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CLASSROOM CLIMATE, CULTURE, PARENTING SKILLS, AND STUDENT GRIT

by

Karen Ochoa

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Education and Human Sciences
and the School of Education
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved by:

Dr. Richard Mohn, Committee Chair
Dr. Bridgette Davis
Dr. Bonnie Nicholson
Dr. Kyna Shelley

December 2022

Published by the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

The education system has noted that student motivation and perseverance are lacking, yet the focus on standardized testing over the last decade has increased the rigor and expectations in the classroom. As such, educational researchers are always looking for new and inventive ways to enhance student achievement without increasing the financial burden on the schools. Grit is the non-cognitive skill that a person processes that enable them to work hard, endure, and persevere through challenging times. A person who exhibits grit often succeeds over those who have cognitive ability but do not have grit. Children in countries with collectivist cultures often display grit, as well as children whose parents are authoritative parents. Thus, if the cultural philosophies or parenting skills could be mimicked in a classroom, the classroom climate could increase grit in a school setting. This quantitative study was implemented to explore the relationships between culture, parenting skills, classroom climate, and grit with the hopes that a predictor of grit could be identified. Results did not find a significant relationship between culture, parenting skills, and grit, but they did find a significant relationship between classroom climate and grit, specifically student academic competence and grit. Further research is needed to examine the connection between discipline and behavior in the classroom and how that affects the grit and classroom climate.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Mohn who has spent countless months, maybe years, guiding, and encouraging me throughout this long process. You have been an integral part of this journey and you never abandoned me even though at times I wasn't sure I would make it across the finish line.

To Dr. Shelley who was the first professor at The University of Southern Mississippi to recognize my ability, and "grit" to pursue a degree in RESA. I will always remember our conversations that inspired and motivated me.

Last, but not least, my classmates who have now become lifelong friends. Thank you for always pushing me to complete what I started.

I could not have gotten to this point without all your encouragement.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to the people who loved and supported me on this journey. First, I want to thank my children. Jared and Nick, you have and always been my inspiration to become a better human and to take the road less traveled. Without the two of you, I would never have been motivated to start this very long journey. My hope is that you will follow my lead and know that anything is possible. There will always be storms, and thorn bushes obstructing your path. Your destination might change, or a detour may be needed, but keep the faith that the skies will clear after the storm, and the cold, numbing rain is what gives the thorny branches the nourishment for its roses to bloom.

Next, I want to thank my parents for giving me the tools, the ability, and most of all the opportunity to move to a country where this was possible.

And last but, not least, to my wonderful husband, Bobby O., who joined this journey at a time when I felt I had lost my direction. You were my compass, my anchor, my lighthouse! When times were tough, you gave me strength, and above all else a renewal of faith. Every morning I wake up, I feel so blessed that you chose me! You are my rock, my Prince, my everything! I love you!

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Background

In 1983, the Commission on Excellence in Education published a report called *A Nation at Risk*. The article stated, "Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and a people. What was unimaginable generations ago began to occur—other countries are matching and surpassing our educational attainments." This issue is the heart of conversation amongst many teachers. Educators have said that a reason for the alleged decline is due to a change in attitude and motivation of children of recent generations. Students' attendance rates and desire to exert forth effort in their classes is declining, and the parents often support their children's lack of work ethic (Gabriel, 2017). Studies over the years have noted a decline in the motivation of students across all grade levels as well as the deterioration of respect for authority. This results in the lack of compliance among students who ignore or dismiss the academic expectations put forth by teachers (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Some researchers have found that American students have been falling behind in achievement compared to their Asian peers, who continuously show gains in performance

(Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). Asian families have high expectations for their children, with their teacher's focus being on academic success. Many American parents do not hold high expectations, and, besides teaching content, teachers are often expected to be the children's disciplinarian, parental substitutes, and counselors (Stevenson, 1993). In the effort to determine how to improve student success and overcome the lack of desire to learn 'The Partnership for 21st Century Learning Skills Framework, and the National Research Council, stated that grit, perseverance, self-control, tenacity and problem-solving are needed for students to become successful citizens in global communities" (Laursen, 2015). Schools thus should find ways to teach emotional and social skills to encourage certain character traits such as grit, to build student resilience (Steiner-Adair, 2013).

In 2007, Angela Duckworth created a renewed buzz around the word grit and defined grit "as the combination of perseverance and passion for long-term goals where a person must perform strenuous work to overcome challenges while maintaining the effort and interest in the goal regardless of the obstacles that might arise" (Duckworth et al., 2007). Duckworth specified that grit is an important trait that can supersede talent and intellectual abilities when it comes to predicting success in students. In her study, she found that West Point cadets who were more likely to persevere and finish their rigorous training displayed more grit than those who did not complete it. She also noted that students who win National Spelling Bees exhibit grit by engaging in unwavering purposeful practice over several years (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). A study by Abuhassàn and Bates (2015) found that even though intelligence and conscientiousness contributed to a student's grades in school, later in life it was perseverance that attributed

to the accomplishment of that individual. Hence, school curriculum and grit should be equally important to master, as grit allows students to overcome challenges throughout an individual's lifetime and will help them to succeed (Fitzgerald & Laurian-Fitzgerald, 2016). If students can learn persistence, it will create a growth mindset that allows them to develop grit (Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015). With grit becoming more connected to student motivation, caution must be taken and recognized that grit contains a "fundamental attribution error" where the value of the child's personality must be underestimated and thus, their behavior must be assessed instead of identifying what critical factors that might be missing in the environment (Stokas, 2015).

<p style="text-align:center">History of Grit</p>

Grit is not a new concept and has been around for over a century. A newspaper article written in 1909, *Have we the grit of our ancestors* by Reginald Brabazon, the 12th Earl of Meath, defined Grit as "the virile spirit, which makes light of pain and physical discomfort, and rejoices in the consciousness of victory over adverse circumstances, and which regards the performance of duty, however difficult and distasteful, as one of the supreme virtues of all true men and women" (Brabazon, 1909). In the American Gilded Age in the early 1900s parents in wealthy upper and middle classes noticed that their entitled children were not exhibiting any grit and that grit only developed when one had to face challenges. According to Ethan Ris (2015), the literature of that era by Mark Twain and F. Scott Fitzgerald exemplified the issue and promoted the narrative of grit. Boarding schools were introduced in New England that purposely challenged students to build Grit. He goes on to state that the Grit Magazine was published during this time and sold by young boys to help build character and make money during the post-war

economic boom. However, following the 1970s, the mention of the word "Grit" in published materials declined dramatically. The notion of Grit was forgotten in the late 1900s and early 2000s until Duckworth revived it in a TED Talk video in 2007.

<div align="center">Parenting Skills</div>

If Grit is an important character trait that can help students succeed, the factors that influence Grit should be explored. So, what factors contribute to Grit? Paul Tough (2016) argued that non-cognitive abilities such as Grit were the product of a child's upbringing. In 1909, Brabazon, the Earl of Meath, published an article in which he questioned whether the men and women of his time-possessed Grit like the previous generations and said that the best way to produce Grit was to ensure that children received strict and "unquestioned" discipline in their early years, while maintaining an "atmosphere of order and teach them steady and cheerful obedience to duty" (Brabazon, 1909). In 1909, a headmaster of Eton College wrote that the lack of Grit among the youth was of great concern, and he linked it to the parenting skills of the elite who coddled their children and gave them too much freedom (Lyttleton, 1909). Studies have determined that non-cognitive skills (persistence, motivation, self-control, attentiveness) have a higher impact on the success of students than their cognitive skills. The Education Endowment Foundation published, *The Impact of Non-cognitive Skills on Outcomes for Young People* a literature review, found that young people with certain non-cognitive skills, such as self-control, have long-term positive outcomes regarding academics and adulthood stability. Additionally, they found that the way a child perceives their ability, and the expectations they have for success, impacts their motivation and persistence (Gutman & Schoon, 2013). Furthermore, a study by Lleras (2008) suggested that

noncognitive abilities are equally essential as cognitive skills with regards to academic success and earning potential later in life, regardless of the acquired education. For example, noncognitive skills are prominent in Asian cultures and thus Asian students hold an academic advantage over American students and score higher on test scores. The parenting skills of Asian parents, who have high expectations and value work ethic, contribute to their children's success (Hsin & Xie, 2014). However, home life and parenting skills are beyond the reach of the United States education system. But what if these "parenting" skills/strategies from the collectivist cultures could be introduced in a classroom? Could teachers impact student Grit?

Classroom Climate

According to the Frey et al., (2020) classroom climate is what increases student learning and is essentially how connected a student feels to their classroom community as well as the rules, procedures and norms that are in place. To find what classroom climate fosters and develops Grit, it is important to look at teachers whose students have attained academic achievement even when faced with challenges. Poplin et al. (2011) observed that in low-performing schools, teachers who were more affective used traditional teaching methods. These teachers were strict, had fewer collaborative learning activities, valued respect, honesty, and hope, while pushing persistence, responsibility, high standards, and made students aware there were consequences to their actions. In schools with a high free and reduced lunch ratio, African American students perceived themselves as having Grit when their classroom teachers were strict but nurturing (Huang & Zhu, 2017). Paul Tough (2016) observed that teachers who encourage Grit in their classrooms often do not use the terms linked to Grit, but rather create a climate that

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allows for those traits to develop. Ericsson et al. (2007) specified that for a person to become an expert, they had to participate in deliberate practice for many hours, and those who wanted success sought out a no-nonsense teacher who gave constructive direct "painful" feedback and challenged the students, causing them to push themselves to the next level of success. Teachers with assertive classroom management styles propose that students learn to be responsible and have self-discipline by defining clear expectations with consequences for behavior (Canter, 1989).

Schools around the United States are thus seeking ways to enhance student academic accomplishments. Farrington et al., (2012), noted that what happens in the classroom, affects student academic behavior which can impact non-cognitive as well as cognitive skills. Thus, there is a push for growing Grit to increase student achievement. Hence, more research into the factors that influence Grit should be initiated.

<center>Problem Statement</center>

According to the literature, parenting skills and cultural values can influence Grit. A few studies indicate that Grit can also be influenced by teachers (Huang & Zhu, 2017; Tough, 2016). But there is a gap in the literature on the relationship between classroom climate, and Grit. If some of those skills that build Grit can be taught by teachers in the classroom, then, in theory, schools could influence student Grit. Despite this theoretical logic, we lack evidence as to the relationship between classroom climate, and Grit. Educational researchers are always looking for new and inventive ways to enhance student achievement. The focus on standardized testing over the last few years has increased rigor and expectations. Additionally, government funding for education has been cut, which creates a huge inequality among the different school districts, forcing

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educators to seek non-traditional ways to push achievement. Non-cognitive factors are being investigated to push students to perform (Pender, 2017). Grit is a non-cognitive factor that is being explored as a solution to the education crisis as schools face funding inequity (Duckworth et al., 2007). Grit and growth mindset have been correlated with academic achievement more so than talent and intellectual ability (Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015). Therefore, if schools are to effectively change classroom climates to enhance student Grit, then the relationship between cultural values and parenting skills, and Grit needs to be understood. If there is a relationship between cultural values and parenting skills and Grit, then perhaps the "parenting" skills/ strategies or that build Grit could be used in the classrooms to create a classroom climate of Grit.

Purpose Statement

This study aims to examine the relationship between Grit, cultural values, parenting skills, and classroom climate. The school of thought is that if students can learn to persevere and not lose sight of their goals, they can overcome challenges and can be successful in all areas of their lives. In theory, students, including those in low socio-economic areas, can increase their chances of succeeding if they have Grit as part of their skill set. If Grit can be taught and developed, then it is important to create a school climate that fosters the factors that create Grit.

Research Questions:

The following research questions will be addressed in this study:

R1. Is there a relationship between parenting skills and individualist/ collectivist cultures?

R2. Is there a relationship between student Grit and parenting skills as reported by Baumrind?

R3. Is there a relationship between student Grit and classroom climate?

R4. Is there an interaction between collectivist/ individualist cultures and parenting skills and its relationship with Grit?

<div align="center">Theory</div>

Psychology of Parenting

National Academies of Sciences et al. (2016) states that there are four important responsibilities for parents besides the basic responsibilities of keeping the child safe from abuse and neglect. These responsibilities are to maintain the child's health and safety, emotional well-being, teach social skills, and prepare children intellectually. Since parenting plays a major role in a child's academic performance and self-esteem, it is important to examine the theories and parenting styles, which create a basis for their future success.

Parenting Styles

Diana Baumrind (1978) discussed three types of parenting styles that affect children's behavior: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Authoritarian parents believe that children can be molded into socially competent individuals by placing strict demands on their behavior with the child has few choices. Permissive parenting allows the child freedom of self-expression and to explore their beliefs, likes, and feelings with little parental guidance or control. In essence, children have very few rules or boundaries. Lastly, authoritative parenting, which allows children to have individual interests, but with rules and consequences. A study compared the different parenting styles proved that a positive relationship between student self-control, high academic achievement, and

authoritative parenting exists. In contrast, students with permissive parents had low self-control, reliance, and low academic achievements (Walker, 2009).

Justification

If non-cognitive skills are important life skills that can impact a person's life, it would benefit children to learn or develop skills such as Grit. Throughout history, successful individuals exhibited non-cognitive abilities that often override intellectual abilities and talent. Duckworth found that Grit is a good predictor of whether students will graduate high school (Duckworth et al., 2007). Subsequently, Suran and Young (2017) identified Grit as a major predictor of college students' academic achievement as well as career-related attitudes. A professor at Princeton University, Holbein, wrote that children who develop non-cognitive skills adapt better to adulthood. These individuals learn to self-regulate and integrate into social settings and thus become more adjusted community members. Active community members involved in civic engagement also participate in politics and are more likely to vote (Holbein & John, 2017). If citizens are engaged and productive, then society benefits.

Assumptions

The first assumption is that all participants understand the meaning and definitions of Grit, perseverance, and classroom climate. It is also assumed that participant data will remain confidential, and they can withdraw their participation status at any time. Finally, the assumption is that all instruments used in this study are valid and reliable.

Delimitations

This study explores the relationship between parenting skills and individualistic/collectivist cultures, classroom climate and Grit. It is impossible to fully reach students and families of all cultures and the study is restricted to teachers, students, and families located in Southern Florida and Southern Mississippi. Grit may be affected in one way or another as students have had a change in the way that their education has been delivered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of a distance learning/online platform have the potential to alter the way a student approaches their education. Teachers may also feel the effects of teaching in a pandemic as they enter uncharted territory of synchronous teaching: teaching distance learning and brick and mortar students simultaneously. This may influence the classroom climate. Parenting skills may also be affected due to the pandemic, with the stress of a shut down and students being kept home for distance learning. Parents may display a different parenting skill during a pandemic compared to a non-pandemic era. This study may have potential effects from the COVID-19 pandemic and may not have a similar effect during a non-pandemic era.

Definition of Terms

To clarify the research, key terms are defined as follows:

Grit- Angela Duckworth defined Grit as the "combination of perseverance and passion for long-term goals, where a person must perform strenuous work to overcome challenges while maintaining the effort and interest in the goal regardless of the obstacles that might arise" (Duckworth et al., 2007). Grit is the ability for a person to succeed and persevere through tough times to get a result.

Self-Control - According to Duckworth and Gross (2014), "Self-control is the ability to regulate attention, emotion, and behavior in the presence of temptation."

Culture - The Peace Corps defines culture as a "...a system of beliefs, values, and assumptions about life that guide behavior and are shared by a group of people. It includes customs, language, and material artifacts. These are transmitted from generation to generation, rarely with explicit instructions."

Collectivist Culture - collectivistic cultures share the belief that all people are connected. Family relationships and interdependence are valued, and the ideology of social conformity is important.

Individualistic Culture - A culture that believes that the individual needs are more important than those of society. Autonomy and independence are important, and social behavior is controlled or influenced by people's attitudes and choices.

Authoritative parenting - Diana Baumrind defines authoritative parenting as parents who believe that children should have autonomy as well as structure. They encourage their child by using reason, positive reinforcement, and setting high standards for their child to succeed (Baumrind, 1971).

Authoritarian parenting - Diana Baumrind defines the authoritarian parent as a strict parent who believes in obedience and discipline. The parent believes in order and tradition and gives little or no encouragement, believing that it is their way or the highway with the child has no say in decision making (Baumrind, 1973).

Permissive parenting - Diana Baumrind defines permissive parenting as parents who accept and allow a child to react on impulse and does not correct their actions. The

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child is given freedom to behave as the child sees fit and the parent does not stop the negative behavior (Baumrind, 1973).

Classroom Climate classroom climate is what increases student learning and is essentially how connected a student feels to their classroom community as well as the rules, procedures and norms that are in place (Frey et al., 2020).

Academic achievement - Steinmayr et al. (2014) defines academic achievement as a student performance outcome that shows that a student has met certain goals that were the instructional focus.

CHAPTER II - LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory behind Parenting Skills

To address a child's Grit, we should start at the basics. Rudy and Grusec (2001) observed that as children mature, they naturally seek to gain self-confidence and independence from their parents. They also state that psychologists believe that children must observe behavior and values to embrace those characteristics. If a child exhibits the values without parental presence, it can be assumed that the child has learned and adopted those values from elsewhere. These values, along with cognitive skills, are likely factors that drive or deter a student's achievement. According to Hess et al. (1984), five processes connect to family and school achievement. These processes are "*verbal communication* between mother and child, *high expectations* of accomplishments, *interactions* between the parent and the child, *a parent's belief system* related to the child, and *control and discipline* regarding the child." Parental involvement and certain parenting skills can help students of all socioeconomic classes increase their reading levels and their language acquisition (Darling, 2008). A child's motivation is connected to the parenting skills used in the child's formative years. Motivation has two components: implicit and explicit. Implicit motivation is influenced by early interactions between the parent and the child which allows a child to feel satisfied when they have tried and performed well on a task, thus acquiring a need for implicit achievement. The interaction with the child is based on the parent's valuing of achievement and success (McClelland, D. & Pilon, D., 1983). Ishak et al. (2012) further confirmed through their study that parenting skills have a large influence on a child's academic and self-concept.

This idea is important as it connects parenting skills to a child's motivation, which is associated with Grit.

Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive Parenting

According to Baumrind (1978) three styles of parenting exist Each of these styles is described below:

Authoritarian Parenting

According to Amy Morin (2019) the authoritarian parents are demanding and often very controlling. Children have little or no say in decisions, are not heard but rather seen, and a child's emotional state is not considered. The parents expect the rules to be followed, without questioning of authority. Children with authoritarian parents are not involved in problem solving but are given consequences if rules are not directly followed, with the child feeling guilty over their mistakes instead of feeling that a lesson has been learned (Baumrind, 1973).

Permissive Parenting

At the opposite end of the spectrum there is the permissive parenting style where children have little responsibility, receive little or no consequences for their behavior, and the parents allow and accept their child's lack of impulse control with little or no correction. Children can act immaturely with no correction that leads to a lack of self-reliance, social responsibility, and cognitive competence (Baumrind, 1973).

Authoritative parents

Authoritative parents are involved in their child's life, set boundaries for them while still allowing independence, and are not controlling and seek to understand, know, and support their children without fear of upsetting the child during a confrontation with

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the child in tough situations. This parenting style has been correlated with greater academic achievement as the children engage in higher levels of problem-solving, and critical thinking (Pinquart, 2016). Bower confirmed Baumrind's findings that authoritative parents set very clear and high standards for their child's behavior, while still allowing for some freedom within very defined limits (Bower, 1989). Authoritative parents have expectations that their children will behave in a mature manner with clear standards set by the parents, which is firmly enforced. Parents encourage children and maintain an open line of communication, encouraging the children to be independent and self-reliant.

<div align="center">Comparison of the Parenting Styles</div>

Berkowitz (2007) stated that a democratic society relies on the characteristics and morals of individuals for self-governance to flourish. To achieve this, children should be raised in a way where the parents shape their character. Permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles have different effects on children. Baumrind (1973) expressed that authoritarian parenting can "retard the internalization of ideals." Dewar (2017) said that authoritarian parents are strict and enforce behavior through fear and shame, but this strategy can be counterproductive with the child externalizing behavior issues by being defiant, disruptive, and anti-social. A meta-analysis of 1,400 published studies by Pinquart (2016) found evidence that a predictor of children with behavior problems was firm psychological control exhibited by authoritarian parents. However, there are some cultural discrepancies. In collectivist societies, authoritarian parenting yields better results than in individualistic cultures, as the good of the group is seen as equally important as the individual's needs and therefore, discipline is not seen as a

negative concept as it is in individualistic cultures (Rudy & Grusec, 2006). Additionally, authoritarian parenting affects genders in different ways: Girls become more socially assertive at a very young age, but both genders tend to show a lower cognitive ability connected to an intrusive directness with authoritarian parenting skills (Baumrind, 1975). It was also found that in Hispanic communities, females with authoritarian parents had significantly lower grades while their male counterparts showed no connection to the parenting skills and their grades (Dornbusch et al., 1987). In contrast, Baumrind states that permissive parenting allows the child to behave in an obnoxious and petulant way, which can bring out narcissistic behavior. These children show low levels of impulse control, and maturity compared to their peers (Baumrind, 1978). According to Trautner, (2017) permissive parents see their children as equals, avoid conflict and use gifts and bribery to sway their child's behavior. Although these parents are warm and nurturing, they lack control over the child. These children often have no responsibilities, which leads to a lack of self-control and independence while being selfish and demanding of others. These children seek approval and define their value according to outside influence, which in turn results in low academic achievement. According to Barton and Hirsch (2016) permissive parenting is counterproductive to get children college ready. They stated that these children have a false sense of self-worth, which makes them feel entitled. They do not take responsibility for their failures but instead blame others. This entitlement is a result of their belief that they deserve to achieve greatness even if they have not put any effort into their learning. Narcissistic tendencies develop when permissive parenting is dominant. Children are inconsiderate and selfish that continues into adulthood. The reason is that permissive parents try protecting their children by

removing any struggles, or challenges in their way. By shielding them, these children

then expect others to remove obstacles for them as well, and they never learn how to push

through or overcome any difficulties that they encounter. Li et al. (2016) also noted in

their study that permissive parenting styles reduce a child's emotional intelligence. In

comparison, the third style of parenting, authoritative parenting, parents have high

standards and expectations, yet allow the child to have autonomy, with a sense of

responsibility. With these limits in place, children exhibit greater emotional and social

wellbeing than those children whose parents show other parenting styles. This style of

parenting has been shown to be beneficial when the children become teenagers as they

tend to avoid risky behavior and want academic achievement (Bower, 1989). A study by

Ramsay (2019) stated significant findings that a child's need for independence is

enhanced when a mother displays authoritative parenting techniques. His study also

found that permissive parenting stunted the child's desire for autonomy. Additionally,

authoritative parenting promotes emotional intelligence in younger children, allowing

them to develop a healthy sense of autonomy, and a "high motivation for achievement."

Morin (2019) states that these parents seek a positive relationship with their child, explain

rules and the reasoning behind those rules and enforce consequences but still validate the

child's feelings. Although authoritative parenting is usually associated with positive

results, authoritative parents who have developmentally disabled children display higher

levels of stress and frustration and this style of parenting is often abandoned as the

children grow older (Woolfson & Grant, 2006). Some cultures see success with other

forms of parenting over the authoritative parenting, especially in collectivist cultures and

ethnic minority cultures, where authoritarian parenting appears to be more successful (García & Gracia, 2009).

<p style="text-align:center">Individualistic and Collectivist Cultures</p>

Cultural values appear to influence motivation and Grit in students through parenting styles and education philosophies. Cultures can be divided into 2 main categories: individualistic and collectivist cultures. Cherry Kendra (2020) defined individualistic cultures as a culture that believes that the individual needs are more important than those of the society. Autonomy and independence are important, and social behavior is controlled or influenced by people's attitudes and choices. Self-reliance and the rights of an individual are valued, where dependence in any form is a weakness. In these cultures, it is more important to be a unique individual than it is to be a part of a group. Most European countries, as well as the United States of America, tend to be individualistic. Cherry defines collectivist cultures as cultures that believe that people should think of the good of the group, and the families rely and depend on each other. In a collectivist culture, decisions enhance the well-being of a group even if they put the needs of an individual on the back burner. The belief is that ultimately decisions must benefit the good of society. Grossmann and Santos (2017) said that collectivistic cultures share the belief that all people are connected. Family relationships and interdependence are valued, and the ideology of social conformity is important. The movement of culture from collectivism to individualism has grown recently and is linked with an increase in socioeconomic development. However, their studies have also shown that individualistic cultures had higher divorce rates with a surge in people displaying narcissistic tendencies. According to Rothstein-Fisch et al. (2008) the individualism framework is highly present

in the United States, Western Europe, Australia, and Canada, with self-expression, task orientation, self-esteem, and cognitive intelligence dominating the culture. In comparison 70% of the world's population function in collectivist cultures. In a collectivist framework, respect, modesty, social orientation, and social intelligence dominate the culture.

Individualistic Cultures

 American Cultures

Bornstein (2012) found that cultural backgrounds correlate with parenting beliefs and asserted that American mothers are individualistic and independent regarding their parenting and are extremely competitive wanting their children to be the best. American parents believe that autonomy, assertiveness, verbal ability, and self-actualization are important values to ingrain in their children. Other researchers have argued that American parents moved to a more permissive parenting style after World War II. Li et al. (2016) states that parents spent less quality time with their children, and the absence of parents introduced children with lower levels of responsibility and leadership, as well as a desire for instant gratification. These children have low self-esteem and lack motivation for achievement. Additionally, MacMahon (2015), said that American parents try to foster individualism and push their children into sports or other activities at a young age and cater to their needs thus making them the center of attention. Chao (1994) states that American parents who are controlling and strict are seen in a negative light. Stevenson (1993) found that American mothers are satisfied with their children's quality of education compared to their Asian counterparts and credited that to the American mothers' lack of understanding of educational standards. These mothers do not stress the

importance of academics but have rather created an environment that allows students to

achieve in other areas besides academics like sports and other extra-curricular activities.

When it comes to the education system, Stevenson and Stigler (1992) wrote that

American teachers believe that specifying a child's failure in public damages the child's

self-esteem and that failure in this instance will cause failure later in life. Bronfenbrenner

(1971) discusses how American schools do not have a climate of mutual respect, or belief

in good work habits but rather children place popularity amongst peers as a priority, and

intellectual achievement as low on the totem pole. Students who did well were not always

the smartest children, but rather those who worked hard. According to Hufton et al.,

(2003) American teachers praise students very liberally with the philosophy that

excessive praise leads to self-esteem.

African American Cultures

African Americans have traditionally fallen behind in education for decades,

sparking the Coleman report published in 1966. The federal government ordered a report

to determine the availability or lack of availability of equal education for students of

color in public schools in the United States. The study was one of the largest undertaken

in the United States at the time and found that segregated schools had a large disparity

between achievement in the white schools and the African American schools. The

disparities included school facilities, class sizes, advanced classes, characteristics of the

faculty of the schools, and highlighted the difference between academic achievements in

the two groups (Hill, 2017). According to Kantor and Lowe (2017) Coleman stated that

there were huge inequalities between black and white schools that was assumed to be the

cause of the lack of achievement in the black schools, however Coleman found in his

study that the biggest influence on the lack of achievement in black schools was the socioeconomic status of the child as well as their belief that they had control over their education and whether they had any personal aspirations for their future. Watkins-Lewis and Hamre (2012) found that warmth and confidence in authoritarian African American parents impacted their child's cognitive ability and thus their achievement although they cautioned that other factors may also be in play. Their study fell in line with the Coleman Report, recognizing that it was the students' home life that had a higher degree of influence of the child's achievement rather than the quality of education that was received. Clark (1984) stated that African American parents' positive perception of education and their belief in whether their child could achieve within the school system, affected their parenting skills and built the child's non-cognitive skills that enhanced achievement. Clark stated that the debate about whether these African American parents value education is not of real importance, but rather their belief that their child can succeed. In a study by Steinberg et al., (1992) it was noted that African American parents have low expectations of their child's achievement in schools, and the children do not believe that low achievement has negative repercussions therefore they often do not try as they believe that hard work does not benefit them.

When it comes to predominantly African American schools there has been some speculation and studies that liken these schools to prison systems. Simmons (2009) discussed the pre-Katrina schools and post-Katrina schools in New Orleans. Students in these schools compared their schools and the treatment of African American students to prisons, with black students being treated as criminals with a zero- tolerance policy. This led to a disproportionate suspension of black students compared to white students.

Additionally, there is a sense that there is a higher investment in the prison system than in the education system. Mallett (2015) stated that the discipline plans in schools lays the ground for students to enter the prison systems, which increases the chances that certain students will be incarcerated before receiving the education they need. Gass and Laughter (2015) studied how teachers could make a difference in these schools. Although the teachers recognized that they may not save many students from gangs or the criminal system, students who had teachers who showed that they were interested in the students while they were in the classroom made an impact that allowed students to be engaged during that time. Kim et al. (2010) expressed in their book *The School to Prison Pipeline: Structuring Legal Reform*, that public institutions have failed to, "meet the educational and social development needs of a large segment of the children they are charged with serving." (p. 1). They found that there are inadequate programs in place to help students succeed and that African American students are often suspended or expelled for the same misconduct that their white peers are not punished for. Recently, schools have used police to try to uphold discipline, which leads to students being prosecuted through the courts for incidents at school. This reduces the chances of the students being successful as it is often hard for these students to reintegrate into the educational system. Delale-O'Connor et al., (2017) confirmed that urban schools had a higher proportion of students who enter the juvenile criminal system, and the number of minorities entering the prison systems is inherently higher than white students. What is interesting to note is that it appears that the cause is that urban schools have either increased their zero-tolerance policy and become too punitive, or they have become too lax in their discipline policy, which creates more opportunities for misconduct. Brantley (2017) stated that in New

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York City Public Schools, African American students served longer suspension times than their white peers even though statistically their infractions were not due to violence, but rather minor discipline issues such as profanity. It was also noted that age does not matter as students being referred to the juvenile system are younger than before.

Collectivist Cultures

     Asian Cultures

Asian cultures often fall under the collectivist umbrella and follow the teachings of Confucius that believe that a government should place education as a priority for society so that their people can succeed, and that all humans must be motivated to learn through self-cultivation that is a person's sole responsibility (Tan, 2017). The Japanese culture is a collectivist culture that believes the "group identity" is important. These mothers have high expectations of self-control and advocate for emotional maturity, social courtesy, and interdependence (Bornstein, 2012). Wang et al. (2019) found a significant positive correlation between authoritative parenting and emotional intelligence in Chinese children, where the culture is collectivist. Authoritative parenting promotes emotional intelligence in younger children, allowing them to develop a healthy sense of autonomy, and a "high motivation for achievement." Asian parents are strict and authoritarian in nature; however, their cultural beliefs and systems are more traditional, with the traditions from the past still deeply embedded in society. This belief causes some conflict in the literature as Asian cultures have high predictability in school achievement even with these parenting concepts, compared to American children who generally fail with authoritarian parenting. Studies show that although the ideals of the Chinese parenting skills are strict, and restrictive, the cultural ideologies have "evolved" over

centuries and are thus considered positive (Kim & Chun, 1994). Asian parents promote

collectivism and honor, with children honoring, respecting, and obeying their parents to

promote a successful society. Although the parents are considered strict, it is seen as a

positive quality (Chao, 1994). Kim (2013) found that most Chinese American parents in

their study were supportive and not "tiger" moms and stated that Chinese American

students with the supportive parents achieved higher academic scores than the parents

with tiger moms who were strict and extremely controlling. Ruddy and Neiman (2015)

and Stevenson and Stigler (1992) discovered in their study that Asian children are more

successful academically than their American peers, as well as more motivated to learn.

Researchers also contend that Asian teachers have an innovative and interesting way of

educating. Stevenson (1992) found that Asian schools have extensive recess time, which

produces a positive attitude toward academics, while American students fall behind each

academic year. Asian mothers, on the other hand, make education precedence and believe

that education is critical to their child's future. When children from both cultures were

interviewed, American children focused on material things, while Asian children focused

on ways to improve academics. Additionally, students in Asian cultures view mistakes

and errors as skills they need to master and learn instead of viewing them as weaknesses

like their American counterparts (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). Yamamoto et al. (2016)

found that mothers' perception of a teacher's request of parental engagement was a

predictor of the child's cognitive and school engagement and that middle-class Japanese

mothers believed in supplementing their child's education at home. They believe it is

their responsibility as a parent. Academic achievement is a result of effort rather than

ability in Asian cultures, which results in the overall success of the students (Hufton et

al., 2003). Studies have also shown that student motivation and overall satisfaction and student happiness at school are greater in the Asian and Eastern European countries than in those in Western countries, with the general belief that harder work results in greater achievement. Intrinsic motivation was found to be notably higher in the Eastern cultures compared to the Western peers, where American and British cultures have a higher rate of school-aged students who are unmotivated, with a large increase in this factor happening when students reach the upper grades (Elliott et al., 2001). Garner (1989) stated that the Vietnamese culture puts education first and relies heavily on the memorization and repetitiveness of material. Vietnamese students see challenging or questioning authority and looking someone straight in the eye as disrespectful, which means they often look down and speak softly as a term of respect. Steinberg et al., (1992) stated that Asian-American students performed well in school due to their personal belief that low achievement will have negative consequences, and thus spend additional time in academics to achieve believing that hard work is rewarded and fearing a parent's reaction to a low grade.

European Cultures

Bronfenbrenner (1971) noted that in the collectivist Soviet Union, which was a socialist country in the 1970s, youth had an easy transition into adulthood, which was accredited to a society that valued authority, compared to the American society that often lacks shared goals. Parenting in the USSR focused on what the Soviets called *the Vospitanie*, which can be translated into "character education." At home, children had to obey their parents, be self-disciplined, help with household responsibilities, and to take care and respect all property in the house (26). However, Western European

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parents kept strict discipline, displayed more affection, were more engaged when at home

and considered the heads of the household rather than a friend lending themselves to the

authoritative parenting style. Brofenbrenner discusses how the teachers and parents in

the Soviet Union were friends and often had affectionate respect for each other. Schools

focused on character education with several objectives. One objective was communist

morality. There was a focus on collectivism, and social humanism, which included

nurturing, perseverance and initiative, a responsible attitude toward learning, and belief in

increasing one's "power of intellectual work" by encouraging good work habits. Students

had to complete all school assignments, clean up after themselves, take care of the school

property, and respect others. Hufton et al., (2003) stated that Russian students were more

motivated to perform well than their American and British peers. Russian teachers were

also far more conservative and critical when giving praise to their students. Regarding

Sweden, the journal *Pediatrics Child Health* published an article by Bremberg in 2009,

stating why Sweden is leading the world in child development. According to the article,

the Swedes have laws that protect the children and see them as individualists. The nation

has put in place polices and a culture that provides children with several basic human

rights. One of these rights is that regardless of the parents' income, children still have

access to equitable early childhood education. Additionally, each child shall be protected

from discrimination, as well as right to good childhood where they can openly express

their opinion (Bremberg, 2009). French parents, on the other hand, set compelling and

clear expectations about behavior for their children from a very young age so that the

authority of who is in charge is not questioned (Druckerman, 2012). This is confirmed by

Judy MacMahon, as she states that French parenting skills include delayed gratification, and parents show authority (MacMahon, 2015).

Latino Culture

In the Latino culture, parents have a high level of influence over their children. The children are expected to display behavior that encourage family connection, cultural values, and respect for parental authority (Zayas & Solari, 1994). According to Kim et al. (2018) in Latino culture there is an ideology of "respeto" that is a culture of respect and consideration for others with the idea of independence in children. In their study, they found that certain Latino groups are at a high risk of underachievement. The children from the Mexican and Dominican origins with authoritative parents displayed better social-emotional readiness for school, and higher achievement compared to the children whose parents were authoritarian in nature. Students with lower academic performance had authoritarian parents in the Latino sub-groups. However, what was interesting is that in children of Mexican origin, authoritarian parenting led to significant underachievement later in life. (2018). Steinberg et al., (1992) noted that Hispanic parents are often authoritarian, and the parents have a higher influence on the children than their peers, but the children do not always perform well. One reason stated was that the home life may not be favorable to achievement in school. They say that authoritative parenting is rare in Hispanic communities, and because schools are designed to produce independent, self-directed learners (similar traits that are promoted by authoritative parenting), Hispanic students do not perform well academically.

Classroom Climate's Connection to Parenting Skills

If parenting skills that promote Grit can be mimicked or replicated in the classroom, it could help students succeed. As one's culture impacts parenting skills, then perhaps teachers can mimic parenting styles to influence classroom climate.

Classroom climate can create an environment that influences student achievement. An environment that encourages nurturing relationships and has effective classroom management can create a classroom climate where students achieve. In a study by van Dijk et al. (2019), it was found that classroom management and climate have a significant direct effect on a student's interest and motivation in the classroom, which in turn affects student achievement. Lewis and Asli Özgün-Koca (2016) discussed strategies in mathematics classes that help students foster perseverance. They created a climate of achievement with a set of math lessons where students must understand that certain emotions such as frustration are normal when approaching a challenging situation. Part of student success is motivation. This is the basis for Montessori's philosophy (1989) who believed that children needed enthusiasm for learning so that they were not just, "complacent students but eager ones." A study by Poplin et al. (2011) stated that highly effective teachers who taught in urban school settings found that African American students were more successful academically if the teachers were strict and had high expectations, structure, instructional intensity with very few downtime minutes, were consistently moving around the classroom monitoring, engaged in traditional education strategies that excluded cooperative and collaborative learning, focused on values such as hard work, persistence, respect for others and consequences, and nurtured strong and respectful relationships. Knowing the difference between respect and liking each other

goes a long way in classroom management. Robison (2019) agreed with the findings of Poplin and contends that teachers can achieve achievements if the climate involves teacher assertiveness and expectations are clear. Baumrind (1974) noted that African American disadvantaged youth in an unstructured classroom climate resulted in lower academic achievement and that a structured and strict climate in the classroom resulted in higher academic achievement. Adedigba and Sulaiman (2020) determined that the classroom climate has a positive effect on student motivation. In their study, they noted that authoritarian and permissive management styles did not increase achievement, but democratic and authoritative teaching styles had a much greater effect. It was also concluded that a positive student-teacher relationship was important to raise achievement. DiTullio (2014) believe that classroom climate is vital for students to build resiliency, which means that students must trust their peers and teacher. This allows for students to take risks without fear of ridicule, while practicing problem solving skills. A classroom climate where students and teachers have positive interactions helps the students manage conflicts and helps them with self-regulation. When teachers foster a positive classroom climate it can greatly reduce aggressive and disruptive behavior. In other words, a teacher's effective discipline strategies can have a positive effect on student behavior and their social problem-solving skills (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Early Child Care Research Network (2005), a classroom climate can be measured by positive interactions between teachers and students, teachers respond with sensitivity to the students' needs, positive classroom management strategies implemented by the teacher, and limited criticism and over-controlling behavior.

Gap in Literature

In conclusion, this review of literature finds that Grit can be influenced by certain types of parenting skills that occur in different cultures across the globe. A handful of other studies indicate that Grit can also be encouraged by teachers (Huang & Zhu, 2017; Tough, 2016). But there is a gap in the literature on the relationship between classroom climate, and Grit.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to determine if culture influences parenting styles, and if parenting styles have relationship to Grit and if so, then can those parenting skills transfer into classroom management skills that equate to a positive classroom climate to influence Grit in students.

Research questions are as follows:

The dependent variable (DV) for this study is Grit, and the independent variables (IV) for this study are parenting styles, culture, and classroom climate. In order to determine if there are relationships within the variables the following research questions will be tested:

R1. Is there a relationship between parenting styles and individualistic and collectivist cultures?

R2. Is there a relationship between student Grit and parenting skills as reported by Baumrind?

R3. Is there a relationship between student Grit and classroom climate?

R4. Is there an interaction between individualistic/ collectivist cultures culture and parenting skills and its relationship with Grit?

Research Design

A quantitative hierarchical multilevel model approach used a formal, objective, systematic process where data is collected and used to test the research questions.

Participants

Before administering the surveys, approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) was obtained to ensure all guidelines were followed. Participants were students in 3rd through 12th grade from elementary, middle, and high school. Two of the charter schools in South Florida have over 50% Hispanic populations and 17% Hattian populations with many of those students speaking Spanish or Creole as their first language. According to the parental demographic questions on the survey, participants were 78.6% ($n=92$) white, 15.4% ($n=18$) black/African American, 5.1 % ($n=6$) Asian, 0.9% ($n=1$) Native Hawaiian/ Islander, and 5.1% ($n=6$) other. The area of origin was 57.3% ($n=67$) North America, 6.8% ($n=8$) South America, 20.5% ($n=24$) Africa, 4.3 % ($n=5$) Eastern European, 7.7% ($n=9$) Western European, and 3.4% ($n=4$) Asia. The area of origin was defined according to the research in the literature review.

Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics for Area of Origin*

Area of Origin	Frequency	Percent
North America	67	57.3
South America	8	6.8
Eastern European	5	4.3
Western European	9	7.7
Asia	4	3.4
Africa	24	20.5

Instrumentation

Short Grit Scale:

The first instrument is the Short Grit Scale by Angela Duckworth, et al (Appendix E). This scale was used to measure student Grit. The scale was administered online at home under parental supervision as section one of the student surveys. The Short Grit

Scale has been tested for validity by Duckworth et al. Studies showed that there was a predictive validity, consensual validity, and test-retest stability of the Grit-S questionnaire. In addition, the confirmatory factor analysis for the Grit-S scale showed that the instrument measures perseverance and passion for short-term goals with the same validity and the original Grit Scale (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). According to Li et al. (2016), the Grit S– Scale showed validity with high school students from China as well. It showed construct validity with relations to the Big 5 personality traits. This confirmed the relationship between Grit and academic achievement in the students from China. This instrument is published and publicly available for use.

Student Perception of Classroom Climate (SPPCC)

This scale is used to determine a student's perception about their classroom conditions. The scale is divided into Teacher Academic Support, Teacher Personal Support, Peer Academic Support, Peer Personal Support, and overall satisfaction. The scale was deemed reliable with a Cronbach's alpha ranging from .79 to .91 (Appendix F). The instrument was administered to the students as part two of their online survey. The survey was administered at home, under parent supervision. The survey took approximately 20 minutes.

Parenting Style Questionnaire

The first part of the parent survey was the Parenting Style questionnaire by C. C. Robinson et al. (Appendix G). This instrument measures parenting styles according to Baumrind's three main parenting styles: Authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Parents of the students who completed the Grit- S scale will be asked to complete the Parenting Style Questionnaire online, in their own time. The Parenting Styles

Questionnaire was found to be consistent with Baumrind's parenting practices (Robinson et al., 1995). A CFA analysis conducted by Fahiroh et al., (2019) tested the validity of the Parenting Styles Questionnaire to measure parenting skills of adolescents and found that the instrument was valid. Önder and Gülay (2009) found the Parenting Styles Questionnaire had reliability and validity to measure parental attitude in the Turkish culture. This survey is available for public use.

Individualism-Collectivism Scale

The Individualism-Collectivism Scale (Appendix H) was given as a second part to the parents of the students to measure if they identified with a collectivist or individualist culture. The scale is a negative bipolar scale with anchors in -3 and 3 with the positive scores representing collectivistic tendencies and a negative score representing individualistic tendencies. Kim and Cho (2011) ran both an exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis and found the scale was validated and has internal consistency and reliability.

Procedures

The study was submitted to USM's Institutional Research Board for approval to complete the research project (Appendix A). Once approval was obtained, the schools that had given permission for the surveys were contacted (Appendix C and D) and the letter with detailed information about the study was sent via email to the Superintendent of the public schools and Regional Vice President of the charter schools to send to the out to the students' families. Parents were contacted through school communication applications (Class Tag) and emails, with the information about the study, links to the parental consent, the child assent, and the links to the surveys. Data was collected using

Qualtrics. After a period, when there was minimal response, a modification was made to the IRB to post the information and surveys on social media sites that would allow for more responses, such as parenting groups, and professional websites. The email explained the purpose of the study and requested consent to survey their children, along with a request for them to complete the Parenting Styles Survey, and the Individualistic-Collectivist Scale. All surveys were available online using Qualtrics. All identifying data was deleted once the names had been used to match the data collected, and confidentially was maintained. Data will be stored online in an encrypted file, on a password-protected server. Given the parameters in the Optimal Design Software, a sample size of a minimum of 240 students was determined. After obtaining the school districts' consent to administer the surveys, as well as parental consent and minor assent, the instruments were administered.

After an initial period with minimal responses, a modification was made to the IRB (Appendix B) to expand my research project and to post the information on professional and social media sites that had an interest in the topic. Approval for the modification was given to on February 1st. The survey links were available from January 20th to March 11th. One hundred and twenty-seven Parent surveys were collected, and 122 student surveys were collected. The data was merged, and a unique corresponding identification number was assigned to the student and parent, and all other identifying data was stripped.

The Grit-Scale had 117 responses. The scale was a Likert scale of 1 through 5, with 5 representing a lot of Grit and 1 representing no Grit. The mean was 3.15 with a standard deviation of 0.58.

Table 2 *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Grit Average	117	2	5	3.15	.584
Valid N (listwise)	117				

The Parenting Styles Questionnaire had a series of questions that were categorized according to parenting styles: Permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian. The responses resulted in 5.9% (n =7) permissive parents, 84.6% (*n* = 99) authoritative parents, and 9.4% (*n* = 11) authoritarian parents.

Table 3 *Parenting style*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Permissive	7	6.0	6.0	6.0
	Authoritative	99	84.6	84.6	90.6
	Authoritarian	11	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

The Individualistic-Collectivist Scale determined there were 29.1% (n = 34) parents who identified as coming from an individualistic culture, and 70.9% (n = 83) parents who were identified as coming from a collectivist culture.

Table 4 *Individualistic-Collectivist Scale*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Individualistic	34	29.1	29.1	29.1
	Collectivist	83	70.9	70.9	100.0
	Total	117	100.0	100.0	

Data Analysis

Data was collected, and data from incomplete surveys was deleted. Reverse coding was implemented for the Grit-S scale. The researcher performed a Chi Square analysis, regressions, and an interaction analysis. First a Chi-squared analysis was performed for RQ1. Regression models were used for RQ2, and RQ3. The scores from the Grit-S survey were the dependent variables and the scores from the Parenting Styles Surveys and the Student Perception of Classroom Climate were the dependent variables respectively. For RQ4, an interaction regression model was utilized with the scores from the Grit-S survey as the dependent variable and the independent variable was the Collectivist scores with the interactions with the parenting styles: Permissive, Authoritative and Authoritarian.

CHAPTER IV - RESULTS

Results

The purpose of this study is to determine if individualistic/ collectivist cultures influence parenting styles, and if the parenting styles have relationship to Grit. If so, then can those parenting skills transfer into classroom management skills that equate to a positive classroom climate to influence Grit in students? Results of the questionnaires are presented in order of the research questions below.

R1. Is there a relationship between parenting styles and individualistic/ collectivist cultures?

R2. Is there a relationship between student Grit and parenting skills as reported by Baumrind?

R3. Is there a relationship between student Grit and classroom climate?

R4. Is there an interaction between individualistic/ collectivist cultures and parenting skills and its relationship with Grit?

RQ1: For research question one a Chi-square Test of Independence was performed to assess the relationship between parenting styles and collectivist/ individualistic cultures. It was found that there was not a significant relationship between the collectivist and authoritative variables: Collectivist and Authoritative = X^2 (1, 117) = 3.324, p = .068; Collectivist and Authoritarian = X^2 (1, 117) = .697, p = .40; Collectivist and Permissive = X^2 (1; 117) = 3.050 = p = .81.

RQ2: For research question two a regression model was run. The Grit-S survey score was the dependent variable and the scores from the Parenting Styles Surveys were the independent variables. Students scored between a 1 and 5 on the Grit -S Scale with 1

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indicating little to no Grit and 5 representing a lot of Grit. The parenting styles on the

Parenting Styles Survey were divided into Baumrind's three main parenting styles:

Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive. Results of the regression indicated that

there was no relationship between parenting styles and student Grit: F $(2, 114) = 1.451$, p

$> .05$.

Table 5 *Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.857	.220		12.991	.000
	Authoritative	.335	.228	.208	1.471	.144
	Authoritarian	.154	.281	.077	.548	.585
a. Dependent Variable: Grit						

RQ3*:* For research question three a regression model was performed to determine

if classroom climate could predict student Grit. The *Student Perception of Classroom*

Climate was divided into 4 subscales: Overall Teacher Support; Overall Peer Support;

Student Academic Competence; and Student satisfaction. The regression model found

classroom climate did predict student Grit, with the subscale of Academic Competence

significantly predicting student Grit. F $(4,112) = 11.801$ $p < .001$.

Table 6 *Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.533	.280		5.477	.000
	Teacher Academic Support	-.139	.089	-.172	-1.572	.119
	*Academic Competence	.415	.083	.492	5.008	.000
	Student Satisfaction	.170	.109	.158	1.561	.121
	Peer Support	.122	.088	.131	1.380	.170
a. Dependent Variable: Grit						

RQ4. A regression model was run to determine if there is a relationship between collectivist/ individualistic cultures and student Grit, parenting skills and student Grit, and an interaction between individualistic/ collectivist cultures and parenting styles and its relationship with Grit. There were no significant relationships found. $F (3, 113) = .973, p > .05$; $F (5, 111) = .882, p > .05$.

CHAPTER V - DISCUSSION

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Grit, culture, parenting styles, and classroom climate. The study first defined Grit and how it has been fostered over history. The literature linked Grit to parenting styles with students raised with authoritative parents showing more Grit, than those with permissive parents. Similar parenting styles were found in similar cultures. Cultures could be divided into two main categories: individualistic and collectivist. These cultures had their own focus and beliefs. In collectivist cultures, the community and family unit come before individual rights and respect for authority, family honor, education, and compliance are valued. Children growing up in collectivist cultures, often display more Grit, and have higher achievement in academics. Individualistic cultures see the individual's rights as more important than the community at large. Children are seen as equal members in the family unit, with the right to express their feelings and opinions. Sports and other activities are seen as more important, and often education takes a backburner. Children growing up in individualistic cultures, often display less Grit, and tend to give up or quit when challenges arise.

Summary of Findings

The analysis of my data resulted in findings to my research questions that were largely non-significant, except for one question. A summary of findings is as follows:

Research Question 1 was to determine if there was a relationship between Parenting styles and collectivist/ individualistic cultures. A Chi Square analysis found that there was no relationship between parenting styles and the respective cultures which could be interpreted that the two are independent of each other. This study contradicts

most of the current literature which indicates that certain parenting styles are dominant in the respective cultures therefore caution should be taken when interpreting the results from this study. This could be a result of the sample population and the participants.

Research Question 2 was to determine if there is a relationship between student Grit and parenting skills as reported by Baumrind. Baumrind's three main parenting styles are authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting. The regression model analysis determined that there is no relationship between Baumrind's parenting styles and student Grit. Again, the results of this study contradict the current literature.

Research Question 3 was to determine if there is a relationship between student Grit and a student's perception of classroom climate. The regression model analysis did show that there was a relationship between a student's Grit and their perception of their classroom climate, but specifically in academic competence. The questions asked were if they felt they were very good at their schoolwork, if they felt they were smart enough to do the schoolwork, if they felt like they did very well at the schoolwork, and if they could figure out the answers to the schoolwork. The regression model found that student perception of their academic competence was a good predictor of student Grit. This supports the study by Dijk et al. (2019), which found that classroom climate was connected to student motivation.

Research Question 4 was to determine if there was an interaction between culture and parenting skills and its relationship with Grit. The regression model was non-significant determining that there was not a relationship between culture, parenting styles and its relationship between student Grit. This does not align with the current literature.

Conclusions

      The relationship between the results of the research study and the related literature was largely inconsistent with regards to culture, parenting styles and student Grit. Previous studies concluded that parenting skills from different cultures were a predictor of student Grit (Stevenson &Stigler, 1992), however results of the current study were not significant. The research did, however, find a significant relationship between academic competence which is a subscale of the student's perception of classroom climate. This was in line with the current literature about classroom climate. Ratcliff (2011) found that teachers whose classrooms centered on instruction and learning, interacted with the students more frequently which minimized behavior issues and created a more positive classroom climate. Classroom management seems to be a factor when creating a positive classroom climate. According to a study by Evertson (1989) teachers who received classroom management workshops prior to the start of the school year, had fewer behavior issues and maximized their instructional time compared to their peers who only received training at the end of the year. The workshops focused on instructional strategies as well as being consistent when managing discipline within the classroom. In a study of university students in South Africa, found that students who were assigned peer helpers to engage and assist them in adventure based experiential learning outside of their academic studies improved the students' development of Grit (Pienaar, et al., 2022). The theory is that if a student can overcome challenges outside of the classroom, and feel success, it built Grit within their academic setting. The process of building Grit and perseverance was explored   through social-emotional learning. The study showed that students who were in social emotional programs that focused on relationships, social

awareness, responsible decision making, and self-management showed an increase in student Grit (Datu & Restubog, 2020).

Limitations

Several limitations should be noted about this study. The number of responses collected was 49.5% of the desired number of participants sought, even though there was a repeated effort to recruit participants. The charter schools that were solicited in my study are largely minority with large Hattian and Hispanic populations. Many students speak another language other than English as their first language which could have caused a language barrier. In addition, due to the large gap between the ages, maturity, and developmental stages between 3rd grade students and 12th grade students, the responses to the surveys may have been screwed. In addition, 12th grade students generally have a higher comprehension ability for more complex questions than 3rd graders. Limiting the age group of the participants could have given different results. This could also impact the results of the parent surveys because of the differences of parenting styles and strategies that parents of an elementary school student may use compared to the parenting styles and strategies that parents of teenage children utilize. With regards to the parenting styles questionnaire, the survey questions could have had social desirability bias, as some of the parenting questions, such as those about disciplining and spanking, could be seen as a negative societal norm in some cultures. Bornstein (2012) found that parents of certain cultures were more apt to want to portray themselves in a different light when taking surveys. They specifically noted that in collectivist cultures, parents responded to "save-face" and protect relationships. In contrast, individualistic cultures there is little pressure to conform to social norms. This

was validated by a student who stated that their parent was nervous to answer the parenting style questions as they did not want to get reported to authorities. Another factor that could have impacted the data, was the demographics of the parent/ guardian that completed the survey. Mothers and fathers do not always have the same parenting styles and divorced, or single parents may have very different views on parenting compared to parents who are married. To that point, after several weeks of minimal response from the schools solicited and approved for the study, a modification was made to expand participation in the study. The modification allowed for solicitation from social media parenting groups, and surveys were taken online, this limited the control of participants and responses. The participants did have to read directions, sign the consents, and the students had to read and sign the assent before the surveys could be accesses. Having very limited contact with the participants could have created confusion with regards to the purpose of the study. Some of the participants were international and the directions may have been misinterpreted, especially those whose second language is English. The Individualism-Collectivism Scale was a bipolar scale with the ratings ranging from a -3 to +3. Without a true understanding of the scale, a participant may have inadvertently answered the survey to reflect a different belief than what they truly hold. According to Chandler et al., (2020), some responses from unmanaged samples with online surveys can result in systematic bias and with just a small number of responses that are of poor quality the results may not reflect true correlations. In addition, a universal pandemic may also result in inconsistent results, as the norms in society shifted during the pandemic years with severe impacts on the economy, health, and mental health of families. The poor responses may be a symptom of survey fatigue which describes as

the participant indifference and thus they respond to surveys without truly reading and dissecting the questions (Singh & Sagar, 2021). Due to these limitations, care should be taken in applying the results to fit into a larger population.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Future Research</div>

Further research in the area classroom climate and student Grit should be pursued adding the component of classroom discipline to the matrix. Although discipline was not addressed in this study, it may have an impact on the student's perception of their classroom climate. However, not enough research has been done to determine or define a curriculum or classroom management system that could increase student Grit and perseverance. The instrument assessing the student's perception, lacked any inquiry to how a student perceived the behavior of other students in their classroom. With a nationwide crisis in education with regards to discipline, bullying and school shootings, it might be helpful to include those components in an instrument.

<div align="center">Implications for Practice</div>

The study's significant finding that there is a relationship between a student's academic competence and Grit and that academic competence was a good predictor of Grit, are important for the fact that this could indicate that if a teacher can introduce strategies to boost a student's confidence and competence, then that could increase a student's Grit which could impact many later decisions and attitudes in that student's lifetime.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Even though Grit is not a new phenomenon, it is becoming increasingly important noncognitive skill to have. The purpose of the research was to find what cultural

parenting skills were responsible for increasing student Grit so that those skills could be used by educators to produce the same result in a classroom setting. Although this research did not find significant results, previous studies have connected them, and these connections should be explored. In addition, classroom climate is important for student success, which according to this study had a relationship to student academic competence. To enhance classroom climate, classroom management and strategies should become a focus in the educational setting. If students perceive themselves as having academic competence, they will more than likely display more Grit when it comes to completing classwork. With the many challenges in education currently, it is my hope that results from this study, and future research can start to set forth strategies and policies that can enhance education in America and instill Grit in our students so that America can once again be at the forefront of innovation.

APPENDIX A - IRB Approval

Office *of* Research Integrity

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

118 COLLEGE DRIVE #5116 • HATTIESBURG, MS | 601.266.6756 | WWW.USM.EDU/ORI

NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident submission on InfoEd IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 21-327
PROJECT TITLE: Classroom Climate, Student Achievement, Parenting Skills, Culture and Grit
SCHOOL/PROGRAM School of Education
RESEARCHERS: PI: Karen Leitenberger
Investigators: Leitenberger, Karen~Mohn, Richard S~
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Expedited Category
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 21-Dec-2021 to 20-Dec-2022

Donald Sacco

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chairperson

APPENDIX B - IRB Modification Approval

Office *of* Research Integrity

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

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Modification Institutional Review Board Approval

The University of Southern Mississippi's Office of Research Integrity has?received the notice of your modification for your submission *Classroom Climate, Student Achievement, Parenting Skills, Culture and Grit* (IRB #:21-327).

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
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PROTOCOL NUMBER: 21-327
PROJECT TITLE: Classroom Climate, Student Achievement, Parenting Skills, Culture and Grit
SCHOOL/PROGRAM   School of Education
RESEARCHERS: PI: Karen Leitenberger
     Investigators: Mohn, Richard S~Leitenberger, Karen~
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Expedited Category
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 14-Feb-2022 to 20-Dec-2022

Donald Sacco

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chairperson

FORZA Education Management

September 20, 2021

Dear Karen,

FORZA Education Management grants Karen Leitenberger the permission to complete a survey of students and parents for the Classroom Climate, Student Achievement, Parenting Skills, Culture and Grit. We understand that the survey will require signed permission slips for the students involved from grades 5-8. We wish you the best for successful project results.

Sincerely,

Gwen DaPore and William Staros
Executive Director and Principal
FORZA Education Management

APPENDIX D - Simpson County Permission

Re: Request to use Simpson County for Dissertation Research project

Robert Sanders <rsanders@simpson.k12.ms.us>
Tue 11/2/2021 11:56 AM
To: Karen Leitenberger <Karen.Leitenberger@usm.edu>
Cc: Toriano Holloway <tholloway@simpsonk12.org>

Ms. Keitenberger,

Your request to conduct research in Simpson County School District has been approved. You may proceed.

Thanks,

Dr. Robert L. Sanders
Assistant Superintendent
Human Resources & Operations

Simpson County School District
111 Education Lane
Mendenhall, MS 39114
601-847-8000 (phone)
601-847-8001 (fax)
rsanders@simpson.k12.ms.us (email)

Believe, Achieve, Succeed- Every Day!

On Tue, Nov 2, 2021 at 9:15 AM Karen Leitenberger <Karen.Leitenberger@usm.edu> wrote:
Good afternoon Dr. Sanders,

I had reached out to Dr. Holloway about my dissertation research project last week. I just wanted to touch base with you to see if you needed any more information from me or if you had any questions.

To complete my IRB, I need permission from the district to proceed with my study. I am attaching the information I sent to Dr. Holloway.

Thank you so much for your time. It is greatly appreciated.

Regards,

Karen Leitenberger

The foregoing electronic message and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are intended only for the use of the intended recipient named above. This communication may

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8- Item Grit Scale

Directions for taking the Grit Scale: Please respond to the following 8 items. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers!

1. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.*
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

2. Setbacks (delays and obstacles) don't discourage me.
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

3. I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.*
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

4. I am a hard worker.
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

5. I often set a goal but later choose to pursue (follow) a different one. *
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

6. I have difficulty maintaining (keeping) my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete. *
   - ❑ Very much like me
   - ❑ Mostly like me
   - ❑ Somewhat like me
   - ❑ Not much like me
   - ❑ Not like me at all

7. I finish whatever I begin.
- ❏ Very much like me
- ❏ Mostly like me
- ❏ Somewhat like me
- ❏ Not much like me
- ❏ Not like me at all

8. I am diligent (hard working and careful).
- ❏ Very much like me
- ❏ Mostly like me
- ❏ Somewhat like me
- ❏ Not much like me
- ❏ Not like me at all

Scoring:

1. For questions 2, 4, 7 and 8 assign the following points:
   5 = Very much like me
   4 = Mostly like me
   3 = Somewhat like me
   2 = Not much like me
   1 = Not like me at all

2. For questions 1, 3, 5 and 6 assign the following points:
   1 = Very much like me
   2 = Mostly like me
   3 = Somewhat like me
   4 = Not much like me
   5 = Not like me at all

Add up all the points and divide by 8. The maximum score on this scale is 5 (extremely gritty), and the lowest scale on this scale is 1 (not at all gritty).

Duckworth, A.L., & Quinn, P.D. (2009). Development and validation of the Short Grit Scale (GritS). Journal of Personality Assessment, 91, 166-174. http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~duckwort/images/Duckworth%20and%20Quinn.pdf

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APPENDIX F - Student Perception of Classroom Climate

Student Personal Perception of Classroom Climate
SPPCC

Items

1. I am very good at my school work.
2. I look forward to going to school.
3. I am smart enough to do my school work.
4. I like being in school.
5. School is interesting.
6. I wish I didn't have to go to school.
7. I do very well at my school work.
8. There are many things about school that I like.
9. I can figure out the answers to school work.
10. I enjoy school activities.
11. My teacher cares about how much I learn.
12. The kids in my class want me to do my best schoolwork.
13. My teacher really cares about me.
14. In this class, other students think it is important to be my friend.
15. My teacher likes to see my work.
16. The kids in my class like to help me learn.
17. My teacher thinks it is important to be my friend.
18. In this class, other students like me the way I am.
19. My teacher likes to help me learn.
20. The kids in this class care about how much I learn.
21. My teacher likes me as much as he/she likes other students.
22. In this class, other students care about my feelings.
23. My teacher wants me to do my best schoolwork.
24. The kids in this class want me to come to class every day.
25. My teacher cares about my feelings.
26. In this class other students really care about me.

PARENTING STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please rate how often you engage in the different parenting practices, listed below. Scores range from "Never" to "Always" on a 5-point scale. At the end of each section, add up the scores and divide it by the number of questions in that section. The calculated score is your total score for that category. The highest score indicates your preferred parenting style.

Authoritative Parenting Style

1. I am responsive to my child's feelings and needs:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

2. I take my child's wishes into consideration before I ask him/her to do something:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

3. I explain to my child how I feel about his/her good/bad behaviour:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

4. I encourage my child to talk about his/her feelings and problems:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

5. I encourage my child to freely "speak his/her mind", even if he/she disagrees with me:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

6. I explain the reasons behind my expectations:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

7. I provide comfort and understanding when my child is upset:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

Based on: Robinson, C., Mandleco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. Psychological Reports, 77, 819-830.

8. I compliment my child:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

9. I consider my child's preferences when I make plans for the family (e.g., weekends away and holidays):

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

10. I respect my child's opinion and encourage him/her to express them:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

11. I treat my child as an equal member of the family:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

12. I provide my child reasons for the expectations I have for him/her:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

13. I have warm and intimate times together with my child:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

Scoring: Total score .... / 13 = ...

Authoritarian Parenting Style

1. When my child asks me why he/she has to do something I tell him/her it is because I said so, I am your parent, or because that is what I want:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

2. I punish my child by taking privileges away from him/her (e.g., TV, games, visiting friends):

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

3. I yell when I disapprove of my child's behaviour:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

4. I explode in anger towards my child:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

5. I spank my child when I don't like what he/she does or says:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

6. I use criticism to make my child improve his/her behaviour:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

7. I use threats as a form of punishment with little or no justification:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

8. I punish my child by withholding emotional expressions (e.g., kisses and cuddles):

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

9. I openly criticise my child when his/her behaviour does not meet my expectations:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

10. I find myself struggling to try to change how my child thinks or feels about things:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

11. I feel the need to point out my child's past behavioural problems to make sure he/she will not do them again:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

12. I remind my child that I am his/her parent:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

Based on: Robinson, C., Mandleco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. Psychological Reports, 77, 819-830.

13. I remind my child of all the things I am doing and I have done for him/her:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

Scoring: Total score .... / 13 = ...

Permissive Parenting Style

1. I find it difficult to discipline my child:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

2. I give into my child when he/she causes a commotion about something:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

3. I spoil my child:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

4. I ignore my child's bad behaviour:

Never   1   2   3   4   5   6   Always

Scoring: Total score .... / 4 = ...

Parenting Styles: On the lines below you can record the rank order of your preferred parenting styles:

1) .... Score:

2) .... Score:

3) .... Score:

Based on: Robinson, C., Mandleco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. Psychological Reports, 77, 819-830.

⌐ PsycTESTS

Individualism-Collectivism Scale

Instrument Type:
Rating Scale

Test Format:
Each of 13 items is presented as a pair of alternative statements rated on a seven-point bipolar scale, with anchors
-3 to +3. In this bipolar comparison method, positive scores represent collectivistic tendencies and negative scores
represent individualistic tendencies.

⌐ PsycTESTS

Individualism-Collectivism Scale

Items

Source of Identity
Q1. People are defined based on the attributes of *individual versus engaged social groups* .
Q2. People are *independent of social groups* versus *defined by social groups* .
Q3. Individuals and groups *can be separated* versus *cannot be separated* .

Goal Priority
Q4. *Individual goals* versus *group goals* are more important.
Q5. Individuals' behaviors should follow individual goals versus group goals.
Q6. To achieve group goals, individual interests *cannot be sacrificed* versus *can be sacrificed* .
Q7. For group members, individual *rights* versus *responsibilitie* s are more important.

Mode of Social Relation
Q8. At work or at play, it is important to *win* versus *harmonize* .
Q9. The source of group success is *competition* versus *cooperation* .
Q10. Groups are better with *competition* versus *harmony* .

Norm Acceptance
Q11. People should follow *free-will* versus *group norms and practices* .
Q12. When you disagree with others, follow *your opinion* versus *group decisions* .
Q13. Within groups, *individuality* versus *group uniformity* is respected.

Note . Each item is presented as a pair of alternative statements rated on a seven-point bipolar scale, with anchors -3
to +3.

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