



## The role of grit on entrepreneurial commitment to young entrepreneurs with social support as a moderating variable

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### Abstract

Fighting for business is not easy. It takes a high commitment in carrying it out. Unfortunately, young entrepreneurs in Indonesia find it difficult to maintain their commitments, especially when businesses are down. This study aims to investigate the association between grit and entrepreneurial commitment, with social support serving as a moderator. Data were collected through an online survey of young entrepreneurs (N = 72), defined as entrepreneurs under 30 years old who established their businesses in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, Bekasi) regions and elsewhere. The Grit Scale, the Entrepreneurial Commitment Scale, and the Social Support Scale were used to measure the variables. Data were analyzed using the Hayes PROCESS macro in SPSS and the moderation model. The results showed that social support positively impacted grit and entrepreneurial commitment. Young entrepreneurs must build their grit and strengthen their social relations to be more committed to growing their business.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Commitment, Grit, Social Support, Young Entrepreneurs.

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### Introduction

Young entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs under the age of 30 (Ministry of Youth and Sports) played a significant role in the increase of independent firms or businesses in Indonesia since 2016 (Utama, 2016). This growth is a result of a government plan, led by the Ministry of Industry, to achieve World Bank standards by expanding the number of entrepreneurs in Indonesia to improve the national economic ecosystem (Press Release No. 366/HM/KOMINFO/10/2021). To expand the number of entrepreneurs in Indonesia, the Dikti has developed an entrepreneurial student program as of 2018. This has prompted numerous students, alumni, and other young individuals to pursue careers as young entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, the survey indicates that 21% of young entrepreneurs in Indonesia were compelled to close their businesses between 2019 and 2021 (Karunia, 2020). Srihadiastuti & Hidayatullah (2018) also state that fresh graduates of the entrepreneurship program in West Java have faced entrepreneurial failures.

Young entrepreneurs' failure to develop successful enterprises might be attributed to psychological factors, including a lack of entrepreneurial commitment. According to Ebert & Griffin (1995:156), the failure of a business is frequently attributed to the founder or the founder's lack of commitment, resulting in a lack of focus on the business's operations. Opening a business involves a significant investment of time, commitment, and sacrifice over an extended period.

Indrawati, Salim, & Djawahir (2015) explain that entrepreneurial commitment is defined as entrepreneurs' desire to continue operating their businesses. Entrepreneurial commitment is exemplified by people's initiative to establish new businesses in response to opportunities they perceive (Tang, 2008). Gundry & Welsch (2001) assert that the commitment of the entrepreneur is a factor in growing a successful business. In addition, according to Erikson (2002), besides competence, an entrepreneur must also possess commitment. According to the Kemendikbud guidebook, an entrepreneur needs to commit to entrepreneurship because it makes an entrepreneur never give up in any situation, withstand the test of facing challenges, be patient in building a business, and be willing to always work, fight, and even sacrifice for the success of his business. Alam,

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Saeed, Sahabuddin, & Akter (2013) assert that the performance of entrepreneurs will be enhanced if it is founded on entrepreneurial commitment, as this will foster entrepreneurial success.

Nonetheless, several young entrepreneurs from various Indonesian regions need help to maintain their entrepreneurial commitments. A preliminary study was conducted through interviews with several founders to collect data based on the perceptions of young entrepreneurs. The quantitative method begins with difficulties that must be obtained through empirical evidence (Sugiyono, 2010). Three subjects were interviewed, namely subject V, A, and R.

On February 14, 2022, an interview with subject V took place. V operates as a custom hoodie business in Bandung and Jakarta. The newly founded company only lasted eight months. Subject V claimed that his uneven marketing efforts were to blame for the collapse of the company he founded. Yet, he confessed that after some time, he became so enthusiastic about marketing that he would be willing to stay up all night to shoot product photos. However, the co-founder, who neglected his commitment to growing the business with subject V, became discouraged and decided to put an end to his business.

Subject A, a Bandung-based t-shirt entrepreneur, acknowledges that maintaining his business is challenging, particularly in daily manufacturing, content generation, and marketing planning. On June 24, 2022, an interview with subject A was conducted. He acknowledged to researchers that he was compelled to maintain the business since subject A's parents disapproved of his decision to become an entrepreneur. Subject A initially attempted to save his business through a variety of methods. However, it was difficult for him because his parents constantly criticised the business he was in. As a result, after nine months of entrepreneurship, subject A decides to return to the company in search of employment.

On June 12, 2022, an interview with subject R was conducted. Subject R said that the greatest difficulty in operating a business that provides goods and services is continually satisfying clients who are frequently difficult or errant. However, subject R's perseverance was rewarded. Initially, subject R believed that this business was a side gig. It was tough for him to divide his time between writing his thesis and running his business; therefore, he was about to close his business. Yet, subject R's parents, older brothers, and friends encouraged him to remain passionate about expanding his business. For instance, assisting with packing, following the subject to the store, or providing encouragement when the subject R is exhausted. The business he established in the city of Yogyakarta five years ago is now his primary source of income and has been operating for five years.

Based on the results of interviews with the three participants, differences in entrepreneurial commitment may be discernible between the individuals. The three subjects face the same challenges in business, including consistency in production, marketing, and customer service. These things will be related to the internal factors of the individual. However, internal factors motivate the subjects to persevere despite these obstacles. The tenacity of a business's founders will be tested as they build the business. Srihadiastuti and Hidayatullah (2018) According to his research, entrepreneurs should be more focused and persistent in growing their businesses since it can enhance their commitment, which will impact their business's success.

There are several factors that influence entrepreneurial commitment. Passion, grit, internalised norms, as well as personality traits are internal determinants. Vikarani and Meiyanto (2019) proves that grit has a significant impact on entrepreneurial commitment. Duckworth et al. (2007) explain that grit or tenacity is characterised by efforts taken to preserve or increase a person's enthusiasm and perseverance in reaching a variety of long-term and expected goals. Duckworth et al. (2007) discover that there are two characteristics of grit, namely perseverance of effort or tenacity in accomplishing objectives and desires despite barriers, and consistency of interest or a commitment to one's interests in order to achieve goals. When an entrepreneur has a strong interest in his business and well-defined entrepreneurial goals, he will be committed to the business he is establishing. However, according to the findings of Vikarani & Meiyanto (2019), grit has only a 5.2% effect on entrepreneurial commitment. Therefore, researchers advise that future studies examine factors other than grit that contribute to the establishment of entrepreneurial commitment.

According to Littunen (2000), an individual's success in business is not solely determined by entrepreneurial characteristics but also by environmental or external factors. Examining the experiences of the three respondents reveals that the influence of the social environment also plays a significant role in the formation of entrepreneurial commitment. The experience of several preliminary subjects demonstrates this. The three subjects are attempting to sustain their businesses. However, when confronted with problems, subject R feels supported by his family and friends. In contrast to subject A, who did not receive support, particularly from his family, abandoned his business development efforts.

External factors that most influence the increase in entrepreneurial commitment, according to Alma (2007), are family environment. Starting from family history and how families can encourage or support entrepreneurial businesses. Okoye et al. (2017) state that social networks, government support, and social

support will influence entrepreneurial commitment. And Okoye et al (2017) explain that the quality of social support will affect entrepreneurial success.

Entrepreneurial commitment is positively correlated with social support (Margaretta, 2018). When young entrepreneurs have a greater level of assistance, it will be advantageous for those who engage in entrepreneurship. According to Taylor & Francis (2009), social support consists of consolation or reassurance that assists an individual in coping with a condition. This can assist entrepreneurs in being better prepared to face obstacles along the way to establish their businesses.

According to Bygrave (1996), there is interaction between internal and external influences in the formation of entrepreneurial commitment. According to Convergence Theory (Walgito, 2004), the surrounding environment plays a crucial role in an individual's growth and development. In a study titled "The Influence of Internal Factors, External Factors, and Educational Factors on Student Alumni Entrepreneurial Intentions," Widhiandono, Miftahuddin, & Darmawan (2016) determine that internal factors originate from within a person, while internal factors also include alumni social support factors that have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention with a significance level of less than 0.05.

Young entrepreneurs with grit realise their passion for entrepreneurship and are determined to achieve their business's long-term objectives. He is committed to entrepreneurship if he is willing to accept obstacles and dangers and even make sacrifices for his business. However, when confronted with challenges, individuals may experience exhaustion or failure. Young entrepreneurs' tenacity will be bolstered by social support during times such as these. Social support, in the form of emotional or material assistance from family or friends, can motivate young entrepreneurs to overcome adversity, thereby sustaining their entrepreneurial commitment (Diyanti, Sofiah, & Prasetyo, 2020).

As far as the researchers are aware, empirical research has yet to be conducted on the association between social support and moderation toward grit and entrepreneurial commitment among young entrepreneurs. This is crucial to understand since, as you can see from the preceding explanation, a high level of commitment is required for entrepreneurial achievement or success. Earlier research have also demonstrated that as one ages, their entrepreneurial commitment increases, and vice versa (Gieter, Hofmans, & Pepermans, 2011). This is supported by data from earlier studies indicating that the level of entrepreneurial commitment among young entrepreneurs is lower than among senior entrepreneurs (RED GEM España, 2017). This implies that the level of commitment of young entrepreneurs must be considered to prevent business failure.

Social support can moderate the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment based on the positive association between grit and social support in increasing entrepreneurial commitment. In other words, the social support that young entrepreneurs receive from others, such as work-related friends and family, can improve the association between grit and entrepreneurial commitment. The main objective of this paper is to find out the relationship dynamics between grit, social support, and entrepreneurial commitment. As far as researchers are aware, no research has been conducted to link these three factors, particularly among participants who are young entrepreneurs. Many researchers only investigate a partial relationship, such as grit towards entrepreneurial commitment or social support towards entrepreneurial commitment. This study tested the relationship between grit, entrepreneurial commitment, and social support as moderating variable.

## Method

### Research Design

Research design of this study is quantitative non-experimental research because it aims to measure research variables without carrying out the manipulation process. The scores reported by the research will be processed using numbers and then interpreted using statistical analysis. Specifically, this study aimed to determine the effect of social support as a moderator of the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment of young entrepreneurs. So, the hypothesis for this study is social support significantly moderate the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment of young entrepreneurs.

### Participants

Participants in this study were young entrepreneurs under the age of 30 who had been in operation for no more than five years. This criterion pertains to the Ministry of Education and Sports, which classifies young entrepreneurs as those who launch a business before the age of thirty. The business age criteria is based on the stage of the business cycle Todd Herman (2021) , Specifically, the first five years of a business are the most critical. Beginning in the first year, the idea and validation phases are the phases of establishing a business identity and developing a product or service. Then comes the startup phase, which includes the marketing and sales phases. The failure of the entrepreneur's commitment at this stage influences the continuation of the business, which is the primary reason why novice entrepreneurs do not reach the age of five. Then comes the

growth/survival phase (3-5 years of business), in which business processes and tactics are enhanced. Entrepreneurs face difficulty when they fail to separate "mental time" and perceive themselves as working alone. After five years, the business will reach the scale-up and maturity phase, which is safer for entrepreneurs because the business is more stable and established. In addition, according to business education websites, 95% of organizations that have recently launched or are launching will fail within the first five years.

Minimum sample size for this study is 55 respondents. Using the F-test linear multiple regression, fixed model, effect size 0.15,  $\alpha$  err prob. 0.05, and power 0.80, this value was calculated. This calculation uses the application G-Power Statistics (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009).

Researchers were able to recruit 75 participants. Nevertheless, some of the data needed to fit the participation criteria, including people with more than five years of business experience who were not founders and older than thirty. 72 participants were gathered after the researchers limited the participant pool according to the criteria. All these data meet the goal requirements for this study participant, namely young entrepreneurs in Indonesia who are under 30 years old and have operated their businesses for no more than five years. The obtained demographic data was then processed to provide an overview of the participants, beginning with their gender, marital status, industry or business sector, business type, and business age.

### Measurement

This study used a grit scale that refers to the aspects proposed by Duckworth et al. (2007). The used scale was the Grit Scale. This measuring tool is comprised of two aspects, namely the persistence of effort and the consistency of interest, and has twelve items for each. In terms of consistency of interest, every item is unfavorable. This study used a Likert scale with a range of 1 to 5 points. Researchers employ a scale that has been adapted through an Indonesian translation process by Djaling and Purba (2019). Djaling and Purba (2019) have conducted trials on this scale and obtained reliability with a coefficient of .737 using Cronbach's Alpha. The Grit Scale has a total item correlation coefficient range of .309-.495. Azwar (2009) states that if the reliability coefficient is close to 1.00, then the reliability is higher. Alpha coefficient value which shows the number .737 (Djaling and Purba, 2019) which means that the measuring tool The Grit Scale used is reliable.

In this study, the social support scale or perceived social support scale refers to the features proposed by Zimet and Dahlem et al. in 1991. This scale was used because it corresponds to the sources this study will use: family, friends, and significant others (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, Farley, 1988) which consists of 12 items. Researchers use a scale adapted by Istiqlal (2018). Nonetheless, the researchers conducted a reliability test again on the social support scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates a result of 0.779% for the test of reliability. This indicates that the social support scale can be used with reliability.

The entrepreneurial commitment scale used in this study is the Entrepreneurial Commitment Scale by Tang (2008). This scale has been adapted, namely the translation process by Vikarani and Meiyanto (2019). This scale was utilized for the first time in the American Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics (PSED) to measure entrepreneurial commitment among 1,261 participants. This scale has eight items. The level of entrepreneurial commitment is related to the participant's score, the lower the score, the lower the level of entrepreneurial commitment. Before its adaptation and use in Indonesia to determine its dependability, this measuring instrument was evaluated by the authors of the scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the method used to evaluate the scale's reliability. The coefficient of dependability falls between 0.00 and 1.00. If the coefficient of reliability is near to 1, then the reliability is high. Vice versa, the lower the reliability, the closer the reliability coefficient was to 0.00 (Azwar, 2009). The alpha coefficient value was the number 0.70 so the measuring instrument is reliable to use.

### Data Analysis

The analytical method used in this study uses the moderation analysis method of Hayes (2013) using the PROCESS program that was inputted into the SPSS software. Using PROCESS, researchers can determine the significance of the indirect effect of the moderator. In testing variables, the relationship between variables and the moderator function of social support in the association between grit and entrepreneurial commitment are considered.

### Result

Participants ranged in age from 19 to 30 years old. Based on gender, there were 45 female participants (62.5% of the total) and 27 male participants (37.5% of the total). Most participants were single, comprising 53 persons (73.6%), while 19 (26.4%) were married. Most businesses are culinary or food and beverage-related. There are 41 (57% of the total) participants residing outside of Jabodetabek who are dispersed across Indonesia. The following describes the distribution of participants based on their levels of grit, social support, and entrepreneurial commitment.

**Table 1. Results Level Research Variables**

Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Grit	0	0.0%	57	79.2%	15	20.8%
Social Support	0	0.0%	16	22.2%	56	77.8%
Entrepreneurial Commitment	0	0.0%	26	36.1%	46	63.9%

Note : n = Frequency; % = Percentage of Frequency

The individuals in this study displayed the highest levels of grit under moderate conditions, followed by high conditions. The level of social support and entrepreneurial commitment is subsequently often high. In addition, the following are the outcomes of the average value, standard deviation, and correlation test between variables.

**Table 2. Correlation Test Results Between Variables and Demographics**

Variable	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Gender	-	-							
2 Age	24.74(2.59)	0.07	-						
3 Marital Status	-	0.98**	0.17	-					
4 Length of Business Establishment	20.69(15.70)	0.21	0.25*	0.31**	-				
5 Number of Workers	4.40(8.53)	0.17	-0.00	-0.06	0.08	-			
6 GRIT	3.35(0.44)	0.14	-0.05	0.07	0.16	0.17	-		
7 Social Support	4.07(0.40)	0.13	0.05	0.32**	0.21	0.05	0.55**	-	
8 Entrepreneurial Commitment	3.93(0.55)	0.07	0.11	0.19	0.25*	0.24*	0.42**	0.45**	-

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

Dummy-code Gender variable (1= Male, 2= Female).

Age is measured in years.

Dummy-code variable Marital Status (0=Single, 1=Married).

Length of Business Establishment is measured in months.

Table 2 shows that the length of business establishment and the number of employees have a positive and statistically significant relationship with entrepreneurial commitment ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p = 0.05$ ;  $r = 0.24$ ,  $p = 0.05$ , respectively). In addition, the relationship between marital status and social support is statistically significant ( $r = 0.32$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). The positive correlation value shows that married individuals will obtain greater social support. The correlation test between variables also demonstrates that each variable is significantly correlated, specifically that there is a positive relationship between grit and social support, grit and entrepreneurial commitment, and social support and entrepreneurial commitment.

**Table 3. Moderation Analysis Results**

Independent Variable	Entrepreneurial Commitment					
	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Social Support (DS)	0.35	0.14	2.57	0.01	0.08	0.62
Grit (G)	0.22	0.16	1.37	0.17	-0.09	0.53
Interaction (DS x G)	0.57	0.27	2.57	0.04	0.08	0.62
Constant	3.86	0.06	60.05	0.00	3.73	3.99

Note : The interaction variable is the variable used to measure the moderating effect, LLCI : Lower Limit Confidence Interval, ULCI : Upper Limit Confidence Interval

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The researcher next tested the hypothesis. The purpose of hypothesis testing is to determine whether the results support the hypothesis. This study's hypothesis testing used moderation analysis with SPSS version 27 and the PROCESS version 4.1 Model 1 macro developed by Andrew F. Hayes. This study tests the hypothesis that social support moderates the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment. The following are the outcomes of the conducted moderation analysis.

## Discussion

This research examined the role of social support as a moderator between young entrepreneurs' grit and entrepreneurial commitment. The hypothesis test results demonstrate that social support strengthens the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment. Researchers discovered that social support moderates the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment. Duckworth et al. (2007) define grit as a character that is shown through the behavior of an individual to increase and maintain enthusiasm and perseverance to achieve various goals in the next period. When a young entrepreneur is persistent in achieving long-term goals, he will work hard to build and maintain his business. It echoes Tang's (2008) definition of entrepreneurial commitment, which emphasizes strong aspirations in building and maintaining a business. Duckworth (2016) explains that grit can be cultivated from within, specifically through forming habits, growing interest, training in overcoming a variety of challenges that can be accomplished through various skills or abilities, and planning several goals.

This was the first time anyone had studied the role of grit and social support in young entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial commitment. Clark, Dorio, Eldridge, Malecki, & Demaray (2019) state that because grit is a necessary variable for success, it is insufficient. The findings of this study indicate that grit will play a stronger role in fostering entrepreneurial commitment if the individual receives assistance from outside sources. An entrepreneur will likely encounter obstacles in his efforts to keep his interest. When faced with challenges and difficulties, entrepreneurs will become less enthusiastic and interested in their work, which will lead to a lower level of dedication. The results of this study suggest that when this occurs, social support will play a role in strengthening an individual's grit. According to Duckworth (2016), social support, such as the support provided by friends, mentors, or family, can develop grit. This support might take the form of facilities, advice, and encouragement in resolving various challenges experienced when running a business to help individuals rediscover their entrepreneurial spirit and enhance their commitment to their businesses. This statement shows the intimate relationship between grit and social support systems.

According to Putri (2016), entrepreneurs become braver, more optimistic, more courageous in taking risks, not giving up easily, tenacious, and more creative when they receive extraordinary social support, which includes attention, positive appraisal, understanding, respect, empathy, encouragement to advance, a variety of financial or material assistance, and assistance in the form of suggestions, directions, actions, and feedback. If entrepreneurs do not receive substantial societal support, the opposite is true.

Moreover, the correlational findings show a relationship between marital status and the social assistance individuals receive. According to Baron & Byrne (2005), a married person has a high ratio of social support. This indicates that young married entrepreneurs are more likely to receive greater social support than single entrepreneurs. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the number of workers and entrepreneurial commitment, such that the greater the number of workers, the greater the entrepreneurial commitment. Individuals can view their colleagues as a source of social support (Zimet et al., 1988). This indicates that the commitment of others in the business-building process will improve the entrepreneurial commitment of young entrepreneurs.

However, this study has several limitations. This study employed a cross-sectional design, which necessitates a large sample size and assumes that the independent variables have a significant impact. However, the limited time and personnel of the researchers limited the sample size of this study. This limitation also necessitates the use of online questionnaires for data collection in this study. Thus, there is a possibility that data entry is not based on real situations but is subject to subjectivity. Moreover, this study did not account for demographic variables, such as level of education and types of business. Education level has a positive impact on the entrepreneurial commitment and grit variables.

## Conclusion

This study contributes to the theory that high social support moderates the relationship between grit and entrepreneurial commitment among young entrepreneurs. Following the findings of this study, young entrepreneurs should be able to identify their entrepreneurial interests and goals, focus, be disciplined, be consistent throughout the growth process, and persist when a failure occurs. This research is designed to encourage persistence in building a business, particularly during the first five years of a business's critical period. Young entrepreneurs are also encouraged to be able to create a network of friends and to involve

partners, family, friends, and especially coworkers in the business process so that they have the support necessary to dedicate themselves to growing their business.

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