

Psychological Distress and Resilience as Predictors of Grit in the Sandwich Generation

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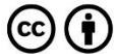
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ABSTRACT: The Sandwich Generation refers to individuals who simultaneously bear dual responsibilities, namely caring for elderly parents while raising children, which potentially exposes them to varying levels of psychological distress. This study aimed to examine the roles of psychological distress and resilience in predicting grit among the Sandwich Generation in Indonesia. Employed a quantitative approach with a linear regression design. The participants consisted of 400 individuals from the Sandwich Generation, selected through purposive sampling. The research instruments included the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and Short Grit Scale (Grit-S). The results supported the central hypothesis and the first minor hypothesis, but did not support the second minor hypothesis. Psychological distress and resilience jointly had a significant effect on grit among the Sandwich Generation in Indonesia ($F = 4.556$; $p = 0.011$). Partially, psychological distress significantly predicted grit ($\beta = -0.100$; $t = -2.589$; $p = 0.010$), while resilience did not show a significant effect on grit ($\beta = 0.030$; $t = 1.614$; $p = 0.107$). These findings highlight the importance of designing interventions that focus on adaptive management of psychological distress to sustain long-term perseverance among the Sandwich Generation. In contrast, resilience remains crucial as a buffer for emotional stability, even though it does not directly enhance grit.

INTRODUCTION

The Sandwich Generation phenomenon has increasingly attracted attention in the social domain due to its strong connection to individuals' psychological and social well-being. In this situation, adults often find themselves caught between the demands of caring for their children and those of their aging parents (Muhammad, 2022). They are responsible for providing care, financial support, and essential resources such as food, clothing, and housing for both generations at the same time. Becoming part of the Sandwich Generation is rarely a preferred choice, as the burden of these responsibilities is substantial and requires continuous support for two dependent groups simultaneously (Putri et al., 2022). This condition creates significant dual role pressures, especially for women who must balance employment, childcare, eldercare, and household duties. As a result, they need strong adaptive capacities and practical strategies to maintain their social well-being (Adi, 2018).

Statistics Indonesia (BPS) reported in 2020 that approximately 71 million people in Indonesia fall into the Sandwich Generation. Among them, about 8.4 million individuals live with and financially support extended family members beyond their immediate household (BPS, 2023). A

2022 Kompas survey found that members of the Sandwich Generation often come from lower-middle socioeconomic groups. According to the Pew Research Center, the Sandwich Generation refers to individuals who care for parents aged 65 and older while also supporting children under 18 or financially assisting adult children. In the United States, around 23 percent of the population falls into this category, while in Indonesia, a 2022 CNBC survey indicated that 48.7 percent of individuals in the productive age group (25 to 45 years old) are part of the Sandwich Generation and bear significant financial responsibilities for their families. The 2022 BPS report further shows that 44.6 percent of Indonesia's population falls within the productive age group, and that 77.82 percent of elderly household expenditures are funded by family members who are still working (Media Indonesia, 2024).

As further evidence of the importance of this topic, several studies and surveys indicate that the Sandwich Generation has become a significant demographic group within Indonesian society. Data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS) in 2023 show that older adults who live with family members fall into four main categories: 35,93 percent reside in multigenerational households, 33,18 percent live with their nuclear families, 20,85 percent live with a spouse, and 10,04 percent live independently without any family members in the household. In terms of financial support, nearly older adults, amounting to 82,99 percent, rely on income contributed by working household members. Additionally, 11,38 percent receive money or goods from external sources, 5,22 percent depend on their own retirement savings, and 0,41 percent are supported through investment income (Syufa'at et al., 2023). These conditions illustrate that many older adults remain economically dependent on their children, who often belong to the Sandwich Generation.

Individuals in the Sandwich Generation, who are simultaneously responsible for caring for aging parents and raising their own children, frequently struggle to maintain grit or long-term perseverance. This dual responsibility can lead to physical and mental exhaustion and role conflict, which diminishes their capacity to focus on personal goals (Ang, 2024). High levels of stress and insufficient social support further intensify these challenges and weaken their ability to adapt to ongoing demands (Wu et al., 2023). As a result, the grit of the Sandwich Generation is often hindered by the burdens of their daily responsibilities (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

Aligned with previous research, the researcher conducted a preliminary survey from 20–28 April 2025 involving 50 respondents categorized as Sandwich Generation individuals. Based on the completed questionnaires, nearly respondents demonstrated strong mental resilience and a high level of grit in carrying out their dual roles. A total of 23 respondents (46%) reported not easily feeling discouraged when facing obstacles, and another 23 respondents (46%) indicated similar tendencies. These findings suggest that most participants can confront pressure with a positive, persistent attitude. Furthermore, 23 respondents (46%) identified themselves as hardworking individuals who remain committed to completing their tasks, supported by another 23 respondents (46%) who reported comparable dedication, while 4 respondents (8%) were neutral. This pattern indicates that perseverance and consistency are key characteristics for most participants. On the other hand, several respondents expressed challenges in maintaining focus on long-term tasks. 19 respondents (38%) reported difficulty maintaining concentration on work requiring several months to complete. Nevertheless, another 19 respondents (38%) stated that new ideas or projects do not necessarily interfere with their ongoing responsibilities, whereas 14 respondents (28%) expressed uncertainty. Overall, these preliminary findings show that the Sandwich Generation demonstrates considerable perseverance and grit while simultaneously facing challenges related to long-term focus and consistency. This highlights the importance of further examining the psychological factors that may predict mental resilience and grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation as they navigate complex life pressures.

The Sandwich Generation refers to individuals who are responsible for caring for both their children and their aging parents simultaneously. This dual role creates a heavy burden that affects

their psychological and social well-being (Trisno & Harani, 2023). Although many members of this group demonstrate strong mental resilience and a high level of grit, they still encounter challenges in maintaining long-term focus and staying committed to demanding responsibilities. A recent study from University College London in 2025 reported that individuals who belong to the Sandwich Generation and provide intensive caregiving, defined as more than twenty hours per week, experience a noticeable decline in mental health. This decline includes increased psychological stress and decreased physical well-being, which can limit their ability to stay focused on long-term goals (Kompas, 2025).

According to Duckworth et al. (2007), grit is not merely about working hard; it is a combination of perseverance and passion that enables individuals to sustain effort over extended periods. Individuals with high grit not only exert short-term effort but also demonstrate enduring commitment to their goals, even in the face of failures or substantial difficulties (Calo et al., 2025). Grit encompasses two fundamental components. First, consistency of interests restores an individual's ability to maintain stable interests and long-term goals without being easily distracted by new ideas or pursuits. Second, perseverance of effort, which reflects an individual's capacity to persist despite challenges or setbacks, and to continue working diligently even under demanding circumstances (Duckworth, 2007). These two dimensions are particularly relevant to the Sandwich Generation, who must navigate continuous responsibilities and persistent pressure while fulfilling their dual caregiving roles.

Low levels of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation can negatively affect their psychological well-being and their ability to manage dual caregiving responsibilities. Individuals who are responsible for both their children and their aging parents often face challenges that place considerable pressure on their mental resilience (Woda & Pontoan, 2024). Without sufficient perseverance, they become more vulnerable to physical and mental exhaustion, which can reduce their capacity to stay focused on long-term goals and intensify stress, anxiety, and feelings of pressure (Clarke, 2020). These conditions make it increasingly difficult for them to maintain a healthy life balance (Lam, 2024). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) demonstrated that role conflict diminishes performance at work and in personal life, which, in turn, predicts grit levels. Burke also emphasized in 2017 that low perseverance may cause individuals to give up more easily, ultimately worsening their overall well-being.

High levels of grit in the Sandwich Generation bring substantial benefits, particularly for psychological well-being and the ability to manage dual responsibilities (Salsabila et al., 2024). Individuals with intense grit can endure demanding challenges, remain focused on long-term goals, and persist even when facing obstacles (Kwon, 2021). They are better equipped to cope with stress and emotional pressure and are more effective in balancing work and family demands. Duckworth and colleagues in 2007 reported that grit enhances a person's ability to endure difficulties and achieve long-term success. In the context of the Sandwich Generation, intense grit enables individuals to manage their dual caregiving roles more effectively, maintain a sense of balance, and reduce the sense of being overwhelmed by the demands of both work and caregiving (Timmers & Lengeler, 2022). With well-developed grit, members of the Sandwich Generation are better able to handle their responsibilities and achieve a more stable, healthier life balance (Tiwari & Verma, 2023).

To understand how grit is formed and developed, it is essential to examine the factors that predict it. These factors include psychological characteristics, environmental conditions, mindsets, behaviors, and positive habits that collectively support the pursuit of long-term goals. They also foster optimism and perseverance, which play a crucial role in helping individuals view failure as an opportunity for learning while maintaining persistence and consistency in working toward long-term objectives (Reysen et al., 2019; Schimschal et al., 2020; Ramadina and Azis, 2024). Among the many predictors of grit, this study focuses on psychological distress and resilience because both have been

identified as significant predictors. To understand their influence, it is necessary to examine the underlying components that shape psychological distress and resilience.

Psychological distress and resilience are considered direct predictors of an individual's ability to sustain grit, especially when facing significant life challenges (Pangngay, 2024). Psychological distress may affect emotional stability and motivation, ultimately diminishing perseverance toward long-term goals. In contrast, resilience reflects the capacity to recover after experiencing difficulties and is therefore essential for maintaining grit (Moss-Pech et al., 2021).

Together, psychological distress and resilience serve as strong predictors of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation who must manage demanding life responsibilities and cope with dual caregiving burdens. Psychological distress such as stress, depression, and anxiety often arise from the substantial challenges faced by members of the Sandwich Generation, including simultaneously caring for aging parents and raising children (Marlow et al., 2022). Meanwhile, resilience serves as a psychological buffer, helping individuals adapt and recover after adversity (Biggs et al., 2023). Individuals with lower levels of psychological distress and higher levels of resilience are more likely to show stronger grit and sustained perseverance (Rao et al., 2024).

Psychological distress refers to a spectrum of emotional experiences that include anxiety, depression, anger, and feelings of helplessness that arise from psychological pressure (Brandstätter and Bernecker, 2021). According to Kessler et al. (2002), psychological distress can influence a person's emotions, cognition, and behavior, including increased anxiety, depressive symptoms, and feelings of worthlessness. Within the context of the Sandwich Generation, the dual demands of caring for both aging parents and children may trigger heightened anxiety and depressive symptoms, which undermine mental endurance and reduce the ability to persist through long-term challenges. This condition can also lower grit, as individuals struggle to maintain focus and perseverance in fulfilling their caregiving responsibilities (Burke, 2017; Owsiany et al., 2023).

Research shows that psychological distress among members of the Sandwich Generation is often intensified by the pressure of balancing these responsibilities, which negatively affects their overall well-being (Sudarji et al., 2022). This distress may manifest as emotional exhaustion, feelings of isolation, and declines in physical health, all of which are commonly experienced by individuals in this group (Shi et al., 2024). Continuous pressure can also lead to sleep disturbances and a significant decrease in quality of life, limiting their ability to manage dual caregiving roles effectively (Fenstermacher et al., 2022). High levels of psychological distress may weaken grit, particularly among those responsible for both childcare and eldercare. Emotional strain, such as anxiety and depression, can leave individuals feeling overwhelmed, draining their energy, and diminishing their motivation to pursue long-term goals. These factors hinder grit by making it difficult for individuals to stay focused and maintain persistence (Chirkina, 2023). Several studies have shown that psychological distress can reduce grit, as individuals experiencing distress often feel overburdened and struggle to sustain effort toward long-term objectives. Burke (2017) notes that members of the Sandwich Generation who experience elevated emotional stress often struggle to maintain perseverance when confronted with life challenges.

On the other hand, low psychological distress among individuals in the Sandwich Generation may foster perseverance. Lower levels of distress enable individuals to face life challenges more effectively and manage their dual caregiving responsibilities. This condition can strengthen grit, particularly when individuals employ effective coping strategies that help them stay focused on long-term goals despite ongoing difficulties (Burke, 2017; Owsiany, 2023). Emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies used to manage distress can also help members of the Sandwich Generation navigate their daily challenges, reduce emotional strain, and enhance both their mental resilience and perseverance when confronted with adversity (Monica et al., 2023).

High psychological distress, such as anxiety and depression, generally undermines grit by diminishing an individual's focus, energy, and motivation to pursue long-term goals (Musumari et

al., 2018). Persistent emotional strain can interfere with cognitive functioning and weaken the capacity to remain committed in the face of prolonged challenges. However, some studies indicate that psychological distress may also contribute to the development of grit when individuals employ adaptive coping strategies and strengthen their resilience in response to adversity. In such circumstances, distress catalyzes growth, enabling individuals to cultivate persistence and maintain goal-directed effort despite ongoing difficulties (Cheng & Santos-Lozada, 2024).

Several studies indicate that psychological distress can diminish grit because individuals who experience high levels of distress often feel overwhelmed and lose the motivation needed to persist toward long-term goals. Burke (2017) notes that members of the Sandwich Generation who face heightened emotional stress frequently struggle to maintain perseverance when confronted with demanding life circumstances. Conversely, other research highlights that psychological distress may also strengthen grit when individuals make out to respond to it in a healthy and adaptive manner (Moss-Pech et al., 2021). Owsiany et al. (2023) explain that distress experienced by family caregivers can motivate them to develop more effective coping strategies and enhance their resilience, which ultimately reinforces their grit. These findings suggest that the influence of distress on grit is complex and depends largely on how individuals manage the pressure they encounter and the degree of resilience they possess.

In addition to psychological distress, resilience is an important factor examined in this study because it helps members of the Sandwich Generation navigate multifaceted pressures. According to Connor and Davidson (2003), resilience refers to the capacity to withstand, adapt to, and recover from stress and adversity. This construct is highly relevant to the challenges faced by the Sandwich Generation, who must balance caring for aging parents and supporting their children. Resilience enables them to endure and function effectively despite ongoing pressure (Paczkowski, 2020), making it a key component in sustaining their well-being and perseverance.

The development of resilience encompasses five core dimensions (Connor & Davidson, 2003). First, personal competence, high standards, and tenacity refer to an individual's confidence in their abilities, willingness to uphold high expectations, and persistence in overcoming obstacles. Second, trust in one's instincts, tolerance of negative emotions, and strengthening through stress involve relying on intuition, managing adverse emotional experiences, and learning from stressful events. Third, a positive acceptance of change and secure relationships reflects one's openness to adaptation and the benefits of supportive interpersonal connections. Fourth, control over one's environment concerns the perception of having agency and influence over life circumstances. Fifth, spiritual influences highlight the role of spirituality in providing emotional strength amid significant pressures.

When members of the Sandwich Generation exhibit low levels of resilience, they become more vulnerable to emotional strain and fatigue stemming from their dual caregiving responsibilities for both children and aging parents (Ju et al., 2024). Individuals with poor resilience are more susceptible to emotional stress, exhaustion, and anxiety, which hinders their ability to cope with long-term challenges. They struggle to regulate pressure, respond constructively to setbacks, and adapt to changing demands, making them more easily overwhelmed (Sudarji et al., 2022). As a result, both their physical and psychological well-being are compromised, exacerbating their difficulties. Song et al., (2021) found that low resilience significantly increases levels of anxiety and depression, underscoring the importance of strengthening resilience to help the Sandwich Generation manage their dual roles more effectively.

Resilience also plays a significant role in strengthening grit, particularly among members of the Sandwich Generation who simultaneously care for both children and elderly parents. Individuals with high resilience are better able to manage stress, maintain balance between work and family responsibilities, and stay focused on long-term goals (Fatmasari & Ambarwati, 2024). Studies indicate that resilience in this population, which often faces considerable financial and emotional

strain, is often characterized by personal competence, optimism, and spiritual grounding (Dewi & Hamzah, 2019). In practice, resilience requires strong adaptive capacity, positive thinking, and perseverance, all of which contribute to the development of grit as individuals navigate complex life pressures (Stepanovic, 2024). Furthermore, direct experiences of hardship can reinforce psychological resilience and foster greater grit among members of the Sandwich Generation (Asy'syifa & Surjaningrum, 2023).

Resilience plays an essential role in shaping grit, especially for individuals in the Sandwich Generation who experience the dual pressures of caring for both their children and their elderly parents. As the ability to adapt and manage stress, resilience becomes essential for helping individuals face and tolerate these demanding challenges. Those with higher resilience tend to show stronger grit because they are better able to regulate emotional pressure and remain focused on long-term goals. Resilience also supports sustained motivation and reduces the likelihood of giving up, allowing individuals to remain effective in the face of various difficulties (Musso et al., 2019; Mustaza and Kutty, 2022). This pattern shows that resilience helps build the mental strength needed to withstand adversity, while grit encourages individuals to keep striving toward their goals despite obstacles. This interaction is significant given the heavy demands typically experienced by the Sandwich Generation (Georgoulas and Kelly, 2019).

Several studies have demonstrated that resilience positively influences grit, particularly among individuals facing substantial life pressures. Baylon et al. (2024) found that individuals with higher levels of resilience tend to exhibit greater grit because they can persist through challenges and maintain focus on long-term goals despite significant difficulties. However, Owsiany et al. (2023) reported that although resilience can enhance an individual's capacity to withstand stress, not all highly resilient individuals necessarily develop high levels of grit. This finding highlights the complexity of the relationship between resilience and grit, suggesting that their interaction may depend on personal context, life experiences, and the specific stressors individuals encounter.

This research is vital because it provides a deeper understanding of psychological factors, namely psychological distress and resilience, which act as predictors of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. This topic was chosen because the Sandwich Generation, who face the responsibility of caring for elderly parents while raising children, often experience a double burden and high emotional pressure, yet still receive limited attention in studies related to mental resilience and grit. The focus of this study is on the specific challenges the Sandwich Generation faces in managing their daily roles. Through this approach, the study is expected to provide new insights into how individuals with dual responsibilities develop long-term perseverance in stressful situations and to identify strategies that can strengthen their resilience in the face of complex life demands.

Rationale of the Study

Previous research by Musumari et al. (2018) indicated that grit is negatively associated with depression and anxiety, where individuals with high levels of grit tend to have better mental health compared to those with low grit. Furthermore, Moss-Pech et al. (2021) found that hope can mitigate the negative impact of psychological distress on goal progress, allowing individuals with high distress to maintain focus if adaptive coping mechanisms are in place. These findings are consistent with the study by Musso et al. (2019), which emphasized that resilience is significantly related to grit, as individuals with high resilience make it out of heavy stress while maintaining long-term perseverance. In addition, the present study shows that psychological distress and resilience together act as significant predictors of grit in the Sandwich Generation ($F = 4.556$; $p = 0.011$). Partially, psychological distress was found to be a significant predictor ($t = -2.589$; $p = 0.010$), whereas resilience was not significant ($t = 1.614$; $p = 0.107$).

Given the urgency of this issue, previous studies have highlighted factors that influence grit, such as psychological distress and resilience. However, few studies have specifically examined these

two factors simultaneously as predictors of grit in the Sandwich Generation in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to explore this dynamic. The results are expected to provide not only new theoretical contributions but also practical insights for individuals, counsellors, and relevant stakeholders to support the Sandwich Generation in maintaining long-term perseverance amid the dual burdens of life.

Research Objective and Hypothesis

This study aims to examine the extent to which psychological distress and resilience predict grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. Psychological distress and resilience jointly predict grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. Psychological distress is a significant predictor of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. Resilience is a significant predictor of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation.

METHODS

Participants

The participants in this study were individuals from the Sandwich Generation across Indonesia. Sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, with inclusion criteria of being part of the Sandwich Generation, resulting in a total of 400 participants.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Research Participants

Classification	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	210	35,3%
	Female	190	47,5%
Age	30-35 years	223	28%
	36-40 years	261	33%
	41-45 years	308	39%
	46-50 years	74	18,5%
Region of Origin	Sumatera	40	10%
	Jawa	64	16%
	Kalimantan	71	17,8%
	Bali	65	16,3%
	Nusa Tenggara	77	19,3%
	Sulawesi	37	9,3%
	Maluku	32	8%
	Papua	14	3,5%
Length of Stay	< 1 year	21	5,3%
	1-5 years	104	26%
	6-10 years	142	35,5%
	11-15 years	68	17%
	16-20 years	37	9,3%
	> 20 years	28	7%

Research Procedure

Data collection in this study was conducted using three psychological scales, namely the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), and the Short Grit Scale (Grit-S). Before the scales were distributed, construct validity and content validity were assessed through expert judgment by three experts. The research design was then presented to a review team for feasibility evaluation and subsequently pilot-tested on 30 individuals from the

Sandwich Generation outside the main participants. The next step involved obtaining permission and preparing informed consent forms. This study received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang with reference number E.6.m/333/KE-FPsi-UMM/VI/2025. The study was conducted using questionnaires distributed via Google Form. Data collection took place from June 13, 2025, to July 21, 2025. Before completing the questionnaires, participants provided informed consent to confirm their willingness to participate.

Instruments

Psychological Distress Scale

Psychological distress was measured using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) from Kessler et al. (2002). This scale has been adapted into Indonesian by Tran et al. (2019) through translation, cultural verification, limited pilot testing, and back-translation. The K10 consists of 10 items on a five-point Likert scale: Never (TP), Rarely (J), Sometimes (KK), Often (S), and Always (SL). Based on the reliability test, the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.819, indicating good reliability.

Resilience Scale

Resilience was measured using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) from Connor and Davidson (2003). The scale has been adapted into Indonesian by Octaryani and Baudin (2017) and consists of 35 items. This instrument uses a four-point Likert scale, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS). The reliability test showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.948, indicating excellent reliability.

Grit Scale

Grit was measured using the Short Grit Scale (Grit-S) from Duckworth and Quinn (2009), which has been adapted into Indonesian by Priyohadi et al. (2019). The scale consists of 8 items divided into two dimensions: perseverance (effort persistence) and passion (consistency of long-term interests). The instrument uses a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Neutral (N), Disagree (TD), and Strongly Disagree (STS). The reliability test showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.776, indicating acceptable reliability.

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique in this study employed multiple linear regression to examine the role of psychological distress and resilience as predictors of grit. Before hypothesis testing, assumption tests were conducted, including tests of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25 for Windows.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis involving 400 participants are presented in Table 4.2. The psychological distress variable had a minimum score of 10, a maximum score of 49, a mean of 22,75, and a standard deviation of 5,887. The resilience variable had a minimum score of 62, a maximum score of 137, a mean of 105,07, and a standard deviation of 12,324. The grit variable had a minimum score of 9, a maximum score of 38, a mean of 26,05, and a standard deviation of 4,588.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Psychological Distress	400	10	49	22,75	6,887
Resilience	400	62	137	105,07	12,324
Grit	400	9	38	26,05	4,588

Normality Test

The results of the normality test showed that the unstandardized residual Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KSZ) value was 0,619, with a p-value of 0,838 ($p > 0,05$). This indicates that the data in this study were normally distributed.

Linearity Test

Based on the linearity test between the psychological distress and grit variables in the Sandwich Generation, the F linearity value was 7,015 with a significance of 0,008 ($p < 0,05$), indicating a linear relationship between the two variables. Meanwhile, the linearity test between the resilience and grit variables resulted in an F deviation from linearity value of 1,237 with a significance of 0,131 ($p > 0,05$), indicating that the relationship between these variables was also linear.

Multicollinearity Test

The results of the multicollinearity test showed that the psychological distress and resilience variables had tolerance values greater than 0,10 and VIF values less than 10, indicating no multicollinearity among the variables.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test showed that the data points were randomly scattered, without a clear pattern, and were distributed above and below the Y-axis zero line. This indicates that there was no heteroscedasticity. Therefore, the regression model can be used to predict psychological distress and resilience variables in the Sandwich Generation based on the independent variable, grit.

Hypothesis Testing

The results of the hypothesis test shown in Table 3 indicate that psychological distress was significantly negatively correlated with grit ($r = -0,127$; $p < 0,01$). Meanwhile, resilience was not significantly correlated with grit ($r = 0,077$; $p > 0,01$).

Table 3. Correlation Test

	1	2	3
Psychological Distress	1		
Resilience	0,024	1	
Grit	-0,127**	0,077	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (1-tailed).

Based on Table 4, psychological distress and resilience together serve as predictors of grit.

Table 4. Results of the Simple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,150 ^a	0,022	0,018	4,527

Based on Table 5, the F value was 4,556 with a significance of 0,011 ($p < 0,05$), indicating that psychological distress and resilience together significantly predict grit.

Table 5. Simple Regression Analysis: Significance of the F-Value

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	186,755	2	93,377	4,556	0,011 ^a
	Residual	8137,343	397	20,497		
	Total	8324,097	399			

Based on Table 6, the predictive coefficient between psychological distress and grit was -0,100 with a significance value of 0,010 ($p < 0,05$), indicating that psychological distress is a significant predictor of grit. Meanwhile, the coefficient between resilience and grit was 0,030 with a significance value of 0,107 ($p > 0,05$), indicating that resilience is not a significant predictor of grit.

Table 6. Regression Results: Beta Coefficient and t-Value

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients β	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	25,196	2,115		11,912	0,000
	<i>Psychological distress</i>	-0,100	0,039	-0,129	-2,589	0,010
	Resilience	0,030	0,018	0,080	1,614	0,107

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the major hypothesis was supported: psychological distress and resilience together serve as significant predictors of grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. These findings underscore that perseverance in achieving long-term goals is influenced by the combination of psychological pressure and an individual's capacity to withstand such stress. Members of the Sandwich Generation, who often face dual demands from family and work, tend to experience psychological distress that can affect their emotional stability and motivation to maintain focus on their goals (Pangngay, 2024; Burke, 2017; Duckworth et al., 2007). High psychological distress has the potential to reduce grit because it can weaken emotional resilience and diminish self-regulation abilities.

However, under certain conditions, psychological distress may trigger adaptive strategies, enabling individuals to persevere when they manage stress effectively (Owsiany et al., 2023; Moss-Pech et al., 2021). Similarly, resilience plays a vital role in supporting grit. Individuals with high psychological resilience tend to sustain long-term focus and motivation despite facing complex life challenges. This indicates that the ability to recover from pressure and adapt is a key factor in helping the Sandwich Generation remain consistent in pursuing their goals (Fatmasari & Ambarwati, 2024; Musso et al., 2019). Both independent variables were proven to be significant in explaining grit among the Sandwich Generation in Indonesia. These findings confirm that the combination of psychological pressure and adaptive capacity jointly predicts the perseverance of Sandwich Generation individuals in achieving long-term goals.

Based on the partial analysis, psychological distress was found to be a significant predictor of grit among the Sandwich Generation, supporting the minor hypothesis. In other words, the higher the level of psychological distress experienced by an individual, the lower their perseverance in maintaining long-term goals. This is consistent with the view that distress can disrupt self-regulation,

trigger emotional exhaustion, and reduce an individual's focus and motivation in achieving their goals (Fresco, 2022). Among the Sandwich Generation, psychological distress often arises due to dual demands from family and work, thereby affecting their ability to sustain perseverance (Pashazade et al., 2023). This condition indicates that individuals who are unable to manage distress effectively tend to face difficulties in maintaining consistency and commitment to long-term goals (Rahayu & Rifayani, 2024). Therefore, managing psychological distress becomes a crucial factor in supporting the perseverance and consistency of the Sandwich Generation, while also helping them develop adaptive strategies to remain productive and handle dual responsibilities effectively. These findings emphasize that understanding and managing distress is not only relevant to emotional well-being but also to the development of perseverance and long-term commitment in daily life.

In contrast to psychological distress, which was found to be a significant predictor of grit, the partial analysis indicates that resilience does not serve as a significant predictor of grit. These findings show that the minor hypothesis proposed in this study is rejected, meaning that resilience does not significantly predict grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. In this context, the resilience possessed by members of the Sandwich Generation may function more to maintain emotional stability and manage daily pressures rather than to increase sustained effort toward long term goals (Ferris, 2021). In other words, strong psychological endurance does not necessarily lead to a consistent drive to persist toward the same goals over an extended period (Owsiany et al., 2023). This study also suggests that the five dimensions of resilience described by Connor and Davidson (2003), namely personal competence, high standards and tenacity, trust in one's instincts, tolerance of negative affect and the strengthening effects of stress, positive acceptance of change and secure relationships, control, and spiritual influences, do not directly contribute to increasing grit among individuals in the Sandwich Generation. Each of these dimensions may help individuals withstand pressure, maintain emotional balance, and cope with stress, yet they do not consistently enhance perseverance or motivation to achieve long term goals. In essence, resilience functions more as an internal support that enables individuals to endure difficult situations rather than as a primary factor that drives sustained persistence and focus on long term targets (Stepanovic, 2024).

Considering these findings, it is crucial to provide relevant responses to support the Sandwich Generation in maintaining long-term perseverance and coping with psychological stress. The results indicate that high levels of psychological distress tend to reduce individuals' perseverance in achieving long-term goals. However, under certain conditions, the psychological stress experienced may also stimulate the development of adaptive strategies, enabling individuals to maintain focus and commitment to their objectives. At the same time, resilience remains essential for sustaining emotional stability and psychological endurance, even though it does not directly enhance grit. Educational programs focusing on stress management, self-control reinforcement, and the cultivation of life meaning can help individuals remain persistent and consistent in managing dual responsibilities. Nevertheless, most interventions targeting grit enhancement have been developed in Western countries, whereas in Asia, including Indonesia, programs specifically designed to strengthen the perseverance of individuals handling dual family responsibilities are still very limited (Calo et al., 2024). Contextually and locally tailored interventions are therefore highly necessary to prevent declines in psychological functioning and to maintain sustainable productive role performance.

Overall, this study provides a novel contribution to the understanding of grit by highlighting the role of internal factors, particularly psychological distress and resilience. Effective interventions should focus on the adaptive utilization of psychological stress, enabling the Sandwich Generation to maintain long-term perseverance and commitment in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities (Moss-Pech et al., 2021; Ubaidah et al., 2024).

However, this study also has several limitations. First, the quantitative approach employed in this research does not capture the subjective experiences or social contexts of everyone. Second,

all measurement instruments used were adaptations from foreign cultures, which may lead to differences in perception or interpretation of the items by the Sandwich Generation in Indonesia. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ mixed-methods or qualitative approaches to capture more in-depth dynamics and to develop measurement instruments that are culturally and contextually appropriate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed. First, for Sandwich Generation individuals, it is important to adaptively utilize psychological pressure by developing healthy coping strategies, such as relaxation techniques, time management, clear prioritization, and stress management, so that the demands of dual roles do not hinder the achievement of long-term goals. Second, for psychology practitioners, counselors, and community empowerment institutions, it is recommended to design locally based intervention programs that integrate emotional regulation training, the cultivation of life meaning, and the enhancement of spirituality. These programs are expected to strengthen grit and perseverance among individuals in the Sandwich Generation within the Indonesian cultural context. Third, for government authorities and policymakers, it is crucial to facilitate affordable mental health services, stress management training, and public education regarding the dual roles of the Sandwich Generation. Policy supports that eases access to services and supportive communities can serve as preventive measures against declines in psychological functioning. Fourth, for future researchers, it is suggested that they conduct further studies by considering additional variables. Researchers may also adopt mixed-methods or qualitative designs to capture the subjective dynamics of Sandwich Generation individuals more comprehensively, as well as to develop culturally appropriate measurement instruments.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that psychological distress and resilience together serve as significant predictors of grit among Sandwich Generation individuals in Indonesia. The findings indicate that the combination of psychological pressure and adaptive capacity influences perseverance in achieving long-term goals. Psychological distress was found to be a significant negative predictor of grit, whereas resilience was not.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

All authors were directly involved in this study, from the preparation of the research design, the implementation of the study, to the writing of the full manuscript. All authors have also read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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