working assiduously toward a goal in the presence of obstacles is a key feature of perseverance.

Receiving guidance and direction from managers or supervisors is key to employees' perception of job satisfaction (Van Hieu et al., 2021:67). Many studies, like those by Arif et al. (2019:239), Han et al. (2021:26), Lan et al. (2019:01) and Torres (2019:111), have found that management positively impacts job satisfaction in schools, with findings highlighting the link between management in schools and teachers' job motivation and job satisfaction. In schools where the levels of teachers' job satisfaction are markedly higher, factors such as favourable working conditions and motivational leadership are cited as reasons (Anastasiou & Garametsi, 2021:58). Teachers who report higher levels of job satisfaction experience positive outcomes in the workplace like giving positive verbal feedback to students; productive work behaviour; more satisfied customers; and reduced turnover intention (Akinwale & George, 2020:72). A "person's grit enhances the grit of others" (Duckworth, 2016: 263) through social contagion and role modelling.

Teachers often go beyond the call of duty, with the onus on educational organisations to shape environments that foster teachers' willingness to engage in desirable behaviour in terms of their commitment to their role, how they view their positions and how they engage with others (Somech & Ohayon, 2020:637). Grit, according to Blanco (2021:11), is a valuable trait of educators, as it is linked to increased performance in an organisation in addition to being an accurate predictor of several sought-after competencies such as persistence, performance and having a growth mindset. Further, grit encourages critical thinking and is a strong predictor of leadership behaviours that nurture organisation-wide resilience.

The key to creating a culture of grit in an organisation is to employ individuals with grit. Simply put, recruiting individuals with grit will result in higher levels of job satisfaction among employees as well as more favourable leadership styles being employed (Agrawal et al., 2022). Retaining and recruiting

teachers with grit will have a ripple effect on the overall working environment that goes beyond the benefits to individuals with grit, such as increased career success (Popoola & Karadas, 2022:1136), increased stamina and resilience among employees, improved citizenship behaviour, greater corporate social responsibility and creating a culture of grit in organisations (Agrawal et al., 2022:01).

### *Leadership*

According to Caza and Posner (2019:8), it is important for leaders in the educational environment to engage with teachers and address any uncertainties that they may have. This leadership behaviour brings about superior performance and wellness outcomes (Southwick, Tsay & Duckworth, 2020:7). Organisational decisions of leaders, such as the selection and retention of skilled teachers, as well as generating proper conditions for teachers to deliver quality lessons, ultimately equate to students' academic achievement (Grissom et al., 2021:44) and the successful operation of the school. Leadership in the school is vital to the school's overall success but also bears on students' academic achievement and learning (Verma & Bala, 2022).

The role of management or leadership in ensuring that employees perceive their work as worthwhile and in creating working environments conducive to achieving job satisfaction is paramount. There are four main foci related to the functions of school leaders, namely using school resources effectively to realise the mission and vision of the school, overseeing and leading teaching and learning, facilitating teachers' professional development and promoting collaborative decision making within the school organisation (Widodo, 2021:130). Each of these functions is essential and they can be seen as parts that have to work together on a macro level. However, how these functions are implemented and how successful school leadership is in achieving them can vary greatly depending on the leadership style employed.

It is noteworthy that most principals in a study conducted by Grantham-Caston and DiCarlo (2021) reported employing transformational leadership strategies, often agreed upon by literature to be the most effective leadership style (Atan & Mahmood, 2019:2191; Budur, 2020:119; Dwivedi et al., 2020:1572). Therefore, individuals with grit are more likely to appreciate favourable leadership styles (Doria, 2022) and report higher levels of job satisfaction (Gustari & Widodo, 2020:218) and lower rates of turnover intention (Lacap, 2020:669).

Gustari and Widodo (2020:218) found that grit markedly affected job satisfaction among lecturers. Therefore, the more satisfied an individual is with his/her job, the lower the intention to leave. Among teachers in particular (Nazari & Oghyanous, 2021:01), occupational stress – one of the factors that influence job satisfaction – is positively correlated with turnover intention among both novice and experienced teachers; however, the association between turnover intention and occupational stress is more prominent among novice teachers.

A study conducted by Priyanka et al. (2022:21) found that among engineers, doctors and teachers, life satisfaction was positively affected by job satisfaction. Leaders ought to strive to create working environments that contribute to

employees' life satisfaction, which in turn will help generate job satisfaction (Marshall, 2020:235). Firstly, having higher levels of job satisfaction will confirm to current employees that the organisation is a pleasant place to work, which will reduce turnover intention and boost individuals' contentment with their lives (Luque-Reca et al., 2020:01; Marshall, 2020:235). Secondly, the organisation will be seen as an appealing place to work by potential employees, attracting top talent to the organisation as opposed to other organisations where job satisfaction is perceived to be lower among existing staff.

The relationship between grit, leadership and job satisfaction has been explored in fields such as nursing (Seguin, 2019:125), sales (Caza & Posner, 2019:36) and athletics (Donald, 2019). However, there is no recent research on the relationship between leadership and the grit of employees in the educational context.

## **Research Methodology**

### *Research Design*

An exploratory research design and a qualitative research method within interpretivism as the research philosophy was adopted in this study. This method was selected as it enables in-depth data collection which is directly related to personal feelings and emotions and its application is exploratory (Rahi, 2017:02). This method was chosen as most suitable because it generates more understanding of a phenomenon in a natural setting (Austin, 2014:10).

The study was exploratory in nature, due to the lack of previous studies on the effect of leadership on the grit of teaching staff. A quantitative approach was followed for this study, using a survey to explain relationships among variables (Adjei-Boateng, 2020:22; Asenahabi, 2019:80; Davies, 2020:11). Three existing questionnaires, namely the Grit scale (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1995) and Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985) using a 5-point Likert scale were adapted to suit the objectives of the study. The research adopted a constructivist approach to understanding the experience of the research participants to discover their subjective truth or perceptions. The population of the study consisted of teachers working in international educational organisations. Homogeneous purposive sampling uses digital means to collect the data.

To ensure that the study was ethical, the researcher applied the following guidelines (Love, 2012:03): obtain informed consent from the participants; communicate and respect the rights of the participants to withdraw at any time; avoid all forms of deceptive practices and guarantee participants' anonymity and confidentiality; make it clear that participation in the study is completely voluntary and that no people will be coerced into participating against their will; keep the data safe and secure once gathered and only allow access to the statistician; present the research questionnaire and informed consent to the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) Faculty Committee for Research Ethics for approval; and

obtain written permission from the Tshwane University of Technology's ethics committee before proceeding with the research.

## Results

### *Biographical Background*

The biographical information encompassed factors such as age, years of service, country of residence, citizenship and highest qualification. Altogether 103 respondents' data were collected. Most respondents (44.7%) were between 18 and 35 years of age; 36.9% of the respondents were between 36 and 45 years old, while 18.4% were older than 48 years. Of the respondents, 77.44% reported working in registered international schools and 22.6% worked in other types of international schools.

The majority (45.63%) of respondents reported working in Sweden, with 12.62% of respondents indicating that they worked in South Africa. The third most frequent country reported was Italy (9.7%), followed by the United States of America (4.85%) and then China (2.91%).

Most respondents reported working as teachers (73.8%). The remaining respondents reported working as teachers' assistants (3.9%) or management with some teaching hours (11.7%), while 6.8% were part of the management team of the school.

The respondents' qualifications were as follows: 33.95% of respondents had a master's degree while 24.25% had a bachelor's degree. A further 8.37% had a Bachelor of Education degree, 8.37% had a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and 7.76% had an honours qualification. The majority (36.89%) reported having taught between 11 and 20 years, while 27.18% had taught for 1 to 5 years and 17.48% for 6 to 10 years. Overall, the majority of the participants had between 1 and 20 years of service in education.

### *Reliability and Variable Means*

According to Barbera et al. (2020:257), an acceptable alpha value indicates good internal consistency between items; the acceptable threshold for confidence in a scale's results is  $\geq 0.70$ . Table 1 indicates that the Cronbach scores for leadership (0.8), grit (0.7) and job satisfaction (0.87) were equal to or above 0.7, which represent an acceptable satisfactory internal consistency between the items.

**Table 1.** *Cronbach's Alpha*

Item	Chronbach's Alpha	Chronbach's Alpha rounded off
Cronbach's alpha for the Grit scale	0.6836	0.7
Cronbach's alpha for the Leadership scale	0.8041	0.8
Cronbach's alpha for the Job Satisfaction scale	0.8681	0.87

The means and standard deviations for continuous data and Likert scale data are reported below in Table 2. In other words, on average the respondents' score for grit was 25, which means on average respondents scored around 3 for each item, indicating a moderate grit score when considering that 1 indicates low grit and 5 indicates high grit levels. The overall average leadership score for the data set was 51, indicating moderate to high scores in leadership skills, and the overall average leadership score for the data set was 51, indicating moderate to high scores in leadership skills.

**Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Grit	25	3.70
Leadership	51	6.30
Job satisfaction	42	5.90

*Non-parametric Data*

Non-parametric data were analysed using quantile regression to investigate the impact of leadership on grit and job satisfaction. The results, as shown in Table 3 below, reveal that only leadership had a positive influence on grit (p-value=0.034), whereas job satisfaction (0.26) did not exhibit a statistically significant effect.

**Table 3. Quantile Numbering Regression for Non-parametric Data**

Grit	Coefficient	Standard Error	P value
Leadership	0.189	0.088	<b>0.034</b>
Job satisfaction	0.168	0.149	0.266

Table 4 illustrates the relationship between biographical factors and grit using the Kruskal-Wallis test for skewed data. Stockemer (2019:104) states that an acceptable alpha level is 0.5 for most social research. Therefore, the results indicate a strong statistically significant difference in the group median of different positions at work (P-value=0.02) and grit. However, there was no statistically significant difference between perceived grit and age, years of teaching experience or highest qualifications at a 5% significance level.

**Table 4.** *Comparisons of Grit in Biographical Factors*

Variables				
Age	Obs	Rank sum	Chi2	P-value
18 - 35	44	2196.50	0.691	0.8753
36 - 45	38	1970.50		
46 - 55	16	793.00		
56 - 65	3	191.00		
How many years of teaching	Obs	Rank sum	Chi2	P-value
None	1	27.50	5.292	0.5069
At least 1 year	6	439.00		
1- 5 years	27	1318.00		
6-10 years	17	787.00		
11-20 years	38	2029.00		
21-30 years	10	461.50		
More than 30 years	2	89.00		
Position at work	Obs	Rank sum	Chi2	P-value
Management with some teaching hours	12	669.50	11.643	<b>0.0202</b>
Management in a school	7	464.50		
Teacher	74	3543.50		
Teacher's assistant	4	353.50		
Other	4	120.00		

Pairwise comparisons using Dunn's test (Bonferroni) are depicted in Table 5. Using an alpha value of 0.5 to establish significance (Stockemer, 2019:104), Dunn's test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the categories “other” and “teacher’s assistant” (p-value=0.0237) in terms of grit.

The “other” category refers to individuals working in schools in a capacity that does not fit the traditional role of a teacher; for example, those working as special educational needs teachers or have jobs where the focus is on behavioural outcomes rather than teaching academic subjects – for example, behaviour coordinators. Moreover, statistically significant differences were observed between the groups, “teacher” and “teacher’s assistant” (p-value=0.0348).

Teachers can be defined as those who are responsible for the planning and implementation of a set curriculum, whereas a teacher’s assistant is an individual

whose job includes but is not limited to providing select students in a class with additional adapted instruction or who assist the teacher in the activities related to implementing the curriculum (Chasani, 2022:242). Literature indicates that grit plays a significant role in educators dealing with special needs pupils, as this is a challenging and emotionally draining job. A teacher’s assistant, as per the definition by Torres (2019:111), is expected to deal with pupils’ needs and behaviour. In a culturally diverse international school environment, it can be expected that the grit of teacher assistants plays an important role in their performance and retention.

**Table 5.** *Dunn’s Pairwise Comparison of Job Satisfaction by Position at Work (Bonferroni)*

Position at work	Management with some teaching hours	Management within a school	Other	Teacher
Management within a school	-0.760085 1.0000			
Other	1.528446 0.6320	1.984643 0.2359		
Teacher	0.869267 1.0000	1.598257 0.5499	-1.192067 1.0000	
Teacher’s assistant	-1.930928 0.2675	-1.201898 1.0000	-2.824567 <b>0.0237</b>	-2.698702 <b>0.0348</b>

Table 6 shows the significant mediation effect of leadership on the interaction between grit and job satisfaction. Grit mediates (p-value= 0.002) the relationship between job satisfaction and leadership in a statistically significant manner. As stated by Barbera et al. (2020:257), a significance threshold of  $p < 0.05$  is universally acceptable, and thus a p-value of 0.002 is considered highly significant.

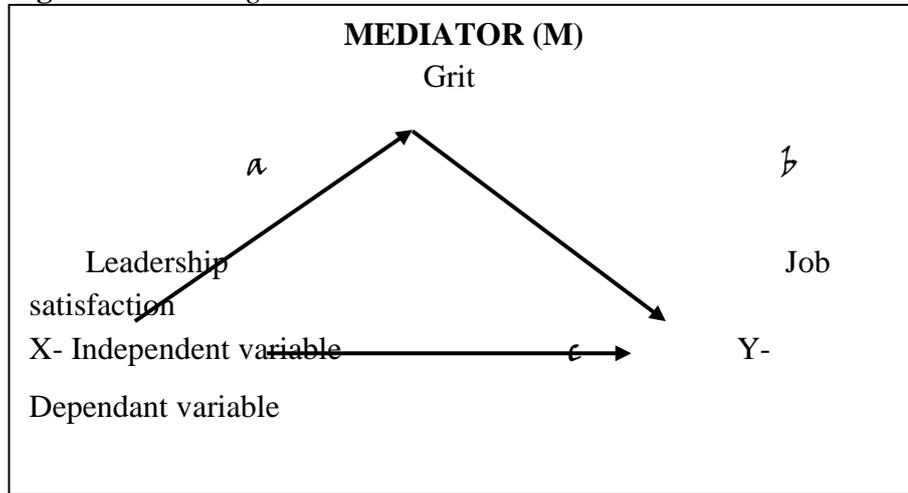
**Table 6.** *Mediating Factors*

Leadership	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P> t	95% conf. interval
Grit and job satisfaction	0.0069204	0.002222	3.11	<b>0.002</b>	0.0025114

Figure 1 shows that Zhao, Lynch and Chen's (2010:197) approach to testing mediation was employed to analyse the extent to which leadership participated in the transference between grit and job satisfaction. In Figure 1,  $a$  represents the relation of leadership (X) to grit (M),  $b$  represents the relation of grit (M) to job

satisfaction (Y) adjusted for leadership (X), and  $c$  the relation of leadership (X) to job satisfaction (Y) adjusted for grit (M).

**Figure 1. Mediating Factor: Grit**



As shown in Table 7, the effect of leadership on job satisfaction, no mediation was detected ( $p$ -value=0.00). However, the RIT indicated that leadership did influence the effect of grit on job satisfaction by approximately 6% (0.055). Further, as shown by the RID, the mediated effect was about 0.1 times as large as the direct effect of leadership on job satisfaction.

**Table 7. Zhao, Lynch and Chen's Approach to Testing Mediation**

Ratio	Effect
Leadership -> Job satisfaction	B=0.385 and $p=0.000$
The ratio of the indirect effect to the total effect (RIT)	(Indirect effect / Total effect) (0.022 / 0.408) = <b>0.055</b>
The ratio of the indirect effect to the direct effect (RID)	(Indirect effect / Direct effect) (0.022 / 0.385) = <b>0.058</b>

Table 8 presents the results of testing the effect of leadership and job satisfaction on grit. The coefficient correlation (R) of 0.756 shows a positive correlation between leadership and both grit and job satisfaction.

**Table 8.** *Correlation between Leadership, Grit and Job Satisfaction*

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Estimated Standard Error
1	0.871	0.759	<b>0.756</b>	6.484

Table 9 is the result of the significant test of parameter (Test Statistic t) on leadership. The significance level was below 0.05, which indicates that job satisfaction and grit together affected leadership.

**Table 9.** *Coefficient Leadership, Grit and Job Satisfaction*

Model 1	Unstandardized coefficients		Standard coefficients		
	B	Standard Error	Beat	T	Sig.
Constant	1.535	7.26		0.211	0.383
Leadership	0.064	0.077	0.034	0.838	0.403

## Discussion

According to the findings, there was a weak relationship between grit and job satisfaction. However, there was a strong relationship between leadership and grit. A significant relationship was found between grit and leadership but there was no significant relationship between grit and job satisfaction.

Further, there was a positive relationship between leadership and job satisfaction. Significant differences in job satisfaction were found for some of the teachers' demographic groups, in particular the position they held at work. The most significant differences noted were between those who selected their job as "other" and "teacher's assistant", as well as between the "teachers" group and the "teacher's assistant" group. Grit was found to be a mediator between leadership and job satisfaction; in fact, approximately 6% of the effect of leadership on job satisfaction was mediated by grit.

## Recommendations

Based on the study to investigate the perceived influence of grit on leadership and job satisfaction among teachers working in selected international schools, the following recommendations are made:

- Schools should foster leadership skills among employees, as this leads to higher levels of job satisfaction in educational organisations and reduces turnover intention among teachers (Lee, Hwang & Lee, 2021:1570; Amen, Sumayya & Butt, 2021:305; Molero Jurado, 2019:01).
- Schools should endeavour to address shortcomings in job satisfaction in the workplace (Kamboj & Garg, 2021:773) to ensure quality leadership is maintained and developed in the organisation.

- Managers in educational organisations should take a more proactive role in promoting and encouraging grit traits among teachers, as this can aid in the development and maintenance of leadership skills in the workplace (Shehzad et al., 2021:03).
- Schools ought to ensure that all teaching and teaching assistant staff experience favourable working conditions and should investigate possible causes for differences between these groups' perceived job satisfaction.
- Schools should endeavour to create professional development opportunities to foster leadership skills among all teaching staff, including those already in leadership positions and those in other positions, such as teachers' assistants.
- Favourable leadership styles for educational contexts should be investigated in organisations to ensure that the best leadership styles are employed and developed for school settings specifically.

### **Theoretical Contributions**

This study made a theoretical contribution by broadening the understanding of grit in an organisational setup. Prior research had focused on the micro-level impact of grit on aspects like career success, academic performance and athletic performance (Arif et al., 2019; Haderer, 2020). This study, however, examined the effect of leadership on the grit of migrated teachers employed at international schools all over the globe. When an organisation comprises individuals with persistence and goal orientation, it can expect higher levels of performance and retention.

This study contributed to the literature by confirming the importance and effectiveness of grit, as little attention had been paid to the occurrence and expression of grit (Khany & Ghasemi, 2021:521). Therefore, this study added to the literature by looking at how leadership could affect grit as well as job satisfaction.

### **Practical Implications**

The results of this study have several implications for educational organisations. An awareness of the importance of grit and the significant relationships that it has with leadership and job satisfaction can promote employee wellness, individual performance, understanding and support. Furthermore, it could contribute to organisations in terms of personnel selection and development. First, the human resource department needs to be aware of employees' potential (Cansoy, 2019) and reflect on the types of human capital to be recruited for the organisation as well as the traits that must be developed in them. Thus, grit can be an important factor for organisations in personnel selection and development (Kim, 2020).

Second, as gritty employees contribute to the organisation, the HR department can create a supportive climate through policies and practices to increase the employees' effectiveness (Bakker et al., 2022). Furthermore, leadership characteristics, such as motivation, consideration, and support (Bass and Avolio, 1995), should be demonstrated by leaders to enhance employee grit and job satisfaction (Bakker et al., 2022). HR managers must develop leaders through training, coaching and feedback programmes (Bridgeusa, 2022).

### **Limitations of the Study**

There is a plethora of knowledge and literature on grit, leadership and job satisfaction. However, there is limited literature with a specific focus on perceived grit, leadership and job satisfaction in educational contexts and on the perceived impact of grit, leadership and job satisfaction on teachers working in international contexts.

In the current study the data gathered came from teachers working across the globe. Although there is some information on specific populations of international teachers, no global international teacher database exists at the current moment.

### **Future Research**

There are boundless opportunities for future investigation within this area of research. Educational organisations, especially international schools, rely heavily on a quality pool of teachers to achieve the objectives of the organisation. Therefore, further research into fostering, maintaining and promoting work environments that help develop grit among teaching staff should be a top priority for any organisation that values a workforce that is well-equipped to deal with the daily challenges of education.

Furthermore, researching specific ways in which working conditions and general perceptions of the workplace could be improved could yield exceedingly positive outcomes in terms of job satisfaction, which has been proven repeatedly to impact turnover intention among employees. Future research into leadership practices that nurture job satisfaction among teachers in schools would be beneficial to the education sector, in addition to investigating why certain job positions in educational organisations report higher levels of job satisfaction compared to other groups.

Teachers are often managers in their classes; therefore, a great area for future research is to establish which teaching qualities naturally lend themselves to springboarding leadership in schools, thus ensuring that leadership potential in schools is developed.

## Conclusions

Leadership is a determining factor in improving the grit and job satisfaction of migrant teachers. The study showed that certain teaching positions differed in their perceptions of grit and subsequently job satisfaction. Leaders should motivate and encourage migrant teachers to develop their grit characteristics for the benefit of themselves, their schools and their pupils.

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