



## Grit Won't Quit: Reduce Turnover by Hiring for Passion + Perseverance

Nikolaus T. Butz  
Reed Stratton  
Emily E. Gruber  
Abigail Schmidt



School of Business & Economics  
College of Professional Studies  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point



### Abstract

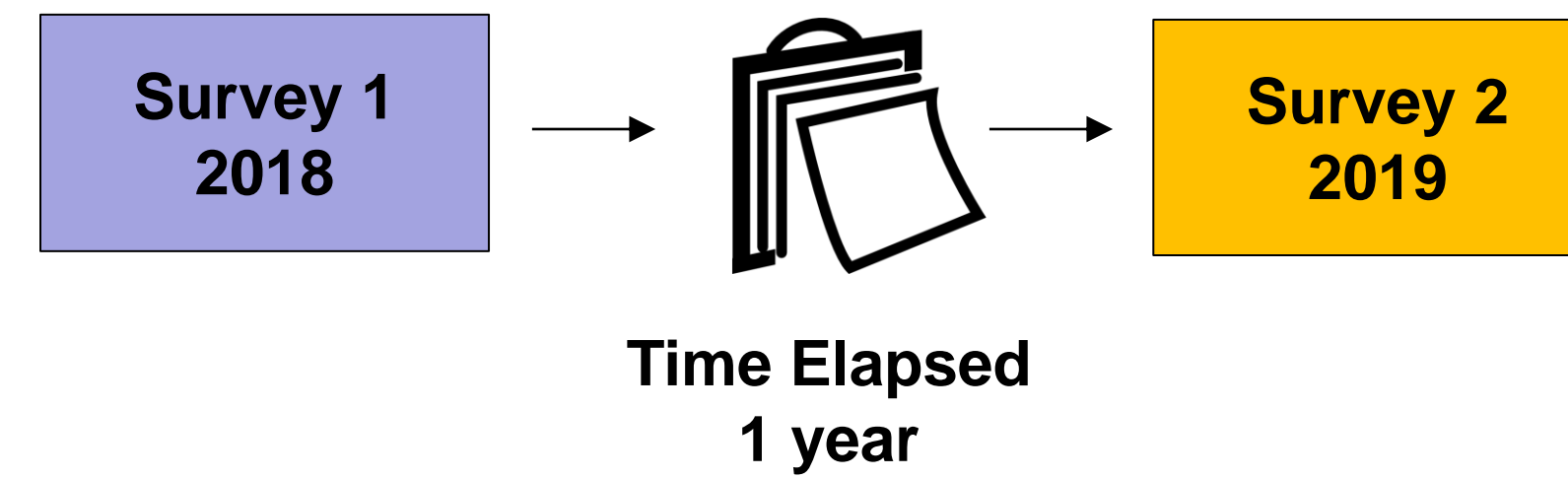
The purpose of this study was to explore how employers in rural economies take grit into consideration when hiring employees. Many rural economies experience the costly and unpredictable issue of employee turnover. Low unemployment and the draw of urban living have negatively impacted the rural labor pool. The Grit Scale can be used to help predict long-term employee success. A combination of passion and perseverance, the Grit Scale focuses on the important, yet overlooked attributes that many successful employees possess. This study extends upon the work started by Butz and his colleagues in 2015 by resurveying the initial sample to test if grit continues to affect employability years after the initial data were collected. The results confirmed that employee turnover and grit remain negatively correlated. As grit scores increase, employee turnover rates decrease. Furthermore, the results suggest that employers who focus on hiring for grit are more likely to reduce their employee turnover. Overall, further utilization of the Grit Scale may help reduce turnover rates, thus improving rural economies across the United States.



# Grit

### Methods

#### RESEARCH DESIGN & PARTICIPANTS



- Survey 1 consisted of 100 complete responses in 2018
- Of those 100, 78 agreed to be contacted in the future
- For Survey 2, 54 (of the 78) provided complete responses (attrition rate 31%)

#### PROCEDURES

- For both Survey 1 and Survey 2, employers were sent an email containing a hyperlink to an online survey

#### MEASURES

- **Grit** (Duckworth et al., 2007)
  - » 12 items, (2017,  $\alpha = .80$ ; 2018,  $\alpha = .87$ )
  - » Sample Item: "A well-qualified candidate would be someone who has overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge." (1 = Disagree strongly, 5 = Agree strongly)
- **Turnover**
  - » Number of new hires in the 1 year that elapsed between Survey 1 and Survey 2
  - » Number of quits
    - ▶ Excludes temporary employees, layoffs due to downsizing, firings, non-performance-related separations such as retirement or injury

$$\text{Turnover Rate} = \frac{\text{Quits}}{\text{Hires}} \times 100$$



### Results

#### PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST

Dependent Variable	Survey 1		Survey 2		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Grit-Interest	3.65	0.49	3.63	0.51	0.17	.870
Grit-Effort	4.00	0.48	3.87	0.81	1.11	.271
Grit Combined	3.81	0.32	3.76	0.47	0.79	.433

#### Interpretation

- Grit-Interest, Grit-Effort, & the combined scale (I+E) were unchanged as hiring criteria in 2018 and 2019

#### CORRELATIONS

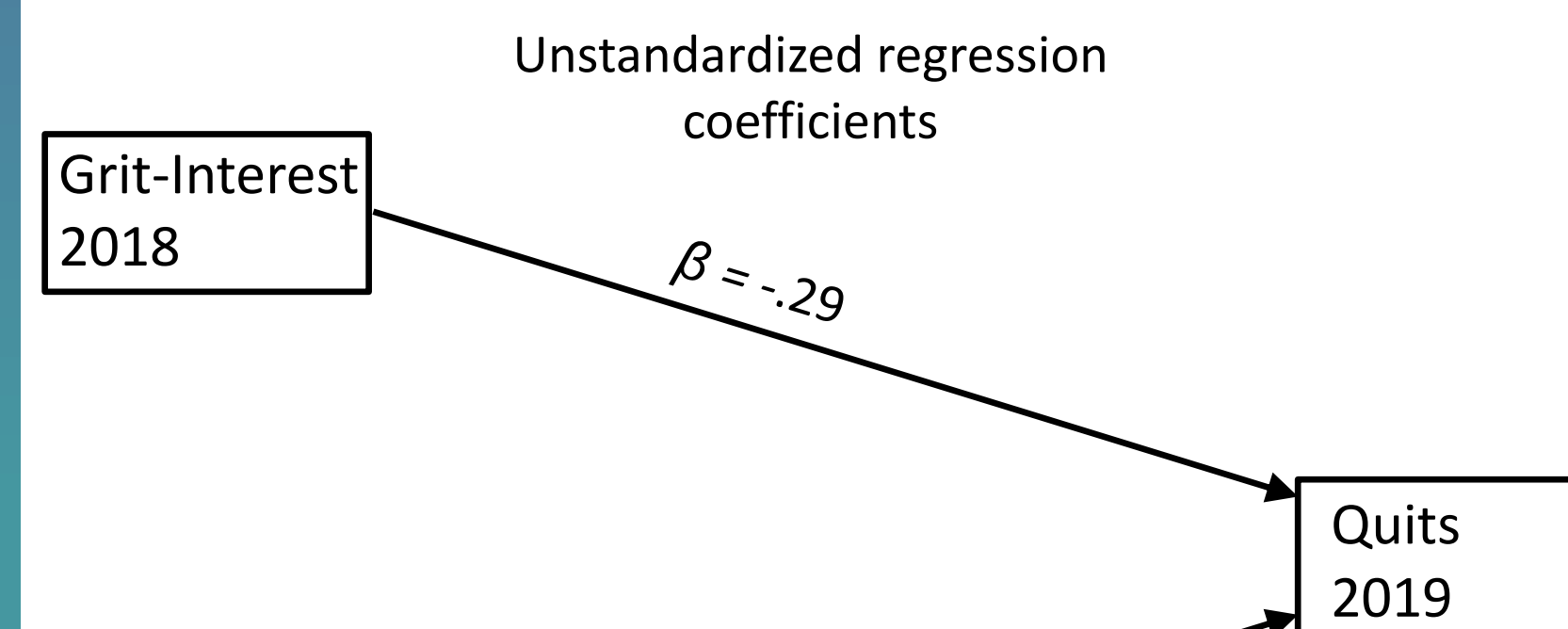
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Grit-Interest 2018	—						
2. Grit-Effort 2018	-.07	—					
3. Grit-Combined 2018	.69**	.67**	—				
4. Grit-Interest 2019	.37**	.15	.37**	—			
5. Grit-Effort 2019	-.14	.13	-.02	-.06	—		
6. Grit-Combined 2019	.08	.20	.19	.50**	.84**	—	
7. Quits 2019	.09	-.23†	-.09	-.05	-.05	-.08	—

Note. †  $p < .10$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

#### Interpretation

- Grit-Effort, measured as a hiring criteria in 2018, was found to be negatively correlated with Quits in 2019

#### MULTIPLE REGRESSION PATHS

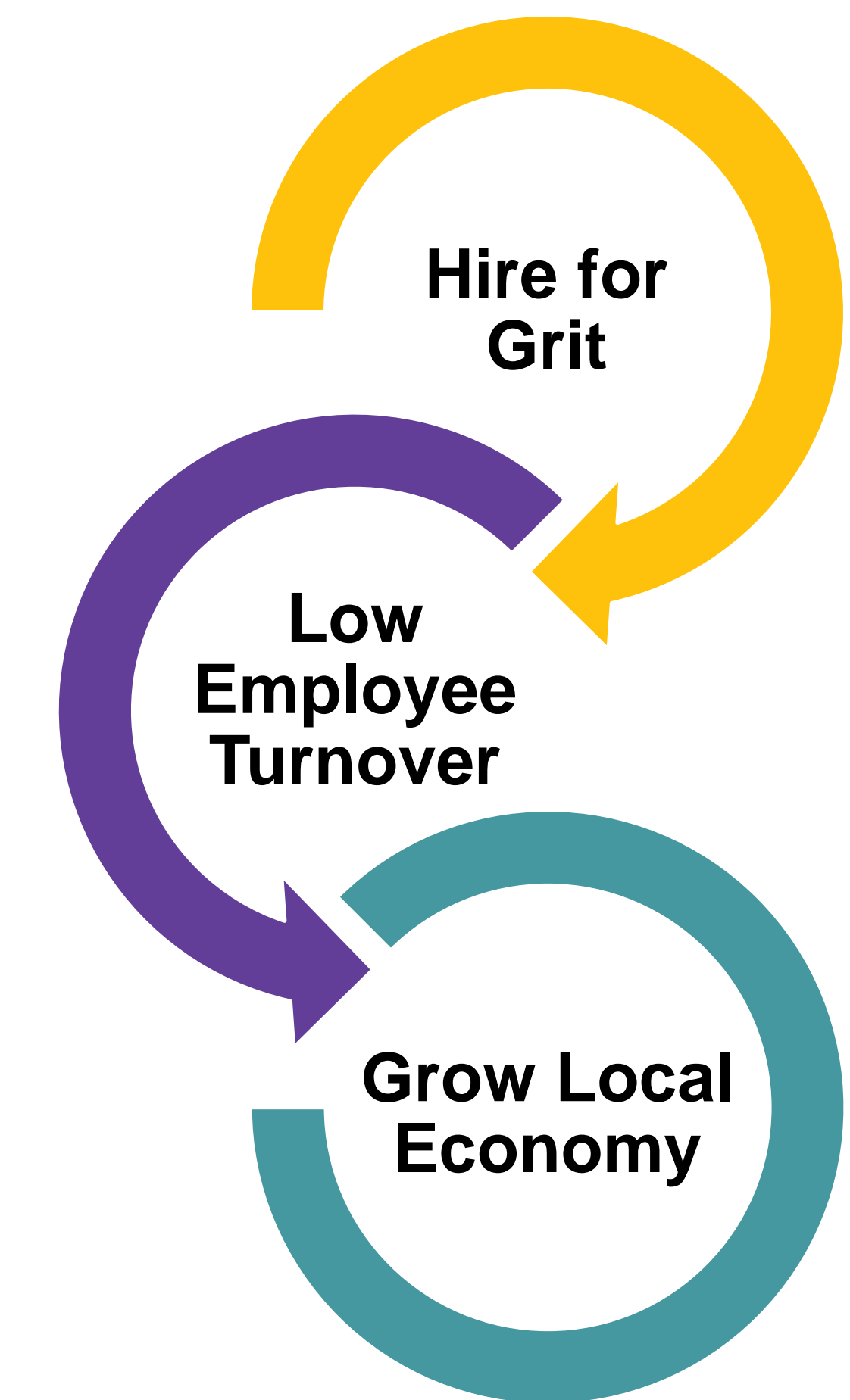


Note.  $R^2 = .08$

#### Interpretation

- Grit-Interest & Grit-Effort, measured as a hiring criteria in 2018, were found to both have a negative effect on Quits in 2019

### Discussion



### References

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