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# Shaping One's Identity: Evaluation Of Motivational Persistence Questionnaire (EMP); Results Of Preliminary Validation In English

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**Abstract**. The study aims to conduct a preliminary validation of the psychometric characteristics of the English version of a Romanian questionnaire, designed to assess motivational persistence. Motivational persistence is an essential element of an individual's identity, a relationship that brings a bi-directional perspective and is seminal for people's social identities. The analysis of the translated English version is performed on a sample of 152 UK residents, with data on the six factors of the questionnaire (ambition, determination, planning, implementation, recurrence, self-discipline), and comparative analyses on the relationships between EMP factors and the Grit scale (Duckworth et al., 2007). The alpha values for the EMP are similar to the ones obtained with the original version of the MPS. The EMP correlates with the two factors of the Grit scale. This tool is unique and complex, as it combines factors based on their temporal proximity to desired ends, focuses on the durability of goal strivings and on post-decisional volitional and motivational processes. Conclusions are drawn about the psychometric characteristics and its usefulness in assessing motivation / persistence for psychotherapy, counselling, any allied fields and for academics and researchers.

**Keywords**: motivation, identity, motivational persistence, scale validation, counselling tool, United Kingdom.

## 1. Definition of Terms – Theoretical Foundation

The existing literature on motivational persistence reveals a need for further empirical research and an improvement of instruments and measurement tools. The repeated empirical testing and successful validation of a Romanian questionnaire, designed to assess motivational persistence, prompted us to translate it and validate it on an English-speaking sample. The preliminary validation of the psychometric characteristics of this English version was done on a UK-based sample and exhibits strong psychometric characteristics.

### *1.1. Conceptual Definitions and Motivation Models*

Motivation is a widely used variable that captures the interest of academics, psychologists and researchers alike. It can be defined as the process "which makes people put real effort and energy into what they do" (Srivastava & Barmola, 2011, p. 106). Other researchers regard it as a "psychological state of the individual as it relates to the authentic action, and the physical reality of undertaking it" (Pinner, 2017, p. 37). In fields such as organisational psychology, education, language acquisition, the importance of motivation is viewed as an essential ingredient.

Motivation is strongly connected to an individual's identity. The IBM identity-based motivation framework (Oyserman & Mesmin, 2010) notes that people are guided by their internal set of values and principles, and they will interpret setbacks, effort put into an action, difficulty of

tasks and other elements depending on how relevant an action is to them. If one reflects on their future selves, then identity can predict task persistence, by increasing motivation (Destin et al., 2022). Also, an individual's identity can make goals feel relevant by matching their view of themselves to the task, and labelling it 'identity-congruent'. As noted by authors Oyserman and Mesmin (2010, p. 1001), "identities are dynamically constructed in context", and when an action or goal feels congruent with one's identity, then motivation appears to sustain effort and persist into finalising actions related to that goal.

Waugh (2002) identified over ten models of motivation that were developed in the 20th century, integrating concepts such as goals, needs, self-efficacy, rewards, reinforcements and so on, that are still used today. Clark (1998) listed over 40 empirically-tested theories in his study about motivation performance. The wealth of so many different types of conceptual models that are tested empirically in domains associated to learning, child development, cognitive, behavioural and social sciences reflect the complexity of motivation studies, and can make it difficult to both define and analyse comparatively.

Motivation can be studied depending on the dimensions of motivation (process-focused or outcome-focused), on the type of motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic and amotivation), in terms of observable cognitive (e.g., recall, perception), affective (e.g., subjective experience), behavioural (e.g., performance), and physiological responses (e.g., brain activation) (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014, p. 328). For example, intrinsic motivation determines the individual to be internally prompted to exhibit a certain behaviour, not out of fear of unwanted consequences but from real interest. Extrinsic motivation was described as a determinant of behaviours which cannot be internally motivated or is outside the person's conscious control, which "pertains to a wide variety of behaviours where the goals of action extend beyond those inherent in the activity itself" (Vallerand & Bisonnette, 1992, p. 600). Deci and Ryan (1985) recognised the existence of a third type of motivation, called amotivation, which refers to lacking intentionality, and described in more recent research as "a strong negative predictor of engagement, learning and wellness" (Ryan & Deci, 2020, p. 3).

### *1.2. Persistence and conceptual operationalisation; empirical results*

Persistence, as a key variable in the history of psychological research, can be defined as "the tendency to remain engaged in specific goal-related activities, despite difficulties, obstacles, fatigue, prolonged frustration or low perceived feasibility" (Constantin et al., 2011, p. 99). An analysis of persistence definitions from the 20th century finds common patterns, such as resistance to frustration and an ability to bypass obstacles and maintain effort (Hojbota & Constantin, 2009). Persistence takes into account facets of goal pursuit, such as the extent to which a person continues to engage (rather than abandoning the goal), the length of time spent on achieving the goal and number of tasks completed (Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2014). Goal pursuit in empirical research attends to "the setting of appropriate goals and the effective striving for goal attainment" (Oettingen & Gollwitzer, 2009, p. 2). For this to happen, individuals should think about the type of goals they have, the type of expected results, the means of acquiring them, the timeframe involved and the type of anticipated rewards. We see again that personal identity guides us towards the goals that feel worth pursuing and, in the meantime, sustained effort and pursuit of goals and actions can shape and strengthen one's commitment to their social identity (Luyckx et al., 2016).

Historically, persistence was shown to occur once levels of motivation to successful goal completion or anticipation of success were high, or when motivation to avoid anticipation of failure was elevated (Feather, 1961). Clark (1999) emphasizes the importance of persistence when addressing distractions that people encounter. One study on the role of affective experience in work motivation (Seo et al., 2004) highlights the dimensions of behavioural outcomes, namely intensity, direction and persistence. These three facets derive from the theoretical model proposed by Kurt Lewin in the 20th century. Intensity refers to the amount of effort involved (task performance), direction is the behavioural choice (between possible actions), and persistence denotes maintaining the pattern of behaviour longitudinally (Kanfer, 1990). Persistence is seen to be a critical element of long-term work productivity (Seo et al., 2004), and is more important during situations where there is a lack of feedback, advice or appreciation (Buddhapriya & Bhatt, 2018).

One line of research concerns personality, affect and emotions. Persistence can be enhanced by positive feelings or positive affect, as individuals tend to pay less attention to progress feedback information and make fewer progress evaluations, enhancing thus task persistence (Seo et al., 2004). Strong goal commitment is the result of envisioning the future goals as desirable, having a positive outlook and high expectations (Oettingen & Gollwitzer, 2009). Another line of research states that motivational persistence can be studied within the context of goal-directed behaviours and Affect Regulation Dynamics (Bagozzi et al., 1998; Baumeister et al., 2007; Pekrun & Stephens, 2009). The majority of self-regulation models are vertical, looking at constructs hierarchically rather than horizontally, spanning over time in a sequential order (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999).

Another similar variable is grit, defined as a "mixture of toughness, persistence and resilience" (Jordan et al., 2018, p. 576). Duckworth et al. (2007, p. 1087) assess grit as being a noncognitive trait, defined as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals" that correlates with the Big Five Conscientiousness and is a predictor of success. Across six studies, findings suggest that older individuals exhibit higher grit than younger people, a grittier person makes fewer career changes, grit correlates positively with level of education and is the result of both talent and sustained effort (Duckworth et al., 2007). According to the same authors, this individual-level attribute can be trained to be developed and maintained over time, which is useful in work environment and academic contexts.

Persistence is therefore, regarded as a vital component of self-regulation, and a key predictor of well-being and performance (Brandstätter & Bernecker, 2022). The concept can be measured either with targeted instruments for children (Lufi & Cohen, 1987) and adults (Mukherjee, 1974), as a component of larger inventories (Cloninger et al., 1991) or with ad-hoc items created to measure specific behaviours. But the variety of measurements can lead to a perpetuation of the concept's ambiguity (Constantin et al., 2011), thus the aim of the authors in this study was to obtain an instrument that can support the needs of academics, practitioners and researchers.

### *1.3. Motivational persistence and The Rubicon Model*

Motivational persistence is regarded as being a relatively stable component of the conative system (the capability to set and follow through with personal goals), often compared to a character trait. Motivational persistence may be viewed as the cumulative effect of a spectrum

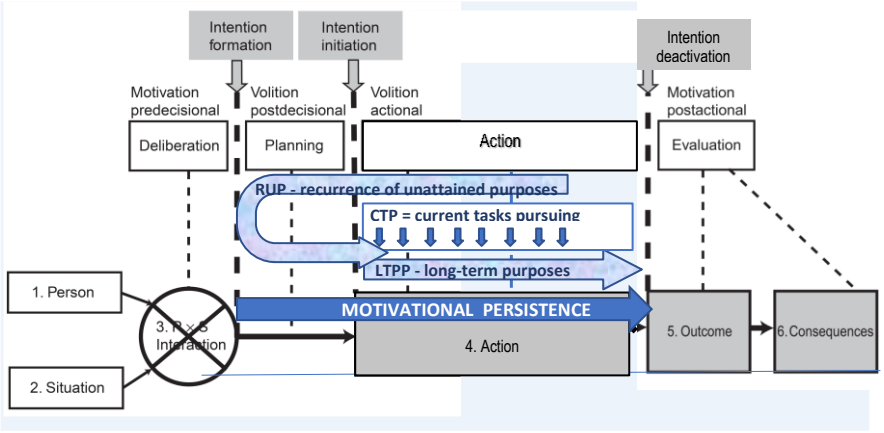
of predispositions, tendencies and conditions that can enable goal achievement (Hojbota & Constantin, 2009).

Recent motivational studies (Sherman and Kim, 2004; Belschak et al., 2006, Houser-Marko and Sheldon, 2006; Eniola and Adebiyi, 2007) confirm that motivational involvement (to be attracted to / to intend to attain personal motivating goals) and motivational persistence (persistence in motivational aims, tendency to persevere behaviourally and motivationally in the effort of achieving ambitious targets) represent two different stages of the motivational process, two distinct facets of motivation, between which a weak relationship of interdependence exists (Constantin & al., 2008).

Based on these observations and on the need to distinguish the concept under discussion (persistence in motivational aims) by the persistence in task (the time necessary for finish a limited task), Constantin et al. (2011) chose the syntagm "motivational persistence". They proposed a comprehensive model and a questionnaire (MPS - Motivational Persistence Scale) that allow the assessment of motivational persistence, defined as a person's predisposition to persevere with a task or action, in the effort of achieving ambitious goals, or the tendency to persist and invest time and effort (Constantin et al. 2011). This concept is quite similar to other concepts that overlap with the semantic content associated with persistence, such as: perseverance, toughness or ruggedness (hardiness) and grit (strength of character).

The motivational persistence model can explain what happens after a person has taken a decision in the post-decisional phase, as reflected by the Rubicon model (Gollwitzer, 2000, 2001, Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008). This term was chosen as a metaphor for the point of no return, a reference for Caesar crossing the Rubicon River (Rauber, 2007). The point of no return signifies a step forward, when the individual moves from goal setting and planning to goal striving or implementation. Coming back to the current model, the two factors of the Motivational Persistence Scale (LTPP - long-term purposes pursuing and CTP - current tasks pursuing) are relevant only for the Action phase (volition actional) of the Rubicon model. LTPP is understood as the endeavour to pursue long-term aims that have been previously selected, and CTP signifies daily efforts made to achieve current tasks that are subsumed to long-term goals. The third factor of the Motivational Persistence Scale (RUP - recurrence of unattained purposes) could be relevant for the Planning phase (volition post-decisional) from the Rubicon model, and also for Action phase form this model (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** The motivational persistence model (Constantin et al., 2011) in the Rubicon model phases (Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2008)




From this perspective, motivational persistence as it is operationalized by the Motivational Persistence scale, is highly relevant to evaluate individual predispositions or capability to maintain long-term motivation in order to achieve important personal goals. The motivational persistence model (Constantin et al., 2011) allows an understanding of the processes between the initial deliberation and the consistent follow-up of long-term goals. For these reasons, we choose to analyze the motivation to adhere to treatment by using motivational persistence model and the MPS questionnaire.

### *1.4. Stages in the construction of the MPS and Implications for the current research*

The original version of the Motivational Persistence Scale (MPS; Constantin et al., 2011) was developed out of necessity, in the absence of suitable scales that would incorporate various personality aspects and elements of the aforementioned Rubicon model. Preliminary data collection from 667 participants through a number of 64 items helped the researchers to identify three factors, following exploratory factor analysis (EFA). These results were reconfirmed in 2011 on a second sample of 296 participants via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The new MPS scale evaluated motivational persistence, focusing on three main factors: Long Term Purpose Pursuit (LTPP), Current Purpose Pursuit (CPP) and Recurrence of Unattained Pursuits (RUP). LTPP and CPP are set on a temporal range and are volition-based, whereas RUP refers to past and inactive responsibilities. Current purpose pursuits depend on volitional and motivational resources that stem from self-control. Long-term purpose pursuit refers to ideal and distant goal pursuits (Constantin et al., 2011). The recurrence of unattained pursuits refers to an actualization and revival process that appears post-intentional, as described by Heckhausen and Gollwitzer (1987) in their Rubicon model of action phases, detailed above.

In the 2011 study, the authors tested the construct and convergent validity of the scale, to see how the coefficients for the MPS would correlate to pre-validated, more established

instruments of measurement for a similar concept, such as the Grit Scale for Consistency of Interest and the Persistence of effort (Duckworth et al., 2007), the ACS-90 scales for Preoccupation, Hesitation and Volatility (Kuhl & Beckmann, 1994) and the Persistence Scale of the Temperament and Character Inventory (Cloninger et al., 1994). Data analysis revealed a statistically coherent model and confirmed both the factorial structure with the three facets of motivational persistence (CPP, LTPP, RUP), as well as its construct validity through the instrument's association with the aforementioned scales (Constantin et al., 2011).

From 2011 to 2017, work has been done to improve the internal consistency and predictive validity of the instrument, including the development of subsequent versions with 18 items, with 21 items and 15 items. In 2018, two more factors were added (SAG or Setting Ambitious Goals, SDA or Scheduling Daily Activities), to cement the relevancy of goal pursuit in achieving long-term projects, and the scale reached a version with 42 items and five factors. This new version was empirically tested on a convenience sample of 3471 participants in 2020, re-confirming the factorial structure and exhibiting high internal consistency.

A third stage in the development of the current Romanian version of the Motivational Persistence Scale was refining the instrument for wider application, for participants ranging from the academic sector, to the clinical settings and organizational contexts. A sixth factor was added, namely self-discipline, to reflect this concept's association with motivational persistence and importance to long-term goal setting. The six factors have also been re-named and given labels to reflect the psychological dimensions they strive to measure: ambition (setting ambitious goals), determination (pursuing long-term goals), implementation (realization of daily tasks), planning (scheduling daily activities), self-discipline (demonstrating willpower and self-restraint) and recurrence (re-actualization of unachieved past plans or abandoned goals).

There are several reasons why we want to validate the aforementioned version of the Romanian scale into English. First of all, when the Romanian version of the scale was created, there was a need to incorporate the three aspects mentioned above, namely CPP, LTPP and RUP. Having created and subsequently validated the scale in Romanian, it was necessary to pursue further analysis on a diverse group of participants who speak English. Secondly, the authors of the original version of the scale considered that there is a lack of adequate measures, and suggested that other researchers should continue improving and testing their findings. Thirdly, by adapting the scale in English, we could test its construct validity, producing a valid self-report measure for motivational persistence. Lastly, we wanted to test the scale against a construct which correlates with persistence, namely grit, variables which have been shown to correlate significantly in the past (Constantin et al., 2011).

## 2. The Present Research

The purpose of this paper is twofold: firstly, to expand current knowledge and understanding of motivational persistence and secondly, to validate the English version of the Motivational Persistence Scale. The factorial structure and psychometric properties of the scale were analysed.

### *2.1. Methods*

Ethical clearance was obtained by submitting a detailed proposal to the University Ethics Committee, several months before data collection was started. The proposal contained a sample

of the Informed Consent, the complete description of the research project, the purpose of the study, details on procedure and methodology, information on the potential risks or benefits, information on participant recruitment, confidentiality agreement details. All respondents completed an online survey for this study. The Informed consent page at the beginning of the survey fully explained to the participants their rights and the complete details of their participation in this study in a clear, transparent manner. All adult participants who have agreed to move forward after reading the Consent were able to progress to the next stage and complete the survey items. Participants were not offered any financial or material incentives for their participation, and there were no risk of harm or any negative consequences associated with taking part in this online research. No information which could be used in any way to identify the participants has been collected, as all online data collection followed the BERA privacy and data storage regulations on anonymity, confidentiality and data safety.

Following institutional approval from the University Research Ethics Committee (no. 2187 from the 20th of April 2021), data collection commenced on the 30th April.

*2.1.1. Participants*

A total of 152 participants (90 female, 60 males, 2 other), ranging from 19 to 76 years, volunteered to complete the online survey. The research survey was advertised on various social media groups, on LinkedIn, different student groups from London-based Universities, and by sharing the form link with UK-based charities and third-sector organisations. The participants self-selected from the general population of the United Kingdom, mainly from London, therefore a convenience sample of 152 respondents was the final lot of participants included into the data analysis. 25% have only lived in the UK, 27.6% lived in the UK for more than 10 years, 14.5% over 5 years, 13.2% between one and five years, 3.3% under 1 year, with 16.4% currently living in a different country. Over 58% are working full-time, 24% working part-time, and 17% are not employed.

The participants were asked to self-assess their English proficiency, with 67% assessing their level as Native/ Proficient, 27% Full professional level/Advanced, and 6% Upper-Intermediate. Respondents whose native language was not English spoke 27 other languages, with larger percentages being the Romanian participants (13%), Arabic (8.5%), French, German, Portuguese, Czech, Polish, Turkish, Slovak (between 1 and 3%) etc. A percentage of 57.9% of participants held at least a University degree (20% of the respondents hold a Master's Degree or a PhD, 37.5% hold a Bachelor Degree), 23% have tertiary education (UK levels 4-5 qualifications), 11.1% Post-secondary education (UK level 3 qualifications/ A levels), 7.2% upper-secondary education (GCSE, NVQ 2) and 1% primary education.

*2.1.2. Procedure*

The MPS (30-item Romanian version) was translated into English, following the cross-cultural adaptation and validation procedure for psychological instruments (Borsa et al., 2012). The original instrument was translated, back-translated and evaluated by two English native speakers, two bilingual speakers, before the two authors reached consensus on the final version of the questionnaire, which was empirically tested on a sample of 152 UK residents. The data collection procedure ran from the 30th April to the 30th June 2021, following the University ethics committee approval, and the survey was administered online, due to the covid-related restrictions.

Participation was voluntary, and the survey was shared via email to London charities or on social media, with the aim of reaching an audience as diverse as possible.

All statistical analyses were conducted in SPSS 20.

*2.1.3. Instruments*

The main instrument used is the Evaluation of Motivational Persistence questionnaire, the English version of the MPS (Constantin et al., 2011), with 30 items and 6 factors (ambition, determination, planning, implementation, recurrence, self-discipline). Respondents selected their response on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Very Little Extent to Very Large Extent.

The scale is a self-report instrument designed to evaluate aspects of three main facets of persistence, namely current purpose pursuit, which refers to persistence for short-term behaviours; long-term purpose pursuit, meaning the sustainment of actions over long periods of time; and recurrence of unattained purposes, the mental reactivation of past goals or postponed actions.

Grit: We used the 12-item Grit Scale (Duckworth et al., 2007) with a 5-point Likert response scale, ranging from Not Like Me at All to Very Much Like Me. The GRIT scale generally exhibits high internal consistency, ranging from 0.77 to 0.85 (Duckworth et al., 2007). This measure is comprised of two subscales, titled the Perseverance of Effort and Consistency of Interest.

## 3. Results

### *3.1. Psychometric properties of the EMP (English version)*

The results for the descriptive statistics analysis show that our newly translated scale exhibits good internal consistency and construct validity.

In terms of the Alpha Cronbach analysis, the internal consistency for each of the six factors was assessed, with acceptable scores for Ambition (.715) and Implementation (.746), good scores for Determination (.831) and Recurrence (.816), and an excellent score for Planning (.909). Self-discipline scored .672, so the items for this factor will have to be corrected for further applications of the scale. Also, the alpha values for the EMP are similar to the ones obtained with the original Romanian version of the MPS.

Confirmatory factor analysis could not be completed, as the number of respondents is lower than required (N=152). As per statistical requirements, a critical sample size of 200 respondents should provide stable results and offer sufficient power to estimate a model's stability (Collier, 2020; Garver & Mentzer, 1999). Exploratory factor analysis EFA and confirmatory factor analysis CFA were conducted on the previous versions of the Romanian scale, and the results confirmed the current structure with six factors that has been used for translation in this case.

A high overall score on the EMP means that an individual has the ability to persevere in the effort over time, in order to reach ambitious goals, without abandoning the tasks that were set out for completion.

**Table 1.** Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness and Kurtosis for Factors of the EMP

| EMP | M | SD | Skew | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| EMP_total | 98.02 | 15.40 | -.394 | -.309 |
| EMP_ambition | 17.47 | 3.25 | -.289 | .149 |
| EMP_determination | 17.84 | 4.27 | -.597 | -.317 |
| EMP_planning | 15.86 | 5.39 | -.323 | -.747 |
| EMP_implementation | 16.23 | 3.76 | -.137 | -.238 |
| EMP_recurrence | 13.00 | 4.35 | .136 | -.573 |
| EMP_self-discipline | 17.57 | 3.48 | -.374 | -.267 |

Note: N= 152. Std. Error of Skewness =.197. Std. Error of Kurtosis = .391.

### *3.2. A comparison between GRIT and the EMP*

The Pearson correlation analyses employed to compare the 12-item Grit scale and the 30-item EMP scale reveal an expected pattern of correlations. The EMP correlates with the two factors of the Grit scale- Table 2 reveals the correlation coefficients.

Out of the six factors of the EMP scale, five correlate significantly with one another, namely ambition, determination, planning, implementation and self-discipline. The only factor of the instrument that showcases negative correlations is Recurrence, defined by the authors of the original scale as "serving the goal of signalling abandoned intentions" and referring to "motivating characteristics of important, still unattained goals" (Constantin et al., 2011, p. 114). There is one reason that might explain the unique role that recurrence plays, compared to the other factors, namely that recurrence is oriented towards the past, with the aim of retrieving and reviving lost or postponed plans and actions, which might be valuable in the long run for personal goal achievement. The other factors of the EMP scale are oriented towards the future, mainly for long-term goal achievement, planning and implementation of actions. This complex mechanism between newer, recently chosen and older, abandoned goals, has been frequently ignored by persistence frameworks, but it is important for humans and influencing their behaviours. People usually have various objectives and goals but it is unlikely they would invest time and effort into achieving all of them, so a sequential distribution of effort and resources is needed, in order for individuals to gradually come back and achieve delayed plans or projects.

**Table 2.** Correlation coefficients among the variables (N=152)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.MPE_total | - | | | | | | | | |
| 2.MPE_ambition | .64** | - | | | | | | | |
| 3.MPE_determination | .77** | .46** | - | | | | | | |
| 4.MPE_planning | .78** | .39** | .48** | - | | | | | |
| 5.MPE_implementation | .64** | .24** | .45** | .40** | - | | | | |
| 6.MPE_recurrence | .15 | .11 | -.05 | -.03 | -.29** | - | | | |
| 7.MPE_self-discipline | .76** | .35** | .59** | .54** | .70** | -.22** | - | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. GRIT- consistency of interests | .36** | .05 | .40** | .31** | .54** | -.41** | .50** | - | |
| 9. GRIT- perseverance of effort | .60** | .38** | .62** | .38** | .55** | -.22** | .62** | .48** | - |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**4. Limitations**

Firstly, the present study used the adapted English version of the Motivational Persistence Scale, where the internal consistency value for Self-discipline is acceptable, yet lower than the other values for the remaining five factors of the scale. The items for self-discipline need to be adapted to improve the value of Alpha Cronbach.

Secondly, we used a self-report questionnaire with two scales to measure our variables, namely motivational persistence and grit. There are numerous limitations to self-report instruments (Lucas & Baird, 2006; Paulhus, 1991), such as a vulnerability to the social desirability bias.

A limitation noted by Duckworth et al. (2007) in their validation article on the GRIT scale refers to the use of items that "asks respondents to reflect on their characteristic approach to goals, setbacks, and challenges", "which necessitate retrospective reflection" (p. 1099). Both Grit and the EMP include items which that refer to past goals and recurrence of unattained purposes respectively, to determine how past behaviours affect or predict present and future decisions.

Lastly, the sample size of 152 respondents did not allow us to conduct confirmatory factor analysis, so further empirical utilizations of the scale should involve larger samples. The small number of participants might affect the external validity of our initial study, so further research is needed.

**5. Conclusions and Future Directions of research**

This measurement tool could prove useful for counselling practitioners, for psychotherapists and researchers in measuring and understanding motivational persistence. Another sector is education, as practitioners should use this tool especially with students who are at the beginning of their careers and wish to decide which path is most suitable for them, and how their social identity is linked to their future professional plans.

This tool is unique and complex, as it combines factors based on their temporal proximity to desired ends, focuses on the durability of strivings and on post-decisional volitional and motivational processes. As literature on the topic has shown repeatedly, goal achievement requires sustained effort, a focus on objectives and prolonged dedication over time, and there are several factors which aid it, such as ambition, determination, recurrence of unattained purposes and so on.

We recommend further applications of the present instrument in organisational contexts. 82 % of our respondents were in a form of employment (58% working full-time, 24% working part-time) at the time of the study, and this tool is fast, practical, empirically valid and theory-grounded. Any intervention programme that can be implemented in organisational, academic,

developmental, counselling or other sectors should focus on both the characteristics of the population, the subgroups involved and of the institution that employs changes.

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**Annex 1**

30-item EMP

1. I like to set up simple and easy-to-reach objectives for myself.
2. I prefer immediate achievements instead of long-term goals or projects.
3. I like to write down my daily/weekly to-do list in advance.
4. I sometimes don't fully go through with my planned activities.
5. I still think about the different ways I could have taken advantage of the opportunities I gave up on in the past.
6. I am a disciplined individual in anything I do.
7. I like to think about future accomplishments.
8. Long-term goals motivate me to overcome day-to-day hardships.
9. I check my planned activities every morning, before I get to work.
10. Some days, I deviate from my planned activities.
11. I still think about the goals I gave up on, even though they don't matter anymore.
12. I honour my commitments, even when I lose or am at a disadvantage.
13. I don't feel the need to prove myself or to achieve great things.
14. I continue to invest time and effort in projects that require months of patience and hard work.
15. I use an agenda and make lists to plan what I have to do every day.
16. When I plan to do something, I don't give up until I get it done.
17. I'm surprised when I think about older, abandoned initiatives again.
18. I still keep things well organised, even when it's not necessary.
19. I am an ambitious person.
20. I remain motivated even for activities lasting months.
21. I plan in detail what I have to do the next day.
22. At the end of each day, I usually find that I did not accomplish what I planned out to do.
23. It's difficult for me to forget an important project that I gave up on to focus on other priorities.
24. I usually break self-imposed limits (for example, with shopping, food, time, etc).
25. I always expect more from myself and from my future.
26. I don't like to pursue goals that require months or years of effort.
27. I regularly update my list of personal goals that I will achieve in the future.
28. I am efficient in achieving my day-to-day objectives.
29. I always think back at my unrealized projects.
30. Through discipline and perseverance, I have achieved my most important goals in life.

Likert Scale ranges from 1- Very Little Extent to 5- Very Large Extent

Inverted Items: 1, 2, 4, 10, 13, 22, 24, 26