

Uniqueness Seeking, Grit and Flow in High and Low Creative University Students

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Abstract:

It has been observed that in modern world every individual is in search of being and doing something different from others which gave rise to concepts like creativity and Uniqueness Seeking. Grit and Flow comparatively new concepts which help an individual to attain their goals which gave rise to the following aims. Aim: To explore the Flow Experience, Grit and Uniqueness Seeking in high and low Creative undergraduate students. To explore the relationship between Flow Experience, Grit, Uniqueness Seeking and Creativity. Hypotheses: There will be a significant difference between high and low creative undergraduate girls on the measures of study that is, Flow Experience, Grit and Uniqueness Seeking. There will be a significant relationship between Flow Experience, Grit, Uniqueness Seeking and Creativity. Sample included was 100 Undergraduate college girls. A two-group research design was employed. t-test was analyzed further correlation and liner regression was also employed. Results reveal that high creative and creative individuals differ significantly on Flow Experience. Uniqueness Seeking is positively significantly related and also predicts Grit (76% of variance). Uniqueness Seeking also significantly positively related to and predicts Flow Experience (49% of variance). Creativity is significantly positively related to and predicts Flow (49% of variance).

Keywords: Creativity, Uniqueness seeking, Grit, Flow

I. INTRODUCTION

“Top Achievers are improvisers, not perfectionist. If you want to create more success in your life you have to move forward not knowing all the answers”

Douglas Vermeeren

This quote summarizes the importance of present research perfectly. Achievers are one who are willing to do something new and create something different from others in some or the other way which is not done before by anyone else. During this they are fully engrossed in the process and experiencing the whole process of achieving their goal for which they are motivated and have sustained level of interest. This leaves us with the quest to understand and know about the important concepts from the field of positive psychology like: Creativity, Uniqueness Seeking, Flow and Grit. All the four seem to play an important role in the life of an individual. Taking up each individually will help in better understanding.

Creativity

The Quality of life depends on how much one is willing to withstand uncertainty, the more foreign the world one puts themselves the greater the chances to lean and excel in novel way. It also gives more opportunities to an individual for the development of creativity.

“Everyone is capable of Creative thought, and everyone can learn to harness their creativity over time”

Psychologists usually define creativity as the capacity to produce ideas that are both original and adaptive. That is, the idea must be new and workable. So, creativity enables a person to adjust to novel circumstances and to solve problems

that unexpectedly arise. It is a highly valued human capacity that has both individual and socio-cultural value that most societies have to encourage those of its citizens who exhibit creative behaviour by special means.

Creativity as “One can’t be creative unless they come up with something that hasn’t been done before, The idea also has to work, or be adaptive and functional in some way; it has to meet some criteria of usefulness.” [19.]. “creativity results from the interaction of a system composed of three elements: a culture that contains symbolic rules, a person who brings novelty into the symbolic domain, and a field of experts who recognize and validate the innovation.” [2]. Csikszentmihalyi’s contextual model of creativity pointed this in a model depicting the interaction of all the 3 elements: DOMAIN, FIELD and PERSON. Further his work also derived a concept of Flow, which is the feeling of intense concentration and enjoyment that people experience when they work on a satisfying task.

Flow

Flow as the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.” [1]. It is evident in the work habits of those who make significant creative contributions. In other words flow is “the mental state of being completely present and fully immersed in a task. It is a strong contributor to creativity. When in flow, the creator and the universe become one, outside distraction recede from consciousness and one’s mind is fully open and attuned to the new creating”.

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Flow is often described as a mental state in which people experience complete immersion and involvement in an activity. Things seem to happen almost effortlessly and time seems to disappear while in the state. Harvard's Teresa Amabile discovered that not only are people more creative in flow, they also report being more creative the day after a flow state—suggesting that flow doesn't just heighten creativity in the moment, it heightens over the long haul. In other words, being in flow actually trains us to be more creative.

It is a state of concentration or complete absorption with the activity at hand and the situation. It is a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. The flow is an optimal state of intrinsic motivation, where the person is fully immersed in what he is doing. This is a feeling everyone has at times, characterized by a feeling of great absorption, engagement, fulfillment, and skill - and during which temporal concerns (like: time, food, ego-self, etc.) are typically ignored. Flow experience can occur in different ways for different people. Some might experience while engaging in sport such as skiing, tennis, soccer, dance or running. Others might have such an experience while engaged in an activity such as painting, drawing and writing. Fortunately, flow is not something restricted to just elite athletes, artists and performers. One can achieve this state during a number of activities such as while working, while engaging in exercise or while engaging in a hobby.

There are few conditions which facilitate flow like: perceived challenges, or opportunities for action, that stretch existing skills; a sense that one is engaging challenges at a level appropriate to one's capacities, clear proximal goals and immediate feedback about the progress that is being made. A concept which is frequently confused with flow is Grit. While flow is the experience to be totally in the activity one is involved in. Grit refers to be motivated, passionate and perseverance to continue the long term goals.

Grit

Grit, clearly explains, is what allows creative geniuses to keep pressing on through failure and bad ideas in order to uncover truly valuable concepts. Grit is the most important attribute for creative's to have if they want to be successful because if they aren't invested to make it through the work until the end, they don't stand a chance at succeeding. The ability to take initiative - to think and explore an idea, or to play with imaginary solutions - and hold this vision for a long time - is the keystone of creativity.

Grit is the tendency to sustain interest in and an effort towards every long-term goal. Self-control is the voluntary regulation of behavioural, emotional and attentional impulses in the presence of momentarily gratifying temptation or diversions. Whereas Grit is the quality of maintaining resilience and perseverance while experiencing obstacles and struggles in working towards meeting goals [6]. Grit is quality that learners have that enables them to persevere while facing struggles and obstacles. This can help the learners attain success because they don't give up until they reach their goal.

When Grit is discussed it leaves us with a question related to goals one set for them. In today's world every individual is

striving to be unique in their own way which in turn affects their goals and motivation behind that goal.

Uniqueness Seeking

Uniqueness seeking is a new addition to the positive psychology nomenclature. The establishment and maintenance of a sense of moderate self destructiveness [11].

Posited a theory of uniqueness seeking that addresses an individual's emotional, cognitive and behavioural similarity to others [20]. They believe that individuals are happiest when they perceive that they are moderately different relative to others. Individuals experience both a need to be distinctive (which contributes to self identity, attracts attention and enhance self esteem and social status) and a need for similarity (which contributes to a feeling of affiliation, belief validation, emotional security, empathy, helping, liking and social influence) [11]. It is obvious that these needs oppose each other.

Flow and Creativity

If we review the past researches we can say that Creative people tend to be independent, nonconformist, unconventional, have wide interests, greater openness to new experiences, and a more conspicuous behavioural and cognitive flexibility and boldness [18]. If we look at the process of creativity the thought process plays an important role. This thought process involves two kinds of thinking convergent and divergent [8]. When the characteristic and process of creativity is associated it is found that the concept of flow from the contextual model of creativity adds a lot to the process of creativity indicating that people who are creative should be high on their flow experience. This gave rise to the first aim of the present research.

Flow and Grit

Grit is a psychological construct characterised by the ability to persevere towards long-term goals despite adversity. Flow state is the experience of being fully immersed in a challenging task. Grit and flow complement each other very well in the service of achieving a life of flourishing. Flow allows us to feel engaged to the present moment while contributing to our personal growth. Grit is a fundamental element for achieving and also for reaching flow in activities of extreme difficulty.

Grit and flow manages to operate independently. Being 'gritty' means consciously deciding to push forward in the face of adversity, failure, and physical or emotional pain, without knowing when the trial will be over. Flow is described as being in a state of full immersion in a given activity, and performing it at one's highest level. Flow contributes to inner growth by making the individual feel a sense of skill and full capacity, especially after the successful execution of the activity in question. Both grit and flow differ in terms of their awareness when an individual is in flow state he/she is not totally aware of it as flow is perceived as a state of effortless concentration, where an individual loses themselves in the moment whereas, an individual is usually aware of their gritty effort [6]. Both are similar in involving an element of real mental self-mastery and achieving success in both is determined by the amount of effort and sacrifice one

is willing to make. Flow allows us to feel engaged to the present moment while contributing to our personal growth. Grit is a fundamental element for achievement and also for reaching flow in activities of extreme difficulty.

Flow and Uniqueness Seeking

Activities that produce flow experiences are intrinsically motivating and as a result they are valuable in that they produce a state of being that is an end to itself. Furthermore they are also hypothesized to allow an individual to flourish and function at their best [12]. These days adolescents want to work on something which is new and unique they are motivated to be unique in their own way. If we look at flow and uniqueness seeking together we can say that motivation to be unique in their own way may lead to the experience of flow.

Grit and Uniqueness Seeking

Grit is a relatively new motivation construct articulating the idea that an individual combines perseverance and passion to accomplish his or her long-term goals [6]. Uniqueness theory [20] deals with people's emotional and behavioral reactions to information about their similarity to others. According to the theory, people find high levels of similarity and dissimilarity unpleasant, and therefore seek to be moderately distinct from others. This means that as people perceive more similarity between themselves and others, they become Motivated to establish their dissimilarity or uniqueness. Some people do appear to seek uniqueness. However, this uniqueness striving is constrained by the need for social affiliation and social approval, So people strive to be unique in ways that do not result in social isolation or disapproval [20]. The stronger an individual's need for uniqueness, the more dissimilar to others he or she wants to be, and the more sensitive he or she is to similarity information [21].

II. METHODOLOGY

Aim

- To explore the Flow Experience, Grit and Uniqueness Seeking in high and low Creative undergraduate students.
- To explore the relationship between Flow Experience, Grit, Uniqueness Seeking and Creativity.

Hypotheses

- There will be a significant difference between high and low creative undergraduate girls on the measures of study that is, Flow Experience, Grit and Uniqueness Seeking.
- There will be a significant relationship between Flow Experience, Grit, Uniqueness Seeking and Creativity.

Sample

A sample of 100 undergraduate girls from the private universities of Jaipur city was selected with the following inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criteria of inclusion

- Only female students.

- Students who knew English language.
- Age range 18 to 20 years.
- Students pursuing regular courses.
- From urban domicile.

Criteria for exclusion

- Students who are from Hindi medium background.
- Students who are mental and physically disabled.
- Students who are doing part time jobs.

Research design

Two group research design was employed.

Variables	Group	HIGH CREATIVITY INTEREST	LOW CREATIVITY INTEREST
FLOW			
GRIT			
UNIQUENESS SEEKING			

Tools

- **The flow state scales (FSS; Jackson & Marsh, 1995):** measures flow in sports and physical activity settings. It consists of 36 items divided into 9 subclass, each representing a different dimension. The 36 items can also contribute to a board second-order general flow factor. The items were derived from research on the flow state within and outside sport setting and qualitative analysis of interviews with elite athletes. Participants are asked to recall one specific experience that occurred whilst participating in sport or physical activity at hat continued an optimal experience. They then respond to the flow items using a 5-point Likert response format where 1 indicates "Strongly disagree" and 5 indicates "Strongly agree". The alpha internal consistency estimates of all subscales ranges from 0.79 to 0.86. Conformity factor analytic research has supported a model with nine first-order and one higher-order factor (Jackson & Marsh, 1996).
- **The short Grit scale (Grit-S; Duckworth and Quinn, 2009):** is an 8 item instrument that measures dispositional tendency to endorse persistence for long term goals. It has two dimensions; consistency of interests (e.g., "New ideas and projects sometime distract me from previous ones.") and perseverance of effort (e.g., "I am diligent"). All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale wherein 1 would mean "not like me at all" and 5 would mean "every much like me". Both the perseverance and consistency dimensions had low reliability coefficient.
- **Self-attributed Need for Uniqueness (Lynn & Harris, 1997):** This scale is a four item scale. This scale is valid measure of uniqueness motives. Moreover, it taps the tendency to pursue uniqueness is socially acceptable ways.
- **Runco Ideational Behaviour Scale (RIBS; Runco et al., 2001):** it is a Self-reported creativity test developed based on the belief that ideas can be treated as the products of original, divergent and creative thinking [8]. The RIBS is reported to be a reliable and valid instrument [16][17]. Each item describes behaviour that reflects the

individual's use of, appreciation of, and skill with ideas. Fifty six items out of 71 original items were translated into Korean. Fifteen of the original items were excluded because the item describe adult behaviour (e.g., "I have ideas for arranging or rearranging the furniture at home."). The RIBS consists of a 5-point Likert scale (from 0-4, with 0 1/4 never, and 4 L daily)

Procedure

Firstly, the private university was approached after taking permission on the basis of inclusion and exclusion criteria Undergraduate girls were identified and inform consent was taken. Those who agreed to be the part of the study were then randomly administered Runco Ideational Behaviour Scale (Creativity test) on a total sample of 150 girls. Then on the basis of their scores excluding high 25 cases and low 25 cases a total sample of 100 undergraduate girls was selected in which high 50 made the high criteria groups and low 50 made the low criteria groups. Then the other measure of the study (Flow Experience, Grit and Uniqueness Seeking) were administered on the final sample. The score were calculated and statistical analysis was found by using SPSS 22.00 version.

III. RESULTS

Table 1: Mean, SD and t- value on Grit, Uniqueness Seeking and Flow of High and Low Creative Undergraduate girls.

	Creativity High		Creativity Low		t	Significant Level
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD		
Grit	26.08	5.06	27.00	3.880	.964	.337
Uniqueness Seeking	14.07	9.246	11.44	2.989	1.717	.089
Flow	131.16	18.604	123.92	14.111	2.077*	.040

It can be observed from table 1 that there is a significant difference between the high and low creative Undergraduate girls only on flow Experience ($t = 2.825$; $p < .05$) whereas no significant difference on grit ($t = 1.607$; $p < .5$) and Uniqueness seeking ($t = .211$; $p < .05$).

Table 2: Correlation coefficient between Grit, Uniqueness Seeking, Creativity and Flow among Undergraduate College Girls ($n=100$)

	Grit	Uniqueness Seeking	Creativity
Grit	1		
Uniqueness Seeking	.276** (.006)	1	
Creativity	-.172 (.088)	.020 (.842)	1
Flow	.167 (.096)	.222* (.026)	.222* (.026)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (Two-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (Two-tailed)

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between Grit are Uniqueness Seeking ($r = .276$; $p < 0.01$), Uniqueness Seeking and Flow ($r = .222$; $p < 0.05$), and Flow and Creativity ($r = .222$; $p < 0.05$).

TABLE 3: Step wise liner Regression : Predicting Creativity from Flow ($N= 100$)

Model summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
Creativity	.222	.049	.040	16.939

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1462.175	1	1462.175	5.096	.026 ^b
Residual	28118.265	98	286.921		
Total	29580.440	99			

a. Dependent Variable : Flow

b. Predators (Constant), Creativity

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	101.626	11.954	.222	8.501	.000
CREATIVITY	.330	.146		2.257	.026

A simple liner regression was calculated to predict Flow based on Creativity. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,98) = 5.096$, $p < .05$), with an R^2 of .49. The result suggest that creativity accounts for 49% of total variance in Flow experience. In other words, creativity significantly and positively predicts flow experience.

Table 4: Step wise liner Regression: Predicting Uniqueness Seeking from Grit ($N= 100$)

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
Uniqueness Seeking	.276 ^a	.076	.067	4.484

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	161.965	1	161.965	8.054	.006 ^b
Residual	1970.675	98	20.109		
Total	2132.640	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Grit

b. Predictors: (Constant) Uniqueness Seeking

Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standard Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	24.229	.899		26.954	.000
Uniqueness Seeking	.170	.060	.276	2.838	.006

A simple liner regression was calculated to predict Grit based on Uniqueness Seeking. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,98) = 8.054, p < .05$), with an R^2 of .76. The result suggests that Uniqueness Seeking accounts for 76% of total variance in Grit. In other words, Uniqueness Seeking significantly and positively predicts Grit.

Table 5: Step wise liner Regression: Predicting Uniqueness Seeking from Flow (N= 100)

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
Uniqueness Seeking	.222	.049	.040	16.940

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1457.601	1	1457.601	5.079	.026 ^b
Residual	28122.839	98	286.968		
Total	29580.440	99			

- Dependent Variable: Flow
- Predictors: (Constant), Uniqueness Seeking

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	121.707	3.396		35.841	.000
Uniqueness seeking	.509	.226	.222	2.254	.026

A simple liner regression was calculated to predict Flow based on Uniqueness Seeking. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,98) = 5.079, p < .05$), with an R^2 of .49. The result suggest that Uniqueness Seeking accounts for 49% of total variance in Flow experience. In other words, Uniqueness Seeking significantly and positively predicts flow experience.

IV. DISCUSSION

It's not beginning and ending that count, but middles. Things and thoughts advance or grow out from the middle, and that's where you have to get to work, that's where everything unfolds.

Deleuze 1995

Creativity is a process which practically speaking, works in this middle phase of any activity between the start and the end. But there are other aspects like flow, grit and uniqueness seeking which might also contribute to attain a particular goal

similarly like creativity by working in the middle phase of an activity.

To fulfill the aim of the present study and test the hypothesis first a t-test analysis was conducted and then correlation was computed.

The findings of the study did not revealed any difference between the high and low creative individuals on Grit and Uniqueness Seeking meaning the both high and low Creative people has almost equal level of grit and uniqueness seeking behaviour. whereas they differ significantly on their experience of flow. The result of the study in Table 1 reveals that high creative people have more flow experience.

A similar study revealed that most typical solitary flow activity are work, sports and creative activity and reading and the most common flow inducing social activity are work and sports [15]. These days most of the students work individual on different projects and attaining their individual goals. To be in flow state- The individual should select clear and proximal goals that indicate the direction and aim of the activity [5]. Secondly the task should be challenging, so that it can be performed by someone with high skills and Third is that the individuals get clear and immediate feedback which suggest why high creative individual in the present sample experience high flow.

As these individuals were undergraduate students involved in attaining there graduation degree which at certain levels demands to be creative also in this process of attaining degree these students are involved in attaining set and clear goals like graduation degree, assignment submissions etc. Which are challenging and require high skills also project file, power point presentation etc. provide feedback when a task is accomplished.

Further a correlations analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between the variables of the study Table 2 reveals that there is significant positive relationship between grit and uniqueness seeking which indicates that if one increases other also increases. Reasoned the need for uniqueness rises because people are (in fact) moderately different from one another and have learned to perceive themselves accordingly [20]. This self image takes on motivational properties because people need a stable self-concept. Secondly they hypothesized that people learn to value a sense of uniqueness in environments that encourage freedom and reward independence. Thirdly they suggest that people prefer a moderate level of self destructiveness because they have need for social acceptance, approval and validation, as well as need for uniqueness. Based on this line of hypotheses an individual is highly motivated to be unique which suggest that if an individual does not advance or win instead of giving up they go back and work even more to what they did before, upping their likelihood of getting farther, or even winning the next time i.e. achieving their goal of being unique. The people who had distinguish themselves in overcoming multiple challenges to sustain the pursuit of goal (being unique) that was important to them are passion, perseverance and long term goal which are important to grit i.e. There is a possibility of positive relationship between grit and uniqueness seeking [6].

Further the table also shows that uniqueness seeking is positively significantly related to flow experience. Flow is subjective experience of engaging in just manageable challenges by tackling a series of goal, continuously processing feedback about program, and adjusting action based on this feedback. To enter into this flow state every individual has his/her unique triggers. Strong tendency to experience flow across different tasks is driven by a stable motive disposition that can be assessed by operant measures i.e. motivation is required. So, flow is a motivational state. It occurs when a person faces a clear set of goals that require adequate responses. It happens when a person's skills are fully involved in overcoming a challenge that is just about manageable, so it acts as a magnet for learning new skills and increasing challenges. Similarly when an individual is working to be unique to create a balance as discussed about they are trying to do or learn something new which could help them to be unique for which they are highly motivated and involved in manageable tasks. Therefore this hypothesis justifies that why there is a link between uniqueness seeking and flow experience.

Further the table revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between creativity and flow which means that Achieving a flow state is positively correlated to creativity and is a natural process. Flow is the mental state of being completely present and fully immersed in a task [10]. It is a strong contributor to the creativity. In flow, the creator and the universe becomes one, outside distractions retract from the individual's consciousness and one's mind is fully open and attuned to the act of creating something unique. There is very little self-awareness or critical self-judgment; just enjoying intrinsic joy for the task. Since flow is so essential to creativity and well-being across many slices of life — from sports to music to physics to religion to spirituality to sex. The relation between these two variables has been pointed out by [3].

Further the regression analysis add a feather to the research by adding evidences indicating that creativity positively predicts flow experience and Uniqueness Seeking positively predicts Grit and Flow experience.

At first glance, the results seem going against our view of creativity, flow experience, grit and uniqueness seeking. As the two group difference only on their flow experience contrary to what we had hypothesized on the basis of the theories and our understanding. But later the correlation matrix helped to understand the relationship among variables.

V. CONCLUSION

In this modern world to be successful it is important to stand different from the world. This gives rise to be unique and creative also, in this fast pace time if one doesn't enjoy what he/she is doing they will not perform well. So, if an individual is performing a task with the aim to be unique by creative ways and if they enjoy while performing this will be positive experience for him/her.

It can be concluded from the results that there is a strong relationship between flow and creativity. Also uniqueness seeking is positively related to flow and grit. Indicating that adolescents search for being unique and flow experience

along with grit are the motivational forces which help them to attain their goals. Adolescents are motivated to set unique goals for which they strive to perform creatively. In this process of attaining their goals they experience grit and flow which further motivates them to be unique and creative. Making it a cycle thus, this suggest that all four variables are in relation to one another and existence of one leads to development of another.

VI. LIMITATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

- The sample size can be larger.
- A study can be planned by comparing creative individuals from different fields. (like - poet, singer, dancer, actor, painter etc).
- A comparison can be done on the basis of gender.
- A study can be conducted where creative individuals can be compared to non-creative individuals in terms to explore their flow experience, Grit and Uniqueness seeking behaviour.

VII. IMPLICATIONS

These days every individual is in search of being unique and different in his/her own way and more emphasis is given on enjoying a work one is involved in. So this study proves to be helpful for researcher and trainer to train individuals in Creativity so that they can further experience Flow and Grit which would make their life more satisfying to themselves. Also, if skills are developed in terms that individuals are able to develop their own uniqueness it would add further to the positive experience an individual can have.

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