
The Impact of Therapeutic Technique on Grit and Locus of Control in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Therapeutic technique has been applied to a variety of problems. Empirical evidence supports the efficacy of therapeutic techniques in improving personality. The goal of this study was to prove the same on psychological correlates i.e. grit and locus of control. For the present study a representative sample of ten adolescents were chosen keeping in account with no prior medical history and no current psychological treatment other than the treatment involved in this study. F.I.R.E (Freedom, Internalizing, Repeating and Emotions) technique was introduced to study its significant effect after pre and posttest on grit and locus of control. The study reports the significance of therapeutic technique in improving grit and locus of control among adolescents.

Keywords: *Therapeutic Technique, Grit, Locus Of Control And Adolescents.*

American Psychological Association (2012) has recognized the effectiveness of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy either individual, group or family is designed to provide personality change, enhance

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quality of life, making better choices in life, promote healthy functioning at work or school and other relationships, American group psychotherapy association (2007). Thus indicating its importance in improving overall personality characteristics. Psychotherapy is a method to help people in the treatment of their mental illnesses (NIMH). It involves tools and techniques which helps one and all to deal with their related negative thoughts, feelings and behaviors. This treatment process involves therapist with patient along with their family members. In some cases psychotherapy alone can be proved beneficial in the treatment but in other times psychotherapy can be combined with medicines for best results.

Proutand Fedewa, (2015) in the book *“Theory and practice for school and clinical setting”*, highlighted on reality therapy which focuses on helping the adolescent in assuming responsibility which in turn helps them in improving personal self-worth, identity and total self –concept. Knowing the importance of psychotherapy proving effective in improving lives of people, an attempt has been made to test its effect on psychological correlates like grit and locus of control. “Skill is not the same thing as achievement, either. Without effort, your talent is nothing more than your unmet potential. Without effort, your skill is nothing more than what you could have done but didn’t. With effort, talent becomes skill and, at the very same time, effort makes skill productive.”- Angela Duckworth, 2016, p. 46. As the saying states clearly more than skill or talent it’s the effort that makes the talent and skill work. Grit is a part of positive psychology, an individual’s passion and a non-cognitive personality trait coupled with strong motivation to achieve the long term goals. Grit is defined as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals”. By Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews and Kelly.2007, p.1087. It is since 2013 educators have said that grit is the single most important factor in success at school, work, business and relationships. Grit can be increased and improved by empowering individuals. Thus psychotherapy can be tested whether it proves as an effective tool to enhance grit in an individual.

Locus of control is again an important factor which works on the belief that one can control events affecting them (Morgan, King & Schopler, 1993). Those who refer to the extent to which individuals believe they can control events affecting them. People who believe that their success or failure is due to the outside influence tend to have external locus of control. Contrarily those who believe that their success or failure is due to their own work have internal locus of control. Wolinsky, Vander, Martin, Unverzagt, Willis, Marsiske, et.al. (2010) investigated the effect of cognitive training in the improvement of locus of control among older adults and found, cognitive training that focuses on reasoning and speed of processing has the ability to improve the sense of personal control. The above review is a clear indicator that locus of control can too be strengthened with cognitive training. Thus predicting the success of these psychological correlates through therapeutic technique on adolescents is the objective by this pilot study.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Sudhir (2015) studied cognitive behavior therapy for adolescents and findings supported the effectiveness of cognitive behavior therapy for treating a wide variety of psychological problems seen in adolescents.

Dugrin, Tranah, Stahl, Moran and Asarnow (2015) investigated the effect of therapy in reducing self harm among adolescents and found out that psychological therapies led to 5% of reduction in self harm.

Shah, Yusooff and Jusoh (2011) studied the effectiveness of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) on self-concept among adolescents and findings revealed significant effect of CBT on self-concept.

Baskin, Slaten, Crosby, Pufahl, Schneller and Ladell (2010) reviewed the efficacy of counseling and psychotherapy in schools and supported the need of counseling and psychotherapy for youths in school

Leinchsenring and Leibing (2003) studied the effectiveness of psychodynamic therapy and cognitive behavior therapy in the

treatment of personality disorders and found psychodynamic and cognitive behavior therapy effective treatments of personality disorders.

Siddiqui (2015) studied spiritual intelligence in relation to achievement motivation among students of professional and nonprofessional courses and found students with professional courses were more likely to possess spiritual intelligence, achievement motivation and gritter behavior as compared to nonprofessional course students.

Hochanadal and Finamore (2015) studied fixed and growth mindset in education and how grit helps students persist in the face of adversity, concluding that growth mindset is changing student's thinking, intelligence level is not a fixed number and can change, thus recommendation in teaching growth mindset and grit facilitates long-term goals and how to achieve them. A similar study by Walters. (2014) reviewed the literature on growth mindsets and observed that people with growth mindset believed that their basic abilities can continue to be developed through hard work and dedication.

Duckworth and Gross (2014) predicted self-control and grit to be related but separable determinants of success, although self-control and grit entail aligning actions with intentions, they operate in different ways and over different time scales.

Duckworth and Winkler (2013) studied true grit, referred gritty individuals as tortoise-like, distinguished by their propensity to maintain effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress. Less gritty individuals are, in contrast, more easily discouraged, prone to take naps mid-course, and frequently led off track by new passions.

Duckworth, Peterson and Matthews (2007) studied personality processes and individual differences particularly grit, where grit demonstrated incremental predictive validity of success measures over and beyond IQ and conscientiousness. Thus achievement of difficult goals entails not only talent but also the sustained and focused application of talent overtime.

Bulmash (2016) studied entrepreneurial resilience with respect to locus of control and well-being of entrepreneurs and founded entrepreneurs with high internal locus of control are more resilient and report higher levels of well-being.

Shojaee and French (2014) attempted to test the relationship between mental health components and locus of control in youth which resulted into individuals having an internal tendency in their locus of control are in higher levels of mental health in comparison to individuals with external locus of control.

Kurt, Dharani and Peters (2012) studied the Impact of locus of control expectancy on level of well-being where maximum level of happiness was achieved by individuals with a balanced locus of control expectancy alternatively known as “bi-local expectancy”.

METHODOLOGY

Sample:

The sample constituted of 10 adolescents in age group of 14 to 18 years belonging to urban area (Jaipur) with middle socioeconomic status.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Age
- Urban area
- Socioeconomic status
- No medical ailment
- No other training program

Exclusion Criteria:

- Gender difference
- Education
- Cultural and religious background

Test and Tools:

Following tests has been taken into consideration for the present investigation.

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Grit Scale: 12 item Grit scale developed by Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews & Kelly (2007) is comprised of 12 statements with alternatives like, Very much like me, Mostly like me, Somewhat like me, Not much like me, Not like me at all. The maximum score on this scale is found to be 5 (extremely gritty) and the lowest on this scale is 1 (not at all gritty). Person's grit score is highly predictive of achievement under challenging circumstances.

Rotter's Locus of control scale: Rotter's Locus of control scale developed by Julian Rotter in 1966 is the most widely used questionnaire to measure locus of control is a 23 item (plus six filler items). According to Rotter, locus of control may vary based on circumstances and people could trend towards internality or externality as a personality trait and this scale is designed to assess this more general situations. In the analysis, high score is indicative of external Locus of control and low score indicative of internal Locus of control. Therapeutic technique: F.I.R.E (Freedom, Internalizing, Repeating, Emotions.)

In this pilot study Freedom, Internalizing, Repeating and Emotions which has been abbreviated as F.I.R.E. technique has been chosen for adolescents to study its effect on grit and locus of control. This technique has been inspired from dynamic Cognitive Behavior Therapy to help people put a halt in their consistent negative thought process and with the help of constant repetition of this technique would eventually help the person to develop Inner Positivity to sustain and continue living their life normally. In this technique positive affirmations are made which sounds logical and can be repeated with feelings to attain freedom from the negative emotions causing the disturbance and to enhance inner compassion and perseverance for their

Variables:

Independent Variable: Therapeutic technique

Dependent Variable: Grit and Locus of control

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant effect of therapeutic technique on grit and locus of control in adolescents.

H₁: There is a significant effect of therapeutic technique on grit and locus of control in adolescents.

Procedure:

A group of ten adolescents (males and females) were randomly chosen for the pretest. Before introducing the test, orientation on grit and locus of control was given so that the group understands the use of it in their personal lives for their future success and happiness. Test of Grit and Locus of control was administered and subjects were given instructions as per the guidelines mentioned in the tests. Next day after the test administration all the ten subjects were given individual session where the score was discussed and noting down the reasons of the result obtained, importance of F.I.R.E. was explained and the ways it can help to improve grit and loc. Each subject received 30 minutes of counseling session including disclosing the pre test scores, asking the problem areas, discussing the rationale of the technique with procedure and practice of the same. This technique was scheduled to 5-7 minutes and each subject was advised to practice four times a day for 15 days with the instructions of not to take-up any other training program of relative nature . During these days student were by themselves with constant reminders. On 16th day Individual session was done whereby each subject practiced the technique four times under supervision and seventeenth day after the individual session and practice of technique for four times post test was administered followed with handing over the reports of pre and posttest comparison to the subjects on the same day.

Statistical Analysis:

To test the preset hypothesis and to evaluate the significant effect of therapeutic technique on grit and locus of control, following analysis has been made.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Table 1, Inferential statistics used for Grit and Locus of Control in adolescents

N=10	Pre test		Post test		t value
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	
Grit	2.6	0.7	4.2	0.8	-4.8*
Locus of Control	11.2	3.6	6.9	2.6	3.07*

*p<.05

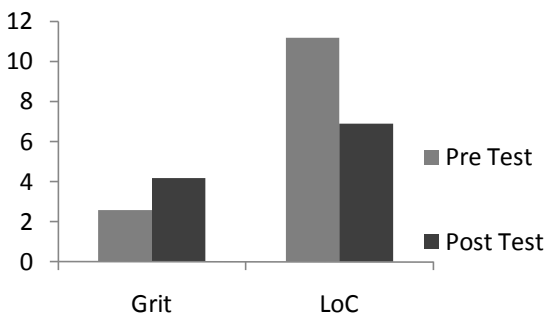


Figure1: Grit and LoC scores representing the changes in the mean and standard deviation scores from pretest to post test.

From table 1 with participants ($N = 10$) in the pretest of the variable grit ($M = 2.6, SD = 0.7$) scored higher in the post test ($Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.8$). Whereas for the second variable i.e. locus of control, participants in the pretest ($M = 11.2, SD = 3.6$) scored lower in the post test ($Mean = 6.9, SD = 2.6$). This explains clearly through graphical presentation (Figure1) of Grit and LOC representing the changes in mean and standard deviation scores from pretest to post test. The variations in the scores between pre and posttest are indicative of the effect of therapeutic technique (F.I.R.E.) on Mean and SD scores. The t-value revealed a main effect of group with $p < .05$ and the calculated value of grit and locus of control ($t = -4.8, t = 3.07$). Thus, the alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is significant

difference of therapeutic technique on grit and locus of control in adolescents is proved.

DISCUSSION

The findings from the study suggest that therapeutic technique may influence participant's grit and locus of control. Technique was structured which would help the adolescents enhance their commitment and compassion for their long term goals. This process helped them to gain motivation, maintain focus for their goals and work on it till they achieve them in reality, which were evident through the changes in the statements on grit scale. Some of the statements which

Showed reduction in the level of their marking included, setting up a goal for them but changing it after sometime. In the pretest, majority of the subject gave positive response in getting obsessed with new idea or project for a short time but later losing interest in it. This changed after the intervention whereby they chose to work on new ideas till they were able to achieve the results. Adolescent is the age whereby identity formation is taking place due to which they experience many internal changes and showing greater influence with peers which sometimes compels them to follow their footsteps. Thus many of the subjects during the pretest scored high on showing difficulty in maintaining focus on projects that takes more months or years to complete, but after the intervention there was a considerable reduction to this thinking pattern leading to better focus and concentration in the chosen task or a long term goal for that matter. After the therapeutic technique subjects gained greater inner confidence with the sense of commitment in improving themselves in the areas of decision-making and working on the decision without distractions affecting them anymore. This was evident with the positive statements marked by subjects in considering themselves as efficient workers.

Result also showed significant improvement in enhancing internal locus of control with the help of therapeutic technique. This change was seen after the comparison of the statements marked before

and after introducing the therapeutic technique. During the time of pretest subject showed belief in luck or fate influencing their lives but later came down to understanding that hard work is the real reason to success. They also felt responsible for their own actions especially during their difficult times rather than blaming it to situations or others. The idea towards political and social affairs also improved through intervention, assisting in accepting the responsibility in order to bring the change in society and also wipe out political corruption. A statement which involved willingness to accept ones mistake rather than covering up received positive acceptance by majority of the subjects. Many of the positive statements received average markings like believing in the ability to get people to do right things rather than just relying on luck. In relation to their studies or goals average response was observed in making and working towards their plans and mixed responses were found in case of considering people as good or bad.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes the effectiveness of therapeutic technique in improving the psychological correlates grit and locus of control in adolescents. Further research is needed to test its effectiveness on large samples with one or more psychological handicap.

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