

## Chapter 11

# Grit to Great: Development of G-OPIM to Improve Oral Presentation Performance

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### ABSTRACT

Oral communicative competence is recognised as an important skill in a professional setting. Strong proficiency of this skill enables speakers to convey their message more efficiently. An essential subset of oral communicative competence is oral presentation skills. However, graduates' presentation skills were reported to be below par and are incongruent with hiring managers' expectations. Therefore, the central objective of this study is to investigate the factors that impact students' oral presentation performance. In this study, two theories are integrated to model the factors that influence students' oral presentation performance. This study adopts a causal research design as the primary aim is to analyse the relationships derived from the model. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is employed to develop and validate this model, G-OPIM. This study conducts a three-phase research design which includes a pre-test, pilot study, and actual data collection. A questionnaire survey will be used for data collection and simple random sampling will be utilised in the selection of respondents. Responses from the pilot study will be used to conduct exploratory factor analysis to finalise the items to measure the construct in the model. Data from the actual data collection will be used to perform confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS which will validate G-OPIM. AMOS will also be used to conduct hypothesis testing, mediation analysis, and moderation analysis. The rigorous and extensive validation and testing process establish the reliability and validity of G-OPIM in measuring students' oral presentation performance. Therefore, this model can also be replicated in different settings to measure the factors that influence the proficiency of other skills. This model will also offer empirical evidence on the moderating influence of grit which is sorely lacking in the literature.

**Key Words:** grit, theory of planned behaviour, oral presentations, communicative competence

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the current employment where the supply of graduates significantly exceeds employment opportunities, graduates must be prepared to equip themselves with various sets of skills ("Youths Need to Equip Themselves with Multiple Skills Set", 2021). Rapid technological advances have also prompted growing skills instability (The Future of Jobs Report: World Economic Forum, 2018). Oral communicative competence is an essential skill that is ubiquitous and is recognised for its criticality for effective workplace communication. Eisner (2010) has accurately predicted that oral communication skill is a skill that will increase in value over time. Thus, this skill is viewed to be essential for graduates to acquire in obtaining employment opportunities (Chung et al., 2016).

Oral communication skill is ranked first based on a calculation of importance scores of all relevant skills that employers look for among graduates. However, despite the necessity of oral communication skills stressed in the report, a mismatch between employers' expectation of graduates' oral communication and graduates' actual oral communication skills was also highlighted (QS Employer Insights Report, 2020). This mismatch contributes to a wide skill gap in the employment sector, leaving many hiring managers frustrated. These findings align with a conclusion by Bhattacharyya (2014) whose sample of engineers have unanimously agreed that oral presentation skills are fundamental.

In this content-driven period, graduates' presentations skill is an important subset of communication skills as articulated by (Riadil, 2020). This skill has gradually increased in value due to the frequency of idea pitching and surge in innovations. Although university students have participated in many formal presentations in classrooms throughout their university years (Hanifa & Yusra, 2018), Singh (2021) indicated that interns are least prepared for formal presentations at the workplace among other tasks. This is supported by findings from Alwi and Sidhu (2013) and Subekti (2020) who discussed that students often underestimate the importance of oral presentation skills and students tend to overestimate their oral skills. The unsatisfactory oral presentation skills demonstrated by graduates are attributed to different factors which encompass fear of negative evaluation (Chandren & Yaacob, 2016), lack of confidence (Raja, 2017), and negative attitude towards classroom presentation (Tian, 2019), and also second language speaking anxiety (Alghorbany & Hamzah, 2020; Tian, 2019; Zheng & Cheng, 2018).

Thus, this study developed the Grit-Oral Presentation Intention Model (G-OPIM) by integrating two theories; theory of planned behaviour and grit theory. G-OPIM investigates the influence of the factors that influence students' oral presentation performance. This study is the first research in Malaysia that examines and quantifies the influence of grit as a moderator as there is minimal literature on the moderating influence of this important criterion. Another novelty of this study is that grit will be examined in the oral presentation performance settings which address a gap in the literature. Hence, this model is capable of facilitating higher education institutions in the assessment practices and development of learning outcomes to integrate grit to support students' passion and perseverance in mastering critical skills and also encourages long-term talent development.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In the efforts to address this issue, this study merged two noteworthy theories which are the theory of planned behaviour and grit theory. The integration of these two theories has developed the Grit-Oral Presentation Intention Model (G-OPIM). This causal study adopts a quantitative research design. Simple random sampling will be employed in

the selection of respondents to ensure no presence of sample bias (Muda et al., 2018; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Online questionnaire survey is used as the instrument for data collection. This study will employ structural equation modeling (SEM) to validate this model using AMOS as this software can test the relationships depicted in Figure 1 simultaneously (Awang, 2015).

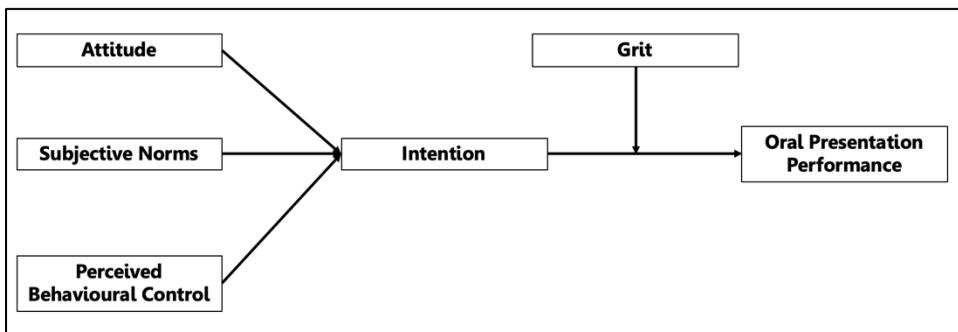


Figure 1: Grit-Oral Presentation Intention Model (GOPIIM)

The main focus of the model illustrated in Figure 1 is examining grit as a moderator. Moderation analysis will be conducted to assess and measure the moderating influence exerted by grit in the relationship between intention to participate in oral presentation and students' oral presentation performance. A moderator is referred as variable or construct that "interferes" in the relationship between two variables that encompass independent and dependent variables (Awang, 2015; Hayes, 2018). The statistical analysis that will be employed for testing the moderating influence of grit is Multi-Group CFA. This analysis is employed to determine the significant difference between the constrained and unconstrained model (Muda et al., 2018). The use of this analysis will offer definite empirical evidence on the influence of grit in this research context.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Therefore, this study is an initiator that aims to spark scholarly interest in examining the influence of grit in different academic settings. This study also intends to investigate the factors that influence students' oral presentation performance. A detailed understanding of the contributing factors would help relevant stakeholders to address the root problem and create initiatives and solutions that can boost students' oral presentation skills to prepare them for the employment sector. G-OPIM can be used by education ministries, agencies, and universities to measure grit among students and design initiatives to reduce dropout rates among students. This model can also be used by human resource practitioners and organisations to cultivate grittiness among employees in achieving the Global Talent Competitiveness Index. Educators, universities, and developers can also refer to this model to create and innovate teaching activities and technological applications to promote grit among students to improve students' intention to participate in oral presentations, thus improving their oral communicative competence.

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