

An Exploration of Interpersonal Intelligence (NTER) Levels Among Undergraduate University Entrants Students

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal intelligence (NTER) stands for the skill to control the meanings of other people; To communicate with them, and to react to them positively. At university, this skill led to an ability to recognize the emotional states of other people, the purposes for their actions, and their viewpoints. Having interpersonal intelligence as a university student will enable one to be actively involved in group discussions, convey ideas clearly, and foster good relationships with classmates and professors. Moreover, it fosters qualities such as leadership, social adaptability, and group learning. This paper explored levels of Interpersonal intelligence amongst undergraduate students enrolled in Punjab, Pakistani universities, and a gender- & residence-based comparison was made. Students from University of Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan were selected conveniently. Data was obtained using a self-report checklist of 10 items based on Armstrong's (1993) multiple intelligence checklists (MIC), which was pilot tested, and the Cronbach alpha value was found 0.89. Major findings indicated that the majority of students have strong interpersonal intelligence, excelling in social skills like giving advice, avoiding arguments, and collaborating with others. Therefore, there was a significant difference between female and male students. Female students have better interpersonal intelligence than male students, and both groups were equivalent in broader and day scholar students in this area.

Keyword: *Interpersonal Intelligence, Multiple Intelligence (MI), Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences.*

INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal intelligence, which is one of the key elements of emotional intelligence, is especially significant in higher education and professional life. Higher education places a great deal of importance on the ability to communicate, empathize, and interact socially. These are the skills that lead to the personal involvement of students and their academic success. For example, the use of emotional intelligence in educational curricula has been linked to the improvement of student motivation and well-being, the creation of a learning environment that is supportive of holistic development, and the overall quality of the education offered (Zulqaidah et al., 2025; Mauroof & Mustafa, 2025). Those teachers who possess a lot of people skills can effectively create classrooms where all are included, deal with conflicts in the best possible manner, and are responsive to different student needs. As a result, there is a significant improvement in the quality of education offered (Sutanti & Wardan, 2024). Interpersonal intelligence is equally important in the workplace. It contributes to the success of the whole organization by making communication and cooperation effective, which are both necessary for leadership and teamwork (Fadhlan et al., n.d.). Even though communication through digital means has become quite

common, personal interactions still play an especially key role, and people skills are necessary for managing people and getting career success (Zhang, 2018). For instance, emotional intelligence is one of the key qualities in the medical sector when it comes to interaction with patients, as it allows doctors and other healthcare professionals to control their emotions and communicate clearly, which in the end leads to better patient care (університет et al., 2024). But still, understanding the link between interpersonal intelligence and professional abilities is not easy. According to a nursing student study, there is no direct significant correlation between interpersonal intelligence and professionalism, thus suggesting that other elements may also contribute to success in the professional field (Pari et al., 2023). On the other hand, the acquisition of interpersonal skills in all social classes, e.g., education and professional ones, is highly recommended as it helps to develop communication, empathy, and social interaction, which are the cornerstones of both personal and organizational growth (Seneru et al., n.d.; Marín, 2022). Hence, investing in interpersonal intelligence through education and training is the right way to impart individuals with the skills of successfully managing the intricacies of modern academic and professional environments.

Moreover, one of the major studies shows that Interpersonal intelligence is one of the main factors that influence and improve communication, collaboration, and leadership among university students. One of the students' most important skills is the development of people skills, especially when it comes to the means of communication, action means, and professional growth. Students who take courses that focus on building these skills, such as the People Skills (KI) course, gain communication, collaboration, and leadership through such firsthand activities as community service projects and presentations, which are significantly incorporated into their academic and professional success (Astuti et al., 2025). In the context of campus organizations, good interpersonal communication is necessary for leadership, as it not only makes the group more united but also increases the participation of the members and the successful implementation of work programs. Some of the strategies that help to create a good organizational culture in terms of democracy and productivity are active listening and adaptive communication (Kusuma et al., 2025). Additionally, interpersonal intelligence, consisting of empathy, pro-social attitudes, and effective problem-solving, is regarded as a major factor in the success of an organization in higher education, which means that it is the core or the basis of both personal and social competence (Fadhlan et al., n.d.). Emotional intelligence (EI) is the attribute that underlies interpersonal communication the most, and it is supported by studies that have found a positive correlation between EI levels and the adaptive and cooperative behaviors of the students, which in turn enhances their communication effectiveness (Seneru et al., n.d.). It is suggested that the incorporation of emotional intelligence (EI) into the educational curriculum could improve the quality of social interactions, ease stress and motivate the students, thereby impacting their achievement in academics and mental health (Zulqaidah et al., 2025). Besides, instructing students emotional and social communication skills is the basis for student leadership since these skills are the underlying characteristics of the vast range of competencies that are needed for good leadership (Riggio, 2024). Emotional intelligence interventions have the power to make a significant difference to the people skills of the students, which will then affect the behavior of the leader and the performance of the team, and these are the factors that employers consider most (Love, 2014). The interdependence of EI, social behavior, and collaboration skills is strong, as evidenced by the findings of several studies that imply such a close relationship between these factors and by the emphasis given to EI in the context of collaborative learning environments (Afif & Fauzi, 2022). Similarly, social intelligence is a factor in university management where effective communication among the various players is essential for leadership and the organization's success. Certainly, the lack of effective communication skills among the managers would lead to ineffective leadership, thus allowing the leaders to build trust, connect, and even inspire the teams to attain the organizational goals ("Role of Interpersonal Communication in E...", 2023).

Definition of Terms

Intelligence

The mental ability or skill to think logically, acquire and apply knowledge and skills in certain areas called intelligence.

Multiple Intelligence

Intelligence is defined as a biopsychological potential to process information, activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create valuable products. Multiple intelligences encompass various abilities, each with distinct neural architectures, contributing to a person's cognitive and emotional engagement (Shearer, 2018).

Interpersonal Intelligence (NTER)

This enshrines social intelligence, that is, being able to understand and relate to others well. People with high intelligence in this area possess social skills and good empathy, and they have high collaboration and productivity capabilities in terms of leadership.

Entrants' Student

The term "Entrants Student" refers to a student who is newly entering or joining an educational institution, program, or level of study. This term is often used in the context of students transitioning from one educational stage to another, such as moving from high school to college or university or starting a new academic program.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement refers to actual performance of the students at the end of course of study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, interpersonal intelligence is the skill to recognize and to have a good relationship with others easily. The people who possess this kind of intelligence can do a lot of things in communication and socialization because they understand the moods, characters, and even the dreams of the people around them (Davis et al., 2011; Petrides, 2013). The theory of Gardner, first put forth in the late 1970s and 1980s, asserts that intelligence is not a unitary condition but rather a summation of several intelligences that are independent of one another and each of them plays a role in an individual's ability to either solve problems or create things that are appreciated by society (Davis et al., 2011; Cavas & Çavaş, 2020). Interpersonal intelligence has a key role in education because it encourages teamwork, understanding, and solving disagreements among learners, as shown in research conducted on junior high students' learning of math skills (Dien & Wustqa, 2018). This kind of intelligence is not limited to social activities only; it also encompasses recognizing the thoughts and goals of others, which are necessary for collaboration and leading (Petrides, 2013). The growth of interpersonal intelligence is highly advocated in preschool learning as it allows the kids to explore the world around them and create peaceful connections (Fauziaturromah & Listiana, n.d.). Gardner's broader theory has been an especially crucial factor in changing the education system, and teachers have been prompted to see and develop the different skills that the students have aside from the classic ones like reading and writing and solving math problems (Emst-Slavit, 2001). This approach goes against the traditional view of intelligence as a single quality that can be measured and is, in fact, a powerful argument for understanding the human being in terms of his or her whole range of capabilities, which include interpersonal skills as the most important part (Tirri et al., 2013).

Interpersonal intelligence, emotional intelligence (EI), and social skills are analogous in some ways, yet different in others, and all three aspects contribute to a person's ability to deal with social situations. Interpersonal intelligence, as defined by a systematic review, is about the capacity of recognizing and treating the person with understanding and kindness, and it also includes empathic skills, social skills, and controlling relationships (Torres, 2025). Emotional intelligence, in contrast, contains a wider variety of skills, which encompasses the perception, understanding, and regulation of emotions in oneself and others, as well as the ease of coming and going among people and even in one's own life (Basu & Mermillod, 2011; L & Laxmi, 2025). Emotional intelligence (EI) is part of interpersonal intelligence in its composition through empathy and social skills; in addition, it requires an intrapersonal skill such as self-awareness and emotional regulation (Roy, 2023). Social skills that are common to both interpersonal intelligence and EI and are part of them denote general behaviors deemed necessary to have successful social interactions, like effective communication, cooperation, and assertiveness (Basu & Mermillod, 2011). The empirical evidence further emphasizes the difference between these constructs; for example, EI and interpersonal intelligence show positive correlations, but they also predict different results; EI, for instance, has mental health outcomes as a better predictor than social interest (Chamarro & Oberst, 2012). Besides, interpersonal intelligence can be associated with social satisfaction and adaptation, but at the same time, it is different from EI in the sense that it focuses on social interactions and not on emotional processing (Torres, 2025). The connection and distinctions among these constructions reveal the complexity of social-emotional functioning and the necessity for precise measurement tools to evaluate the unique contributions of each construct to personal and social success (Schutte & Malouff, 1999; Abrahams et al., 2019). The distinctions outlined in this paper are pivotal in the formulation of specific interventions in both educational and professional settings to improve social-emotional learning and interpersonal effectiveness (Waiswa et al., 2024).

Theoretical Perspectives

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) has made an impact on higher education that was so big as to overturn the long-established concept of intelligence, while at the same time opening a much more comprehensive and varied approach to the entire process of teaching and learning. Among these intelligences, he counted the linguistic, logical-mathematical, and interpersonal ones and said that people had a mixture of cognitive and non-cognitive capabilities that were different from one another and all of them should be acknowledged and developed in the schools (Abdallah, 2008; Sharma, 2023). The application of the MI framework in higher education has spanned various disciplines, such as construction management, where students' self-assessment uncovered dominant kinesthetic and logical-mathematical intelligences; thus, educators decided to introduce more practical and teamwork-based learning experiences to the students for the purpose of developing their linguistic capacity (Barnes, 2025). In the same vein, the MI theory has been advocated around legal education as a mechanism for creating more inclusive environments through the acknowledgement of the different capabilities of the students and the development of a wide range of skills that are essential for successful lawyering (Dauphinais, 2005). The amalgamation of MI theory with contemporary technologies, for instance, Artificial Intelligence (AI), has opened newer areas of its application, especially in language teaching, where AI tools offer personalized feedback and provide interactive learning environments that comply with the MI principles (Pitychoutis & Rawahi, 2025). The theory, despite its disruptive potential, still meets challenges in being adopted in the higher education sector, such as a lack of knowledge among teachers and the issue of providing sufficient resources for the support of multiple intelligences (Walela, 2024). Nonetheless, several studies support the idea that MI strategies can bring about comprehensive growth of students' cognitive, emotional, social, and physical aspects even when the primary impact on academic performance is not very noticeable (Beriña, 2025). The theory has also been put into practice through homework design, where academic performance and student engagement have improved by assigning different activities based on intelligence (Zagkotas, 2025). To sum up, Gardner's MI framework leads to a complete transformation of educational practices, from being the traditional teacher-centered approach to a more personalized and inclusive one, acknowledging and nurturing the various strengths of students which in return causes their overall development and well-being (Dezsó et al., 2023). Research that looked at the interpersonal intelligence of secondary and university students

indicated that there is a very complicated interaction between emotional intelligence (EI), academic achievement, and social life. A cross-temporal meta-analysis revealed that while the overall trait EI of Western university students has not changed significantly over the past 17 years, the development of skills in well-being, self-control, and emotionality has declined. This might be interpreted as a reflection of the current trend of society becoming more individualistic and hence, more dependent on digital communication (Khan et al., 2021). On the contrary, emotionally intelligent, and socially skilled gifted adolescents consider themselves competent in establishing and maintaining relationships with their peers, but their social self-concept is less favorable when compared with their academic self-concept. Moreover, gender and academic acceleration affect these views as the girls and the accelerated students tend to report better people skills (Lee et al., 2012). Emotional intelligence has been permanently correlated with academic success; thus, some researchers claim that both emotional and spiritual intelligence are significant predictors of student success (Zhou et al., 2024). In addition, EI is related to the development of collaborative critical thinking skills, as understanding and controlling one's feelings are the factors that increase the performance of the team (Dimitrijević et al., 2025). Meta-analyses have proven that EI, particularly ability EI, is a vital predictor of academic performance, and it affects the outcomes through the channels of emotion regulation and social relationship building (MacCann et al., 2020).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is considered as a predictor of both cognitive and emotional engagement in the higher education sector, which means that the increase of EI would eventually escalate the students' engagement and performance (Maguire et al., 2017). It is common for students who are active in extracurricular activities to be the ones with better developed people skills; hence, the students' social and emotional characteristics may be positively impacted by their participation in these activities (Rubin et al., 2002). When it comes to medical education, the EI trait is considered an indicator of people skills; however, the link with the selection criteria is still not clarified (Carr, 2009). Furthermore, EI components like emotional appraisal and emotion utilization are found to correlate with happiness; hence, it could be inferred that the cultivation of these dimensions would lead to an enhancement of the students' psychological well-being and social skills (Platsidou, 2013). In sum, all these studies confirm the necessity of emotional intelligence as a main factor in the development of people's skills and in the process of achieving academic success among high school and college students.

Interpersonal intelligence, considered emotional intelligence (EI), is one of the major factors affecting academic performance, collaboration, and leadership. EI is the major foundation for producing great leaders in higher education since it includes traits like empathy, self-control, and the ability to motivate others that are important for academic leadership (Parrish, 2015). In the context of teamwork, leaders who possess emotional intelligence motivate team members to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors, thereby increasing the overall performance of the team in environments that are quite dynamic and sometimes even affected by global crises (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). The linkage of intelligence and leadership. Moreover, the same study showed that one of the main effects of the positive psychological traits on academic success through emotional intelligence was stress regulation. That is, the improvement of emotional skills will be reflected in the psychological well-being and the proper performance of the students (Ye et al., 2024). The outcome of the reviews is that emotional intelligence is a typical feature of students with good academic achievements, particularly in the area of arts and human sciences, according to the fact that emotional intelligence enables students to control their emotional response to the academic world and make friends with peers (MacCann et al., 2020). Lastly, emotional intelligence has been found to correlate with greater student involvement and better learning outcomes (i.e., GPA and satisfaction with university life), thus underscoring its importance as a factor in the functioning of higher education (Zhoc et al., 2020). However, the use of emotional intelligence in educational institutions can lead not only to the overall success of students but also to the improvement of team productivity and the leadership development process in an organization.

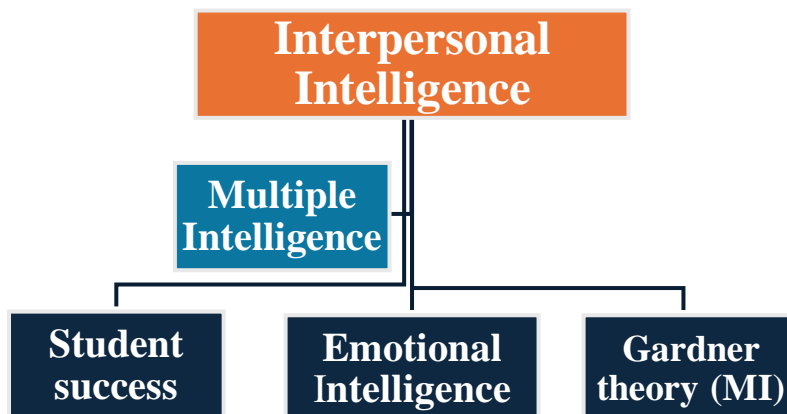
Artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom is bound to lead to the development of new curricula, better counseling services for students, and more effective AI-based individualized learning, especially

regarding emotional intelligence. The ability of AI to customize learning for each student can be seen in its power to reshape the learning material according to the unique preferences and abilities of each pupil, as supported by the huge advancement of students' performance and engagement after the application of personalized interventions with the help of machine learning models (Villegas-Ch et al., 2024). This custom-fit learning experience plays a critical role in the acquisition of people skills since it creates personalized teaching that can nurture the social and emotional faculties of the learners, which are increasingly regarded as indispensable in the 21st century (Tuomi, 2022). The application of AI-driven tools in education has improved the quality of student counseling, as evidenced by the employment of large language models (LLMs) within the framework of university admission counseling that is simultaneously scalable and adaptable, which in turn elevates the quality of decisions and the trust of students (Van et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the dependence on AI for personalization has thrown up a question regarding the generation of independent thinking and teamwork skills, which are the main traits of social intelligence, Bae & Bozkurt (2024) argue. To overcome these difficulties, institutions of learning must implement AI-facilitated personalization, which is complemented by chances for human interaction and teamwork, such that students are able to develop not only their people skills but also their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities (Msambwa et al., 2025).

In addition, the ethical issues involved in AI, such as data privacy and algorithmic bias, must be additionally monitored to ensure that their effects on student social and emotional development are not negative (Wang et al., 2024). The educational sector calls for a major fix of the existing curriculum, one that will place a premium on the training of vital human skills like empathy and teamwork, which machines are not likely to learn easily (Cady et al., 2024). If the educational systems give AI-powered personalization alongside a focus on interpersonal intelligence, then they will have equipped the students for the intricacies of an AI-dominated world (Kamalov et al., 2023; Sajja et al., 2025).

Conceptual Framework on Interpersonal Intelligence (NTER)

The findings from the fields of social skills, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal competence provide the framework for conceptual interpersonal intelligence understanding among undergraduates.



Interpersonal intelligence is undistinguishable with social skills and includes the capacity to communicate, to find common ground, and to engage with people effectively. The work of Riggio provides insights into the SSI, which reflects the multidimensional nature of social skills and underlines the importance of communicating both verbally and nonverbally, providing empathy, and performing role-playing as the basic skills of interpersonal intelligence (Riggio, 1986). Bochner and Kelly build on that and identify the major components of interpersonal competence, such as empathic communication, self-disclosure, and behavioral flexibility, which are essential skills for effective and adaptable interaction and the adjustment to different social contexts (Bochner & Kelly, 1974). Also, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is one of the most significant factors as it involves the ability to recognize,

comprehend, and regulate emotions, which is the major determinant of interpersonal relations. Kunnanatt's EI competency model says that emotional competencies can be acquired through training that will lead to the development of people skills, which in turn will be beneficial for social interaction and career opportunities (Kunnanatt, 2008). Sánchez-Bolívar et al. reported that social skills were a good predictor of professional competencies, whereas emotional intelligence had an ambivalent effect, with cases of negative correlation suggesting that high EI does not necessarily mean better people skills (Sánchez-Bolívar et al., 2025). Moreover, Ye et al proved that emotional intelligence not only improves psychological well-being and academic performance but also does so through positive psychological traits such as self-efficacy and resilience, which are especially important in the prevention of unhealthy interpersonal relations (Ye et al., 2024). Kudo et al.'s findings on the development of intercultural relationships indicate that such relationships also help in the growth of interpersonal intelligence, thus demonstrating the intricate interaction of one's agency and environment in developing intercultural competence (Kudo et al., 2019). This research, in conjunction, stresses the various aspects of interpersonal intelligence, showing that the interaction of social skills, emotional intelligence, and intercultural competence is the main factor in the development of effective interpersonal abilities in college students. Embedded in this framework is the idea of educational interventions aiming to develop these competencies to facilitate interpersonal communication and, hence, overall student success.

Statement of the Problem

This study will be conducted on the 1st semester bachelor entrants' students at the University of Sargodha and aims to explore the levels of interpersonal intelligence among university entrants' student and their impact on the primary performance of students' academics. This study delimited to Sargodha University, Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan.

Objective of the Study

This study explored the levels of interpersonal intelligence among undergraduate students enrolled in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities and Pure Sciences at a Pakistani university. The research is guided by three main objectives: (1) to assess the level of interpersonal intelligence among these students, (2) to examine significant gender and residence-based differences in interpersonal intelligence (NTER), and (3) to determine whether the findings confirm or challenge prevailing societal beliefs about gender and social aptitude.

METHODOLOGY

The nature of the study was a qualitative survey. Students of the first semester of undergraduate programs were the sample of study from the University of Sargodha, Pakistan, which was selected as the population of study. Through convenient sampling techniques, available students of the faculty (Science and Art & Humanities) were selected for data collection. For data collection, the scale, developed by Armstrong (1993), consists of 80 items and comprises eight intelligences was adapted after seeking his permission through email. The 10-item checklist of interpersonal intelligence (NTER) from the original instrument of Multiple Intelligences of Armstrong (1993) was adapted. Cronbach's alpha value for this adapted bilingual research instrument was 0.89, which is acceptable and particularly good.

Table 1

Reliability of Inter-Personal Intelligence (NTER) Checklist

| Instrument | Cronbach Alpha | Decision |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Inter-personal intelligence (NTER) | 0.89 | Very Good |

Significance level <0.05

Table 1 shows the reliability analysis of the Inter-Personal Intelligence Checklist (NTER) using Cronbach’s Alpha. The table shows the high reliability coefficient of 0.89 and indicates that the checklist items have a level of internal consistency. The elements are so interrelated and consistent in their measurement of the same underlying construct of inter-personal intelligence. In social science research, Cronbach’s Alpha value of more than 0.80 is usually regarded as acceptable, whereas values nearing 0.90 are indicative of extremely high instrument reliability (Campo-Arias & Oviedo, 2008; Kilic, 2016). Hence, the reliability coefficient found in this study is large, providing strong empirical evidence that the Inter-Personal Intelligence Checklist is a stable and reliable measurement tool. The consequences also suggest that the instrument is suitable and trustworthy for the measurement of interpersonal intelligence in the study population.

Table 2

Results Inter-Personal intelligence (NTER)

| Sr. no | Question | No f% | Yes f% | Total f% | Mean | S. D |
|--------|---|-------|--------|----------|-------|------|
| 1 | I’m the kind of person others come to for advice. | 107 | 168 | 275 | 1.389 | .48 |
| | | 38.9% | 61.1% | 100% | | |
| 2 | I like going to parties and social events. | 108 | 167 | 275 | 1.392 | .48 |
| | | 39.3% | 60.7% | 100% | | |
| 3 | I don’t like to argue with people. | 78 | 197 | 275 | 1.283 | .45 |
| | | 28.4% | 71.6% | 100% | | |
| 4 | I enjoy getting other people to work together. | 88 | 187 | 275 | 1.320 | .46 |
| | | 32% | 68% | 100% | | |
| 5 | I consider myself a leader (and others call me that). | 147 | 128 | 275 | 1.534 | .49 |
| | | 53.5% | 46.5% | 100% | | |
| 6 | When I have a problem, I’ll probably ask a friend for help. | 88 | 187 | 275 | 1.320 | .46 |
| | | 32% | 68% | 100% | | |
| 7 | I have at least three close friends. | 92 | 183 | 275 | 1.334 | .47 |
| | | 33.5% | 66.5% | 100% | | |
| 8 | I am easy to get to know. | 133 | 142 | 275 | 1.483 | .50 |
| | | 48.4% | 51.6% | 100% | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|-------|-------|------|-------|-----|
| 9 | I feel comfortable most of the time, even in the midst of a crowd. | 146 | 129 | 275 | 1.530 | .49 |
| | | 53.1% | 46.9% | 100% | | |
| 10 | I am good at making new friends. | 120 | 155 | 275 | 1.436 | .49 |
| | | 43.6% | 56.4% | 100% | | |

Table 2 shows the majority of students' socially adaptive behaviors. 61.1% of respondents (mean = 1.389, SD = 0.48) indicated that others come to them for advice, suggesting a reasonable level of trust and perceived social competence among peers. Similarly, 60.7% (mean = 1.392, SD = 0.48) expressed liking for parties and social events, indicating openness to social participation. A notable proportion, 71.6% of students (mean = 1.283, SD = 0.45), reported that they do not like arguing with others, which reflects a preference for harmony and conflict avoidance, an important interpersonal skill.

68% of students (mean = 1.320, SD = 0.46) enjoyed getting others to work together, and the same proportion reported that they would ask a friend for help when facing a problem. These findings point toward cooperative attitudes and reliance on social support networks. In addition, 66.5% of respondents (mean = 1.334, SD = 0.47) stated that they have at least three close friends, further indicating the presence of stable interpersonal relationships.

However, leadership and social confidence showed more variability. Only 46.5% of students (mean = 1.534, SD = 0.49) considered themselves leaders, suggesting that while many students are socially engaged, fewer identify with formal leadership roles. Likewise, feelings of comfort in crowds were reported by 46.9% of respondents (mean = 1.530, SD = 0.49), and 51.6% (mean = 1.483, SD = 0.50) described themselves as easy to get to know. These equivalent distributions imply that a substantial proportion of students may experience social hesitation or require more time to feel confident in broader social settings.

To conclude, 56.4% of students (mean = 1.436, SD = 0.49) reported being good at making new friends, indicating moderate social adaptability. These findings suggest that most students demonstrate functional interpersonal intelligence characterized by cooperation, peer support, and social engagement. Nevertheless, the mixed responses on leadership and comfort in larger social contexts highlight areas that were targeted interventions, such as group-based activities or leadership development programs, could further strengthen students' people skills.

Table 3

Gender-Based Comparison of Inter-Personal Intelligence

| Intelligence | Gender | N | Mean | Sd | T | df | P |
|--------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-----|
| NTER | Male | 87 | 13.57 | 2.37 | -2.33 | 273 | .79 |
| | Female | 188 | 14.23 | 2.08 | | | |

Significance level <0.05

Table 3 depicts a comparison of interpersonal intelligence based on gender among students. The females (N = 188) had a (M=14.23%; SD = 2.08), which is more than the males (N = 87), who got 13.57% (SD = 2.37) as their mean score. However, the difference between them, as indicated by the T-test, was not significant, $t(273) = -2.33, p > .05$. The conclusion was that gender did not significantly affect interpersonal intelligence, and the difference in mean scores perceived could be due to chance rather than gender-based variation.

Table 4

Residence-Based Comparison of Inter-Personal Intelligence

| Intelligence | Residence | N | Mean | Sd | T | df | P |
|--------------|-------------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-----|
| NTER | Hostilized | 121 | 13.79 | 2.18 | -1.53 | 272 | .12 |
| | Day scholar | 153 | 14.04 | 2.20 | | | |

Significance level <0.05

The inter-personal intelligence of students was compared based on their place of residence in Table 4. It can be seen that day scholars (N = 153) scored a little better on average (M = 14.04, SD = 2.20) compared to hostel students (N = 121), who had a mean score of 13.79 (SD = 2.18). The day scholars' slight upper hand is, however, not confirmed by the independent samples t-test, which showed the difference not to be statistically significant, $t(272) = -1.53$, $p = .12$. This finding implies that the students' residence status has no significant effect on inter-personal intelligence, and the differences in mean scores observed are probably due to random variations rather than a real impact of the living arrangements.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the study represent the levels of interpersonal intelligence of the undergraduate university entrants and provide evidence about their social interactions during the initial period of university life. The results indicate that the majority of students possess an adequate amount of interpersonal intelligence, especially in the areas of cooperation, peer support, and relationship maintenance at academic progress. An ample number of students confessed that they were approached for advice, avoided conflicts, enjoyed being with people, and would even take turns doing the same task as others. These behaviors show much of the interpersonal intelligence that Gardner, in his Multiple Intelligences model, has singled out and that has been supported by earlier studies emphasizing the necessity of empathy, effective communication, and collaboration in academic settings.

On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the area of leadership-related traits and in the aspect of social confidence in a broader sense. A smaller number of students showed themselves as leaders, were not scared in a crowded place, or considered themselves the kind of people that one can easily approach. This indicates that although students may be socially functional within their familiar peer groups, some of them may lack confidence in taking the initiative or may not be assertive in larger or more formal social contexts. Such findings overlap with the literature that suggests that interpersonal intelligence is deliberately developed and it is dependent on environmental exposure, academic culture, and opportunities for social engagement in a structured way. For the first-semester entrants, this mixed pattern is understandable, as many are still getting used to the social and academic demands of university life.

A comparison based on gender indicated that girls had a mean score that was somewhat higher than boys; however, this difference was not statistically significant. This means that the factor of gender does not play a key role in determining interpersonal intelligence; instead, it is the experience and social exposure that come along with attending university that shape it. In the same vein, comparison based on residence showed that day scholars had scores that were just slightly higher than hostel students, but this difference was still not significant. The results imply that living conditions do not affect students' interpersonal intelligence, probably due to the fact that both groups are in the same academic and social settings on campus and therefore interact.

The current research findings show strong alignment with existing theoretical frameworks and empirical studies about interpersonal intelligence, which also demonstrate how Pakistani undergraduate students interact in their unique academic environment. The majority of students showed functional interpersonal competence through their ability to work with others and help their peers while avoiding conflicts and keeping their friendships stable according to Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences. The results demonstrate that social-emotional competencies lead to better academic adaptation and student participation in higher education according to previous research findings. The mean scores of female students were higher than those of male students, but the result did not reach statistical significance which indicates that social aptitude for interpersonal intelligence functions independently of gender-based assumptions. The residence status did not create any substantial differences which suggests that shared academic and social environments have a more powerful effect on students' ability to develop interpersonal skills than their home living situations. The data shows that students who exhibit social abilities and relationship-building capabilities have a leadership gap because they fail to identify themselves as leaders and show low leadership confidence in social situations. The entrants' undergraduates show their interpersonal intelligence through supportiveness and conflict avoidance because they have reached this developmental level and followed their cultural values. The study supports existing theoretical frameworks while delivering new empirical research from a regional context which enhances our understanding of interpersonal intelligence.

The results demand that higher education institutions plan and implement curriculum and non-curriculum activities like group projects, leadership workshops, and student organizations aimed at promoting people skills development, especially at the very beginning of the students' university journey. These skills would not only help students to cope with their academics and have a good relationship with others socially but also get them professionally ready overall.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results, some recommendations are, it is recommended that universities should promote students' participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities actively, such as clubs, debates, and community service, as those places are where teamwork, empathy, and social confidence are naturally developed. Finally, students who experience social hesitation should be provided with continuous assessment and mentoring support through counseling and advisory services, ensuring the flourishing of interpersonal intelligence all the way through their academic journey.

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