

Cite this Article: Hina, Q. A., Abid, M. N., Mazhar, U., & Arshad, M. (2026). Academic Stress and Students' Interpersonal Skills in Higher Education: A Social Psychological Perspective. *Journal of Regional Studies Review*, 5(2), 28-40.
<https://doi.org/10.62843/jrsr/2026.v.ii.207>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES REVIEW (JRSR)

Academic Stress and Students' Interpersonal Skills in Higher Education: A Social Psychological Perspective

Quratul Ain Hina ^a Muhammad Naseem Abid ^b Uzma Mazhar ^c Mahek Arshad ^d

Corresponding Author: Muhammad Naseem Abid; naseemabid@ue.edu.pk



Abstract: This study aimed to assess the level of academic stress among students at the higher education level, explore students' interpersonal skills, and analyse the effect of academic stress on interpersonal skills. The framework was based on the model of academic stress proposed by Lin and Chen (2009), which includes seven factors: teachers, results, tests, studying in groups, peers, time management stress, and self-inflicted stress. The model of interpersonal skills developed by Skills You Need (2011) was also adopted, encompassing four factors: listening skills, emotional intelligence, verbal communication, and communicating in groups. A quantitative research approach and correlational research design were employed. The study was delimited to the departments of Education, Psychology, Mass Communication, and Governance and Public Policy under the Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Modern Languages. A total population of 2,102 students enrolled in session 2025 constituted the study population. Using a simple random sampling technique, a target sample of 340 students (16% of 2,102) was selected. The data received consisted of 279 responses, resulting in an 82% response rate. The findings revealed that 70% of students reported a high level of academic stress, while 89% demonstrated an average level of interpersonal skills. The results further indicated that academic stress had a zero percent effect on students' interpersonal skills. The study recommended organizing academic activities as an effective way to cope with academic stress. Students should develop time management skills and maintain a balance between educational and social lives. Teachers should be trained to communicate time management strategies to help students manage stress and sustain positive interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Interpersonal Skills, Listening Skills, Emotional Intelligence, Verbal Communication, Communicating in Groups

Introduction

Students are enrolled in an institution to receive an education and ensure a productive life. The time students spend in institutions to get an education is an investment for a bright future. Interpersonal skills are the most important feature in ensuring a productive life in society. Human beings need to communicate with each other for every single need. The stronger the will to communicate and interact with others, the greater the chance of better adjustment (Dunkeld et al., 2020). Human children are born as social beings, and socialization depends on the ability to adjust to the environment (Loh et al., 2021). Although interpersonal skills are only one type of multiple intelligences, they are an important component of life (Manchiraju et al., 2021). The generation that is currently enrolled in higher education nowadays is more expressive and

^a Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

^b Division of Management and Administrative Science, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

^c Lecturer, Department of Educational Sciences, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

^d Controller of Examinations, Fazaia Bilquis College of Education for Women, Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan.

communicative. However, the generation is also sensitive at the same time. On one hand, parents send their children to educational institutions for a better future, but sometimes during adulthood, students face multiple pressures. Unfortunately, in most cases, such pressures are not expressed on proper platforms, so that there can be some proper resolution for such stresses. Academic stress is one such pressure.

Academic stress can be defined as stress that mostly develops from load, expectation, and fears. Academic stress is described as a product of physical or mental struggle for regulating requirements or testing, where the learner will gain command in the given field (Singh & Jha, 2013). Stress has become a part of students' academic lives due to the high expectations of parents. Currently, parents' demands are high, creating pressure on the minds of children. This makes students' lives stressful, and this stress can be a main reason for their disturbed health. One of the major impacts of stress is that it affects the psychological functions and mental health of people. Such mental health issues and disturbances persist throughout an individual's life.

University is more demanding for adults, and they face many physical, social, and emotional difficulties. These challenges sometimes create mental problems for adults, and the pressure of examinations also leads students toward anxiety, especially those who are unable to perform better even when they do their best. Some problems that are commonly faced by university students are mood disturbances, harsh behaviours, interpersonal problems, and impairment of self-concept.

Stress directly affects students' interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills are the behaviours a person shows while communicating and interacting with others. Positive interpersonal skills enhance academic performance, whereas stress can damage a person's interpersonal skills. People who are stressed can easily become frustrated with small matters that affect their social relationships. When a person is angry, they usually fail to choose appropriate words in their communication and forget to do things in an appropriate manner. Academic stress affects a person's relationship with another person because when a person is stressed, they usually do not listen to another person, which causes conflicts and misunderstandings. Academic stress affects students' interpersonal skills by creating a jealousy factor among students, as every student tries to get better grades than the others. Therefore, when they fail to do so, they become enemies. Because of academic stress, students isolate themselves when they do not fulfil the expectations of their parents by getting good grades. They become disappointed, and this disappointment makes them separate from their loved ones. When this happens, they are unable to receive proper support from their loved ones. In academic settings, interpersonal skills help students manage their emotions and maintain control over them in difficult situations. Students with good interpersonal skills can develop coping skills for stress; they can control themselves in any stressful situation. They have the ability to accept whatever happens, such as when they do not get good grades; they accept it and move on. People with good interpersonal skills can remove themselves from any stressful situation.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers designed this study mainly to determine the effect of academic stress on the interpersonal skills of students as a social issue. The researchers initially targeted the assessment of the level of academic stress among university students. Further, the level of students' interpersonal skills at a higher level should be explored. After looking at both variables independently, the main aim of the study was to analyse the effect of academic stress on students' interpersonal skills at the university level. Higher education students, as the future of any nation, were the population of the study, and the most sensitive social issue targeted for exploration was interpersonal skills. Society is based on positive behaviour development, especially for those who will be future nation builders.

Significance of the Study

This study is valuable and helpful for parents, teachers, and students. This study is also beneficial for future researchers. This study provides information to students about interpersonal skills and makes them aware of how academic stress can destroy their good interpersonal skills. Students would be able to control their stress

effectively. This study would help students develop good interpersonal skills that are necessary for a successful life. This study would be beneficial for teachers as it would help them manage stress. This study would help teachers understand the interpersonal skills of their students and make them aware that the level of stress negatively affects students' interpersonal skills.

This study would help parents manage stress. This would make them aware that academic stress badly affects their children. This study would help parents manage their children's stress by carefully listening to their problems and providing effective solutions. This study would also be helpful for future researchers who are interested in conducting research related to this topic. It would provide them with the basic background for their research, which is related to academic stress on students' interpersonal skills. The results of this study would help them to understand that academic stress affects students' interpersonal skills.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the level of academic stress on students at the higher education level.
2. To explore the level of students' interpersonal skills at the higher education level.
3. To analyse the effect of academic stress on students' interpersonal skills at the higher education level.

Null Hypotheses

H₀1: There is no statistically significant effect of academic stress on students' interpersonal skills.

H₀1a: There is no statistically significant effect of academic stress on students' listening skills.

H₀1b: There is no statistically significant effect of academic stress on students' emotional intelligence.

H₀1c: There is no statistically significant effect of academic stress on students' verbal communication.

H₀1d: There is no statistically significant effect of academic stress on students' communication in groups.

Literature Review

Stress is one of the most debatable words that has multiple meanings for different people, cultures, and situations. Selye (1956) defined stress as "the common denominator of all adaptive reactions in the body", and the events that naturally produce stress are called "stressors". Any situation that creates a reaction in the form of moods and behaviours is called a stressor (Selye, 1956). Tachè and Selye (1985) reported that human children are born with feelings of happiness, fear, and anger; these are the basic human emotions that help them deal with the environment (Tachè & Selye, 1985). Aldwin (2009) stated that stress can be reflected in physical and emotional forms. Simultaneously, stress can also affect physical and emotional stability equally. The effects of stress on physical well-being, sleep, and health have also been proven by medical sciences. At the same time, emotional setbacks can also be caused by stressful conditions (Aldwin, 2009). He states that stress can be external and internal, which includes environmental, physical, and psychological factors.

Academic stress was defined as described above. Academic stress refers to the domain of stress caused by the pressure of academic life and studies. Kouzma and Kennedy (2004) found that high school students face academic stress in the form of assignments, exams, and projects, and results that are related to future plans and career expectations of others as well as themselves. Academic stress can become a reason for different problems such as depression, anxiety, and suicide that are common in students. Researchers identified the main reasons for academic stress among students as high levels of self-expectation, fear of poor academic grades, and pressure from parents (Liu et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2024).

The demand for the future is changing daily. Academic life skills have also changed from the acquisition of knowledge to the acquisition of life skills. Interpersonal skills are the main component of educational life today (Everson & Terjesen, 2023). A. C. Kubrusly et al. (2026) reported that interpersonal skills are more than just the ability to communicate with others. However, it is also about understanding people and their behaviours and acting as a productive citizen in society. Interpersonal skills are primarily defined as communication skills. However, it includes the ability to be proactive in any situation for others to feel easy

and comfortable in their presence. Socialisation can also be called a product of interpersonal skills (Boute, 2017).

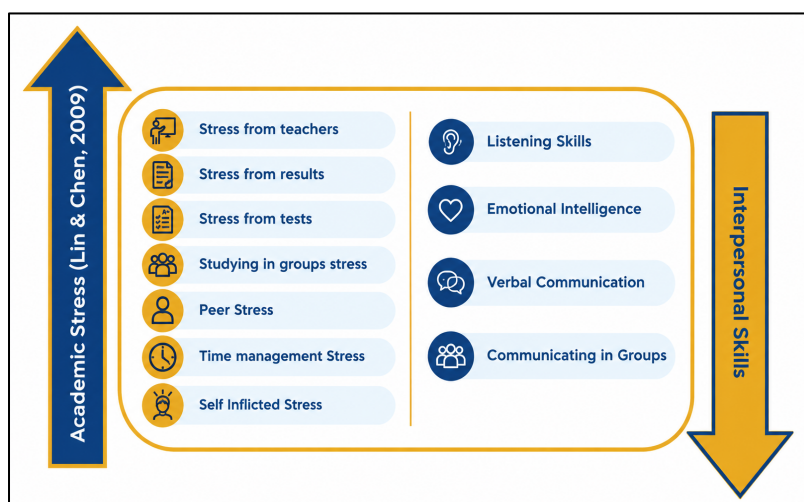
A successful college graduate must possess a ratio of 80% emotional-social intelligence (ESI) to 20% book smarts. Interpersonal skills are important in all occupations. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a salient theme in a diverse array of circles, including the scientific, education, and business realms, that addresses elements of interpersonal skills. The term is defined as follows: Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Xuan, 2025). Those who possess good interpersonal skills are more successful, especially in public-dealing businesses (Bar-On, 2006). It is also a key component of emotional intelligence (Boute, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

The model is given by Lin and Chen (2009), who discussed seven factors of academic stress: teachers, results, tests, studying in groups, peers, time management stress, and self-inflicted stress. Interpersonal skills are the ability to communicate and interact with others (Lin & Chen, 2009). The model of interpersonal skills given by an open-access organisation named Skills You Need (2011) was selected as the framework for this study (Suranto, 2011). It explains four factors of interpersonal skills (listening skills, emotional intelligence, verbal communication, and communicating in groups).

Figure 1

Study Framework



Academic Stress

There are seven factors of academic stress that are mentioned below.

- Stress from Teachers:** Academic stress occurs when teachers are not aware of the mental caliber of their students, and sometimes they make the content too difficult for their students to understand. Teachers mostly burden their students with excessive courses, causing academic stress as they become worried about finishing the course on time.
- Stress from Results:** Academic stress occurs because of parents' high expectations. They set specific grade criteria for their children. When their children fail to meet their criteria, they become disappointed, which causes academic stress among their children.
- Stress from Tests:** Academic stress is caused by tests. Students usually take a lot of tests in schools, and they become worried about preparing for those tests. Sometimes, they fail to get enough sleep at

night because of their tests. Most students have to prepare for compulsory courses in which they fail. This excessive study burden causes academic stress among students.

- d) **Studying in Groups Stress:** The main factor of academic stress was studying in groups. Sometimes, teachers assign group tasks. In group work, students face some difficulties, such as some students easily getting worried that they will not find suitable group members. Some students are shy and think that their classmates will make fun of them when they present in front of the class. Students are so sensitive that even harsh words used by their group members easily hurt their self-esteem. These factors create academic stress in students.
- e) **Peer stress:** Academic stress arises from academic competition and peer interference. In a class, there is competition among students, and every student tries their best to get better grades than other students. When they fail to do so, academic stress occurs. Most students feel that when they decide to study, their classmates disturb them by chatting.
- f) **Time Management Stress:** Students experience stress when they fail to manage their time. Students face difficulties in time management and cannot maintain a balance between their academic and social activities. This causes academic stress among students.
- g) **Self-inflicted Stress:** Students mostly have high expectations of themselves; for example, when they do their best, they still feel that they are not performing as well as their classmates. In a race to get better grades than their classmates, students spend a lot of time studying, which makes them easily frustrated. Some subjects are so boring for students that they cannot study them, causing academic stress as they become worried about how to cover the course of those subjects. Most students are worried about their future and think that they will not perform well at the university level. All these factors create academic stress among the students.

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal skills are those that we use daily when we interact with other people, both individually and in groups. Interpersonal skills include a wide range of skills, among which communication and listening skills are very important. Interpersonal skills include the ability to manage our emotions. People with good interpersonal skills can develop healthy relationships with others, both formally and informally. This is because they have effective communication skills and communicate effectively with others, whether they are family, clients, customers, or colleagues.

- a) **Listening Skills:** Listening skills are the ability to pay attention and accurately interpret what the other person is saying. Without the ability to listen effectively, the message can be misunderstood. It breaks down the communication process, and a person can easily become frustrated.
- b) **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional intelligence is the ability to control our emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence is related to the human psyche and can be improved by practising new skills. Emotional intelligence can only be measured by how a person progresses throughout his life and develops meaningful relationships with others.
- c) **Verbal Communication:** Verbal communication involves the use of words to share information. These words can be spoken and written down. Clarity of speech, being focused, and being polite are the basic principles that make verbal communication effective.
- d) **Communicating in Groups:** Communication skills are the act of transferring information from one place to another, from one person to another, in the most effective manner. It can be done vocally (using voice), written (such as books, magazines, printed, and digital media), or non-verbally (using gestures, body language, tone, and pitch of voice).

Methodology

Research Approach and Design

In this study, a quantitative research approach was used. Quantitative research can be expressed in numbers. This type of research can be used to establish general facts about a topic. The researcher was looking forward

to finding the impact between variables and determining their cause and effect in controlled circumstances; therefore, quantitative research was used. A correlational research design was used to determine the one-way effect of academic stress on students’ interpersonal skills. This research was conducted to measure the two variables to find a statistical relationship between them. A correlational research design was selected for this study.

Population: The study was delimited to four departments: Education, Psychology, Economics, Mass Communication, Governance, and Public Policy. A total of 2,102 students were enrolled in the above-mentioned departments under the Faculty of Social Science (session 2025) at the National University of Modern Languages.

Sample Technique: Simple random sampling technique was employed for the selection of the sample

Sample Size: The targeted sample size was 16% of 2102, which was 340 students. The data received consisted of 279 responses from students of selected social science departments. Thus, the rate of return was 82%.

Data Collection Tool: Two scales were adopted to assess the responses to the research variables. One scale was developed by (Lin & Chen, 2009), in which seven factors of academic stress were addressed (teachers, results, tests, studying in groups, peers, time management stress, and self-inflicted stress). The other scale was a self-assessment inventory based on the model of interpersonal skills given by an open-access organisation named Skills You Need (Suranto, 2011). This explains the four factors of interpersonal skills (listening skills, emotional intelligence, verbal communication, and communicating in groups).

Delimitations

The study was delimited to four departments of the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, which were

- 1. Education,
- 2. Psychology,
- 3. Mass communication,
- 4. Governance & public policy

Table 1

Tool Structure

Scale	Sub Scales	Items
Academic stress Assessment scale	▶ Teachers	09
	▶ Result	05
	▶ tests	04
	▶ Studying in group	05
	▶ Peer	04
	▶ Time management stress	03
	▶ Self-inflicted stress	04
Interpersonal skills- A self-Assessment Inventory	▶ Listening skills	10
	▶ Emotional intelligence	13
	▶ Verbal communication	13
	▶ Communicating in groups	15

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics and SmartPLS-4. IBM SPSS was used for data screening, data cleaning, descriptive analysis, and preliminary assessment of the dataset. Descriptive

statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the characteristics of the respondents and the study variables. Subsequently, SmartPLS 4 was employed to conduct Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

Table 2

Analysis Description

Objectives	Hypothesis	Statistical Analysis
To assess the level of academic stress on students at higher education level.		Independent Score
To explore the level of students interpersonal skills at higher education level.		Independent Score
To analyze the effect of academic stress on student's interpersonal skills at higher education level	H _{0.1} There is statistically no significant effect of academic stress on student's interpersonal skills. H _{0.1a} , H _{0.1b} , H _{0.1c} & H _{0.1d}	Regression

Table 2 reports that the academic stress and interpersonal skills were calculated using descriptive statistics, and the major objective that was "To analyze the effect of academic stress on students' interpersonal skills at the higher education level" was operationalized by using inferential statistics. For this purpose, linear regression was used as a statistical test.

Descriptive statistics

Table 3

Reliability Analysis (n=279)

Scale	No. of items	Reliability
Academic stress scale	34	0.968
Interpersonal skills	53	0.818

Table No. 3 shows that the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the academic stress scale was .968. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the interpersonal skills assessment scale was .818. This shows that future researchers can use the tool in educational settings of Pakistan with a fair amount of confidence.

Table 4

Academic Stress Assessment among Students (n= 279)

Status	Score	n	Percentage
Low	34-68	10	3%
Medium	69-103	47	16%
High	104-138	198	70%
Very High	139-173	24	8%

Table 4 shows that 8% of the students' responses showed a very high level of academic stress, 70% of the responses were at a high level, 16% of the responses were at a medium level, and only 03% responses were at a low level of academic stress.

Figure 2
Level of Academic Stress

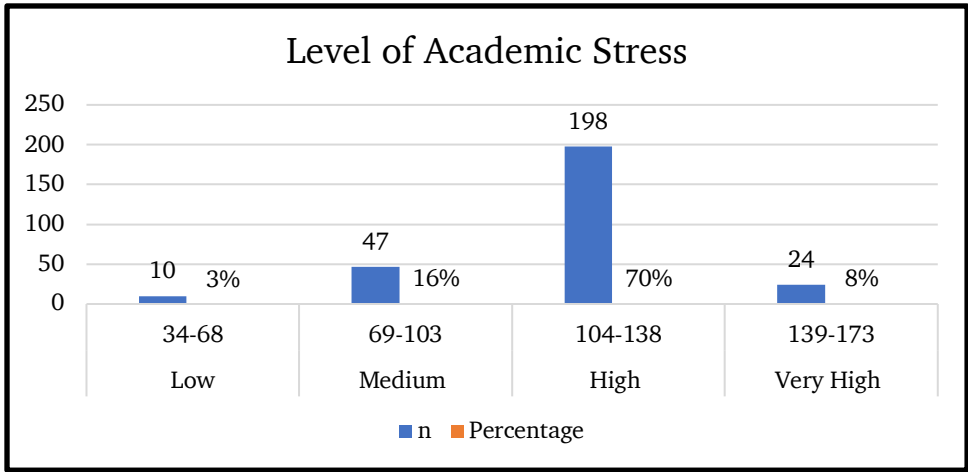
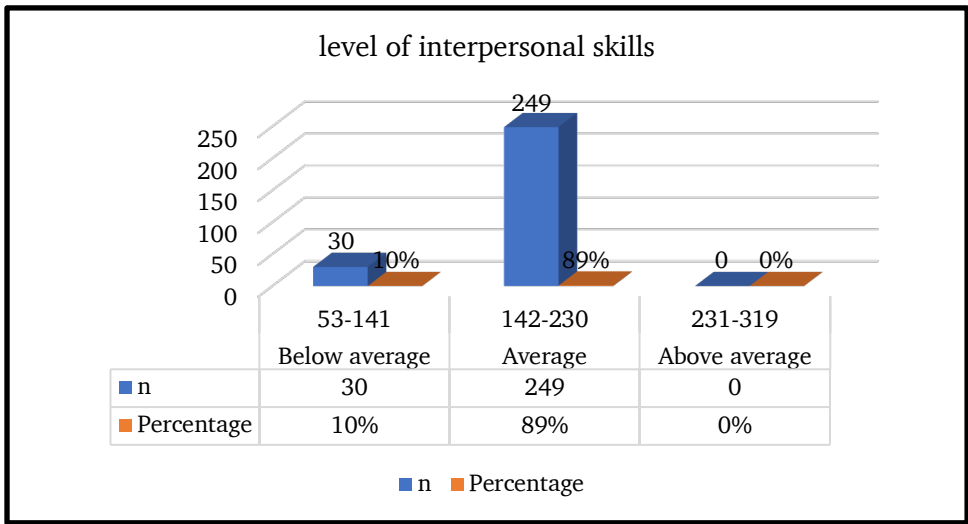


Table 5
Interpersonal Skills Assessment (n=279)

Status	Score	n	Percentage
Below average	53-141	30	10%
Average	142-230	249	89%
Above average	231-319	-	-

Table 5 reports that 10% of the students’ responses were at a below-average level of interpersonal skills, 89% of the students’ responses were at an average level, and no one fell above the average level of interpersonal skills.

Figure 3
Level of Interpersonal Skills



Results of (Inferential statistics) Path Coefficient

Table 6
Effect of Academic Stress on Student’s Interpersonal Skills (n=279)

IV	DV	R square	β	t	Sig.
Academic Stress	Interpersonal skills	0.000	0.004	0.78	0.938

Table 6 shows that academic stress (IV) had zero percent effect on students' interpersonal skills ($R^2=.001$). The beta value was positive ($\beta =0.004$) and non-significant ($t= 0.78$, Sig. = 0.938).

Table 7

Effect of Academic Stress on Student's Listening Skills (n=279)

IV	DV	R square	β	t	Sig.
Academic stress	Listening skills	0.001	-0.012	-0.426	0.670

Table 7 shows that academic stress (IV) had a 0.1% effect on students' listening skills ($R^2=.001$). While there effect was negative ($\beta =-.012$) and non-significant ($t= -.426$, sig= .670).

Table 8

Effect of Academic Stress on Student's Emotional Intelligence (n=279)

IV	DV	R square	β	t	Sig.
Academic stress	Emotional intelligence	0.001	0.013	0.638	0.524

Table 8 shows that academic stress (IV) had a 0.1% effect on students' emotional intelligence ($R^2=.001$). While there effect was positive ($\beta =.013$) and non-significant ($t= .638$, sig= .524).

Table 9

Effect of Academic Stress on Student's Verbal Communication (n=279)

IV	DV	R square	β	t	Sig.
Academic stress	Verbal communication	0.000	0.002	0.220	0.826

Table 9 shows that academic stress (IV) had zero percent effect on students' verbal communication ($R^2=.000$). However, the beta value was positive ($\beta =.002$) and non-significant ($t=.220$, sig= .826).

Table 10

Effect of Academic Stress on Student's Communication in Group (n=279)

IV	DV	R square	β	t	Sig.
Academic stress	Communication in group	0.000	-0.007	-0.116	0.908

Table 10 shows that academic stress (IV) had zero percent effect on students' communication in group ($R^2=.000$). Beta value was negative ($\beta =-.007$) and non-significant ($t= -.116$, sig .908)

Figure 4

Structural Model (Smart-PLS-4)

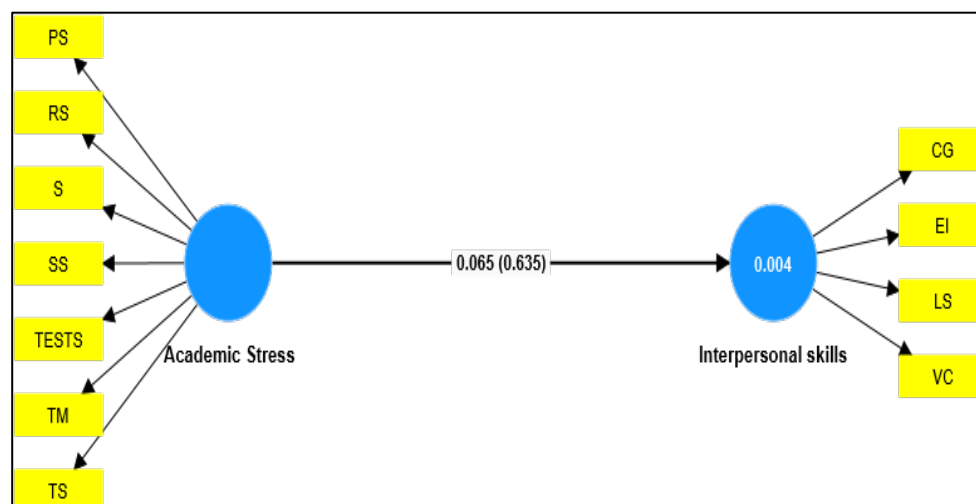


Table 11
Path Coefficient Results

	β	(M)	SD	T statistics	P values	Deison
Academic Stress -> Interpersonal skills	0.065	0.028	0.138	0.475	0.635	Rejected

Table 11 indicates that academic stress has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on interpersonal skills ($\beta = 0.065$, $p = 0.475$). Therefore, the proposed hypothesis was not supported. This finding suggests that academic stress alone may not be sufficient to significantly explain variations in students' interpersonal skills. The finding is consistent, in part, with recent evidence reported by M. Kubrusly et al. (2026), who examined the relationship between academic stress and social skills among undergraduate medical students. Although academic stress was significantly associated with several social-skill domains, no statistically significant associations were observed for the domains of defending one's rights and denying requests. This suggests that the influence of academic stress may vary across different dimensions of social and interpersonal functioning rather than producing a uniform effect. Similarly, examined stress and social skills among college students and found no statistically significant difference in social-skills scores between students from public and private institutions. Therefore, the non-significant relationship found in the present study may indicate that interpersonal skills are influenced by multiple factors beyond academic stress, such as social support, self-efficacy, coping strategies, personality characteristics, and the educational environment.

Discussion

This study was designed to explore the effect of academic stress on students’ interpersonal skills. Academic stress can be a stress that mostly occurs due to extra work that is beyond a person’s capabilities. A sample of 279 students was selected for this study. 8% of the students’ responses were at a very high level of academic stress, and 70% of the responses were at a high level of academic stress. Sixteen percent of responses were at a medium level of academic stress, and 3% of responses were at a low level of academic stress. Stress has become a part of students’ lives. Academic stress occurs in many ways, such as high expectations of parents for their children and excessive assignments and projects. Students are usually the reason for academic stress. Research described academic stress as a product of mental or physical struggle for regulating requirements or testing, where the learner will gain command in the given field (Jardim & Soares, 2025). Researchers claimed in their research that anxiety related to academic affairs results in poor health, depression, and poor academic performance (Jehi et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the results of the current study revealed that the majority of the students possessed average interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills are a person’s behaviour while communicating and interacting with others. This research shows that 10% of responses were at a below-average level of interpersonal skills, 89% of responses were at an average level of interpersonal skills, and no one fell above an average level of interpersonal skills. The study shows that there is no significant effect of academic stress on students’ interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills can be goal-directed behaviours, including communication and relationship-building competencies (Heggestad et al., 2023). In another study, researchers state that individuals with good interpersonal skills are more likely to improve their ability to determine appropriate self-behaviour, cope with undesirable behaviour, absorb stress, deal with ambiguity, structure social interaction, share responsibility, and interact more easily with others (Lopes et al., 2015).

However, the study shows that academic stress did not have any significant effect on students’ interpersonal skills. This indicates that although students may experience academic pressure related to examinations, assignments, workload, and academic expectations, such stress does not necessarily impair their ability to communicate, cooperate with, and maintain positive relationships with others. This finding may be explained by the fact that students can use social support and effective coping strategies to manage academic stress without allowing it to interfere with their interpersonal functioning. Social support, social

well-being, and self-identity can act as important protective factors when students experience academic stress (Li et al., 2022).

Similarly, research has shown that university students experience academic stress for various reasons, including examination pressure, lack of preparation, and parental expectations; however, the consequences of stress may vary among students depending on their individual coping resources (Shakeel et al., 2022). The availability of supportive relationships may enable students to maintain their social interactions, even when they face academic difficulties. Subasreebala and Sreedevi (2024) examined the relationship between perceived academic stress and social support among college students, highlighting the importance of social support in students' experiences of academic stress.

Furthermore, interpersonal skills are influenced by several factors, including social adjustment, peer relationships, emotional development, personality, and the social environment. A relationship between social adjustment and interpersonal support among university students suggests that students' interpersonal functioning involves broader social and adjustment processes rather than being determined by a single stress-related factor (Kaur & Sharma, 2022). Therefore, the non-significant finding of the present study may suggest that academic stress alone is insufficient to predict students' interpersonal skills. Students may possess adequate coping mechanisms, resilience, peer support, and communication abilities that enable them to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships despite the academic demands. Research on students' adjustment has emphasised the role of adaptation and social support in dealing with stressful experiences (Kapoor & Prakash, 2024). Overall, the present findings suggest that future research should examine other variables, such as social support, resilience, emotional intelligence, coping strategies, self-efficacy, and family environment, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' interpersonal skills.

Recommendations

1. Organizing academic activities is the best way to cope with this stress. Students need to organize their educational activities and learn time management skills to deal with academic stress.
2. Teachers need to be trained to communicate time management strategies to students for daily practice to manage their stress levels.
3. It is very important for students to maintain a balance between their educational and social lives. This will help them improve their interpersonal skills, as they will be able to maintain good relationships with others.
4. Students need to be trained by organizing one- or two-day sessions on how to control their emotions, even when they are extremely exhausted, and they need to learn to express themselves in a calm manner.
5. Although academic stress was not significantly associated with interpersonal skills in the present study, students should still be provided with opportunities to learn effective coping strategies such as problem-solving, time management, positive reappraisal, and seeking appropriate support. Research indicates that active coping can reduce the negative effects of academic stress on mental health.

Recommendations for future Researchers

Future researchers should examine variables such as emotional intelligence, social support, self-esteem, resilience, family environment, peer relationships, personality, and coping strategies, as these factors may have a stronger influence on students' interpersonal skills than academic stress. Recent research suggests that coping strategies and social support are important factors in students' responses to academic stress.

References

- Aldwin, C. M. (2009). *Stress, coping, and development: An integrative perspective* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Bar-On, R. (2006). The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI). *Psicothema*, 18(Suppl.), 13–25.
- Boute, B. J. (2017). *Emotional-social intelligence: Development during online and on-campus holistic healthcare programs* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. Walden University ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/3283>
- Boute, B. J. (2017). *Emotional-social intelligence: Development during online and on-campus holistic healthcare programs* [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. Walden University ScholarWorks. <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/3283>
- Dunkeld, C., Wright, M. L., Banerjee, R. A., Easterbrook, M. J., & Slade, L. (2020). Television exposure, consumer culture values, and lower well-being among preadolescent children: The mediating role of consumer-focused coping strategies. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 59(1), 26–48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12325>
- Everson, K., & Terjesen, M. (2023). Irrational beliefs among competitive high school student athletes: Are they general or context-driven? *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 41(2), 314–333. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-023-00504-3>
- Heggestad, E. D., Voss, E. N., Toth, A. A., Ross, R. L., Banks, G. C., & Canevello, A. (2023). Two meanings of “social skills”: Proposing an integrative social skills framework. *Group & Organization Management*, 48(2), 361–404. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011221151006>
- Jardim, M. E. de M., & Soares, A. B. (2025). Academic adaptation, stress, self-efficacy and social skills in college students from public and private institutions. *Estudos de Psicologia (Campinas)*, 42, e220088. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-0275202542e220088>
- Jehi, T., Mulvey, M., Shulgan, E., Burke, E., Dean, M., Betancourt, J., Carliss, G., Khan, R., Majzoub, N., Halawani, R., Beeson, L., & Zeman, C. (2024). Anxiety, depression, stress, and test anxiety are inversely associated with academic performance among undergraduate students post-COVID-19 confinement. *American Journal of Health Education*, 55(2), 89–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19325037.2023.2296943>
- Kapoor, R., & Prakash, S. (2024). Adaptation, stress, social support and adjustment among rural students in India. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(3). <https://doi.org/10.25215/1203.271>
- Kaur, R., & Sharma, S. (2022). Gender differences in social adjustment and interpersonal support among undergraduate students. *International Journal of Bio-Resource and Stress Management*, 13(1), 53–61. <https://doi.org/10.23910/1.2022.2331>
- Kouzma, N. M., & Kennedy, G. A. (2004). Self-reported sources of stress in senior high school students. *Psychological Reports*, 94(1), 314–316. <https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.94.1.314-316>
- Kubrusly, A. C., de Souza, L. P. B., & Kopsaftopoulos, F. (2026). Effect of initial shear stress on acoustoelastic guided waves in plates. *Ultrasonics*, 164, 108006. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ultras.2026.108006>
- Kubrusly, M., do Carmo, J. M., Costa, H. S., Azevedo, L. M. C., Arruma Filho, C. A. D., da Silva, S. F. R., & Rocha, H. A. L. (2026). Association between social skills and academic stress among first-year undergraduate medical students. *Discover Psychology*, 6, 228. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-026-00775-8>
- Li, P., Yang, J., Zhou, Z., Zhao, Z., & Liu, T. (2022). The influence of college students' academic stressors on mental health during COVID-19: The mediating effect of social support, social well-being, and self-identity. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10, 917581. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.917581>
- Lin, Y. M., & Chen, F. S. (2009). Academic stress inventory of students at universities and colleges of technology. *World Transactions on Engineering and Technology Education*, 7(2), 157–162.
- Liu, S., Zhang, Y., Zhao, L., & Liu, Z. (2025). Academic stress detection based on multisource data: A systematic review from 2012 to 2024. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 33(3), 1823–1849. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2024.2387744>

- Loh, H. S., Gaur, S. S., & Sharma, P. (2021). Demystifying the link between emotional loneliness and brand loyalty: Mediating roles of nostalgia, materialism, and self-brand connections. *Psychology & Marketing*, 38(3), 537–552. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21452>
- Lopes, D. C., Gerolamo, M. C., Del Prette, Z. A. P., Musetti, M. A., & Del Prette, A. (2015). Social skills: A key factor for engineering students to develop interpersonal skills. *International Journal of Engineering Education*, 31(1), 405–413.
- Manchiraju, S., Sadachar, A., & Manchanda, R. (2021). Exploring the relationship between loneliness, materialism, and life satisfaction in a Western context: The moderating role of gender. *Studies in Business and Economics*, 16(2), 171–185. <https://doi.org/10.2478/sbe-2021-0032>
- Selye, H. (1956). Stress and psychiatry. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 113(5), 423–427. <https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.113.5.423>
- Shakeel, S., Fazal, S., & Majoka, M. I. (2022). Academic stress among university students in Pakistan: Causes and consequences. *Research Journal of Social Sciences and Economics Review*, 3(2), 27–34. [https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol3-iss2-2022\(27-34\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol3-iss2-2022(27-34))
- Singh, I., & Jha, A. (2013). Anxiety, optimism and academic achievement among students of private medical and engineering colleges: A comparative study. *Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 3(1), 222. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jedp.v3n1p222>
- Subasreebala, R., & Sreedevi, J. (2024). Perfectionism, perceived academic stress and social support among the college students of Bengaluru. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(1), 2300–2308. <https://doi.org/10.25215/1201.209>
- Suranto, A. W. (2011). *Komunikasi interpersonal*. Graha Ilmu.
- Taché, J., & Selye, H. (1985). On stress and coping mechanisms. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 7(1–4), 3–24. <https://doi.org/10.3109/01612848509009447>
- Xuan, Q. (2025). Emotional intelligence and holistic student development: An assessment of psychological and social efficacy in vocational university English education. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16, 1664645. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1664645>
- Zhang, S., Rehman, S., Zhao, Y., Rehman, E., & Yaqoob, B. (2024). Exploring the interplay of academic stress, motivation, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness in higher education: A longitudinal cross-lagged panel model approach. *BMC Psychology*, 12, 732. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-02284-6>