Social Intelligence in the Context of Digital Transformation Among Female Students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the level of digital social intelligence among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila, Algeria, and to examine whether this level varies according to two variables: academic specialization (Psychology vs. Media and Communication Sciences) and daily Internet usage hours. The study employed a descriptive-comparative design and was applied to a randomly selected sample of 80 second-year female students. Data were collected using a researcher-constructed scale comprising 35 items distributed across three dimensions: digital social awareness, digital relationship management, and digital empathy and emotional responsiveness, following thorough verification of the instrument's validity and reliability. To address the study questions, data were analyzed using SPSS through a one-sample t-test, an independent-samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA.

The findings yielded three principal results. First, participants demonstrated a high level of digital social intelligence, with an overall mean score of 80.94 that significantly exceeded the hypothetical mean of 70. Second, statistically significant differences were identified in favor of Psychology students (M = 83.20) over Media and Communication students (M = 78.03) at the 0.01 significance level, a finding attributed to the nature of specialized academic formation and the depth of training in interpersonal communication skills. Third, no significant differences were found based on daily Internet usage hours ($F = 0.07$, $p = .93$), suggesting that the quality, rather than the quantity, of digital engagement is the primary determinant of digital social intelligence.

Keywords: Social Intelligence — Digital Transformation — Higher Education — Digital Social Competence — Specialization Differences.

1. Introduction

Social intelligence stands as one of the foundational pillars of productive human interaction. It is the capacity that enables individuals to understand the depths of human psychology, read social cues with sensitivity, and build bridges of effective communication with others. With humanity's entry into an era of comprehensive digital transformation, this form of intelligence is no longer confined to face-to-face encounters; its horizons have expanded to encompass cyberspace and digital platforms, which have become the new stage upon which contemporary social relationships are enacted.

Since the dawn of the third millennium, human societies have experienced an accelerating engagement with digital communication technologies in their social interactions. This expansion has been striking on a global scale, reflected in the rapid increase in Internet users worldwide—from approximately one billion in 2005, representing roughly 10% of the global population, to 5.3 billion in 2022, accounting for approximately 66% of the world's population (ITU, 2022). This growth has

been paralleled by a surge in mobile phone subscriptions, which reached 73% of the global population and 81% of the Arab world's population in 2022 (La'boudi, 2024, p. 520).

This fundamental transition toward digitalization has not merely altered the tools of communication; it has reshaped the very competencies that constitute social intelligence, reconfiguring them to conform to the language of screens, the velocity of information flow, and the absence of traditional bodily language. It is in this context that studying this variable among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences becomes particularly significant, as these students represent the future professionals entrusted with understanding and guiding human behavior in society. A student of psychology or media and communication today needs, more than ever, a flexible social intelligence that transcends physical boundaries to achieve genuine influence and guidance within a complex technological environment.

This study was designed to illuminate the reality of social intelligence within the digital university environment, with the aim of identifying its levels among female students, and detecting the differences that may be introduced by different academic specializations or varying patterns of digital engagement. The present investigation seeks to offer a scientific perspective that contributes to understanding how social intelligence skills are exercised within the frameworks of digital transformation—thereby supporting the preparation of a generation of specialists capable of interacting with competence in a digital world that never ceases to evolve.

The world is witnessing a rapid digital transformation that has profoundly shaped the nature of human interactions, shifting relationships from the domain of physical encounter to the realm of cyberspace. Although female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences are arguably the cohort most closely aligned with understanding social bonds, a knowledge gap persists regarding how they practice social intelligence amid this transformation. Have digital media enhanced their capacities to understand others and interact with them meaningfully, or have they given rise to a new communicative pattern that lacks emotional depth? From this tension, the study's central research question emerges:

What is the level of social intelligence, in the context of digital transformation, among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila?

This overarching question is further specified through the following sub-questions:

- What is the level of social intelligence in the context of digital transformation among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila?
- Are there significant differences between Psychology students and Media and Communication Sciences students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation?
- Are there significant differences among students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation according to the variable of daily Internet usage hours?

Research Hypotheses

- The level of social intelligence in the context of digital transformation among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila, is moderate.
- There are no significant differences between Psychology students and Media and Communication Sciences students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation.
- There are no significant differences among students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation according to the variable of daily Internet usage hours.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the level of social intelligence in the context of digital transformation among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila.
- To determine whether significant differences exist between Psychology students and Media and Communication Sciences students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation.
- To investigate the effect of daily Internet usage hours on the level of social intelligence among students.
- To offer practical educational recommendations that contribute to the development of digital social intelligence skills in ways that serve students' professional trajectories.

Significance of the Study

This study addresses a vital subject, as it bridges an enduring psychological trait—social intelligence—with a defining contemporary variable: digital transformation. Its significance can be articulated along two complementary dimensions.

- **Theoretical Significance**
  - Conceptual grounding: The study contributes to defining the concept of 'digital social intelligence' and its formation among students of the humanities, examining whether its parameters differ from those of traditional, face-to-face social intelligence.
  - Enriching the Arabic academic literature: The study adds to the psychological and educational corpus research that bridges technology and behavioral sciences—a field characterized by scarcity in the Arab context, particularly regarding 'digital transformation' as a social environment rather than a mere set of technical tools.
  - Theoretical framework: The study may contribute to constructing a theoretical framework that explains how students in humanistic disciplines maintain their social equilibrium under conditions of intensive reliance on digital media.
- **Practical Significance**
  - Curriculum development: The study provides administrators at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences with empirical data regarding students' levels of social intelligence, which can inform the integration of digital social intelligence and communication skills within academic curricula.
  - Counseling programs: The findings enable university counseling units to design training programs aimed at enhancing social intelligence among students who may experience 'digital isolation' or deficiencies in effective online communication.
  - Academic and professional empowerment of women: Given that the sample consists of female students, the study supports their preparation for a future labor market increasingly demanding high social intelligence to manage remote teams and navigate digital work environments.
  - Scale construction: The researcher developed a measurement instrument that may be utilized by future scholars to assess social intelligence within rapidly changing technological contexts.

2. Conceptual and Operational Definitions

2.1. Social Intelligence

Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as the individual's ability to understand others, manage relationships, and act wisely in social situations. In the Dictionary of Social Sciences, social

intelligence is described as "the individual's capacity to handle novel situations involving reciprocal relationships with group members" (Musa Subhi Musa Al-Qudra, 2007, p. 14).

2.2. Social Intelligence in the Context of Digital Transformation

Conceptually, social intelligence within the context of digital transformation may be defined as the individual's ability to interact efficiently and responsibly within digital environments while preserving emotional and contextual understanding of human behaviors.

Operationally, it is defined as the total score obtained by a student on the measurement scale used in this study.

2.3. University Student

For the purposes of this study, university students are second-year female students enrolled in the Psychology and Media and Communication Sciences programs at the University of M'sila.

2.4. Digital Transformation

UNESCO (2021) defines digital transformation as "the comprehensive process that reemploys digital technologies to transform services, operations, and institutional culture in ways that generate added social and educational value." At the level of higher education, the OECD (2023) identifies three levels of transformation: Digitisation, Digitalisation, and Digital Transformation in its fullest sense.

Al-Hassi (2022, p. 1) describes digital transformation as an organizational shift toward big data, analytics, cloud computing, mobile devices, and social media platforms, whereby organizations continuously evolve in response to change. Al-Musalmani (2022, p. 816) traces the term to the digital era—the period succeeding the industrial age—in which all forms of information became digital and transmissible via the global information network through a variety of tools.

3. Literature Review

- Bar-On (2006), a pioneering scholar in measuring emotional intelligence, found that individuals in helping professions—such as psychology and social work—score higher on empathy and social responsibility compared to those in technical communication fields.
- Schutte et al. (2011) focused on individuals who study presentation and persuasion skills, such as those in media studies, demonstrating that they possess superior ability in impression management—a core dimension of digital social intelligence—which may translate into higher competence in building social networks.
- Grieve et al. (2013), published in Computers in Human Behavior, compared social intelligence in face-to-face settings with digital social intelligence. The study concluded that skills acquired online have become cross-disciplinary: intensive Internet users develop a shared digital sensitivity that effectively equalizes media students and psychology students due to the unity of the digital experience.
- Iqbal et al. (2023), published via Zenodo, investigated the relationship between social intelligence and academic performance among higher education students. Using a social competence scale on a university sample, the findings demonstrated that proficiency in social communication skills positively and directly influences academic achievement—regardless of demographic or educational variables—thereby supporting the stability and influence of social intelligence across diverse contexts.
- Sailinova et al. (2024) examined mechanisms for developing social intelligence and interactive skills among university students within contemporary digital learning

environments. Using a survey method with self-regulation and cognitive process scales, the study concluded that digital transformation imposes a new form of 'flexible empathy' and an alternative capacity for solving social problems in virtual contexts.

- Mazi Zainab (2017) aimed to determine the level of social intelligence among university students, and to identify whether this level varies by gender or specialization. Conducted on 80 Master's students in the Psychology Department at the University of Laghouat, the study employed the Social Intelligence Questionnaire developed by Al-Sayed Mohammed Abu Hashim. Data were analyzed using a one-sample t-test, an independent-samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA.
- Mansour (2018) reported statistically significant differences in emotional and social intelligence in favor of students in literary and humanities disciplines—including psychology—compared to other specializations, attributing this finding to the nature of the subject matter, which refines skills of self-understanding and understanding of others.
- Abd al-Latif (2020), in a study on social intelligence and its relationship to Internet addiction among university students, found that intensity of Internet use (number of hours) leads to a decline in face-to-face communication skills for all students regardless of specialization, thereby creating a condition of equalization—at reduced or moderate levels—in traditional social intelligence skills.

Table 1: Key Studies Related to the Present Research

Author/Year	Topic	Sample & Instrument	Key Findings	Relevance to Present Study
Thorndike (1920)	Conceptualization of Social Intelligence	Theoretical analysis	Distinguished social intelligence as a concept independent of general intelligence	Provides the theoretical foundation for scale construction
Bar-On (2006)	Social-emotional competencies in professional settings	Professionals across diverse sectors	Helping-profession workers score higher on empathy	Supports the hypothesis of specialization-based differences
Grieve et al. (2013)	Digital vs. face-to-face social intelligence	University students / digital skills questionnaire	Large convergence in digital skills across specializations	Helps explain the absence of differences by usage hours
Mazi (2017)	Level of social intelligence among university students	80 students / Al-Sayed Abu Hashim scale	University students demonstrate high	Corroborates the first hypothesis

Author/Year	Topic	Sample & Instrument	Key Findings	Relevance to Present Study
			general social intelligence	
Mansour (2018)	Specialization differences in social intelligence	University student sample	Humanities students surpass science students	Supports the second hypothesis findings
Abd al-Latif (2020)	Social intelligence and Internet addiction	University students / digital behavior questionnaire	Face-to-face skills decline with intensive digital use	Informs interpretation of the third hypothesis
Iqbal et al. (2023)	Social intelligence and academic performance	Public & private university students / social competence scale	Social intelligence positively affects performance regardless of demographics	Supports the stability of social intelligence across demographic variables
Sailinova et al. (2024)	Social intelligence development in digital environments	University students / survey + self-regulation scales	Digital environments foster flexible empathy and virtual problem-solving	Enriches the theoretical framework for digital intelligence dimensions

4. Methods

4.1. Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive-comparative analytical approach, which permits observation of the phenomenon—namely, the level of social intelligence in the context of digital transformation—as it exists in reality among students without any experimental manipulation. This design also allows for the detection of differences in social intelligence levels according to the study's variables: academic specialization (Psychology vs. Media and Communication Sciences) and daily Internet usage hours. This choice was made on the grounds that the approach is well-suited to the study's objectives.

4.2. Population and Sample

The study population comprised all female students enrolled at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences for the academic year 2025/2026 who use digital media in their daily interactions, including second-year students in Psychology and in Media and Communication Sciences.
A sample of 80 female students was drawn from both specializations, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Distribution by Specialization

Specialization	Frequency	Percentage
Psychology	45	56.25%
Media & Communication Sciences	35	43.75%
Total	80	100%

As shown in Table 2, Psychology students constituted 56.25% of the sample (n = 45), while Media and Communication Sciences students represented 43.75% (n = 35).

Table 3: Sample Distribution by Daily Internet Usage Hours

Daily Usage Hours	Frequency	Percentage
5 hours or fewer	30	37.50%
6 to 10 hours	29	36.25%
More than 10 hours	21	26.25%
Total	80	100%

Table 3 shows that 30 students (37.50%) used the Internet for five hours or fewer per day; 29 students (36.25%) for between five and ten hours; and 21 students (26.25%) for more than ten hours.

4.3. Measurement Instrument

The researcher developed a purpose-built scale consisting of 35 items distributed across three primary dimensions. These dimensions were derived and adapted from Albrecht's (2006) model of social intelligence and indicators of digital interaction in virtual environments.

Table 4: Dimensions of the Digital Social Intelligence Scale and Item Distribution

Dim. No.	Dimension	No. of Items	Score Range
1	Digital Social Awareness (reading contexts and interpreting cues)	13	13 – 39
2	Digital Relationship Management (building networks and positive influence)	12	12 – 36
3	Digital Empathy and Emotional Responsiveness	10	10 – 30
Total	—	35	35 – 105

Responses were recorded using a three-point Likert-type scale: Always (3 points), Sometimes (2 points), Never (1 point). Accordingly, the total score range is 35 (minimum) to 105 (maximum), with a hypothetical mean of 70, which serves as the criterion for evaluating participants' levels.

4.4. Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

Validity was verified through two complementary approaches:

- Content Validity (Expert Review): The scale was submitted to three expert reviewers specializing in psychology and psychological measurement from several Algerian universities. Agreement ratios were computed using Lawshe's (1975) Content Validity Ratio formula. Agreement rates ranged from 80% to 100% across items; two items with agreement rates below 70% were removed, leaving 35 items in the final version.
- Construct Validity: Item-total correlations were computed for each item within its respective dimension. Correlation coefficients ranged from 0.41 to 0.79, all statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Reliability was assessed through two methods:

- Cronbach's Alpha: The overall coefficient reached 0.81, with dimension-level coefficients ranging between 0.74 and 0.79—values considered acceptable in educational and psychological research.
- Split-Half Reliability: The Spearman-Brown corrected correlation coefficient was 0.78.

4.5. Statistical Analyses

- Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for descriptive purposes.
- One-sample t-test: To evaluate the first hypothesis by comparing the observed mean against the hypothetical mean (70).
- Levene's test for equality of variances: To verify homogeneity of variance prior to the independent-samples t-test.
- Independent-samples t-test: To evaluate the second hypothesis.
- One-way ANOVA: To evaluate the third hypothesis.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Hypothesis One: Level of Digital Social Intelligence

The first hypothesis posited that the level of social intelligence in the context of digital transformation among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila, is moderate. To test this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was conducted; results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: One-Sample t-Test Results for Hypothesis One

N	M	SD	SE	t	df	Sig.	Hypothetical Mean	Decision
80	80.94	9.03	0.54	80.10	79	.000	70	Significant

Although the first hypothesis predicted a moderate level of digital social intelligence, the results revealed a markedly different picture. The data indicated a high level of digital social intelligence, with an overall mean of 80.94 that substantially exceeded the hypothetical mean of 70 ($t = 80.10$, $df = 79$, $p < .001$). Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

This finding is consistent with Mazi (2017), whose study of Master's students in Psychology at the University of Laghouat confirmed that university students exhibit a high level of general social intelligence, suggesting that this characteristic is not specific to any single institution but rather

extends across the Algerian university environment. The result also aligns with Bar-On (2006), who demonstrated that individuals engaged in humanistic and helping professions score highly on empathy and social responsibility—qualities that naturally extend to students of the humanities. Furthermore, Iqbal et al. (2023) showed that social intelligence positively influences academic performance regardless of demographic variables, underscoring the stability and elevation of this trait across diverse university settings.

The high level observed may be explained by the nature of university life itself: the academic environment continuously immerses students in a complex network of academic, social, and digital relationships, which cultivates communication, adaptability, and social interaction skills. Additionally, as Sailinova et al. (2024) noted, the digital transformation of modern learning environments has generated a new form of 'flexible empathy' and virtual social problem-solving capacity, raising the ceiling of students' digital social competence beyond what was initially anticipated.

5.2. Hypothesis Two: Differences by Academic Specialization

The second hypothesis posited that no significant differences exist between Psychology students and Media and Communication Sciences students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to examine this hypothesis; results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Independent-Samples t-Test Results by Academic Specialization

Specialization	N	M	SD	F (Levene)	Sig. (Levene)	t	df	Sig.
Psychology	45	83.20	7.31	7.38	.008	2.63	78	.01
Media & Comm. Sciences	35	78.03	10.25			2.52	59.06	.01

Contrary to the null hypothesis, the results of the independent-samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level in favor of Psychology students (M = 83.20, SD = 7.31) compared to Media and Communication Sciences students (M = 78.03, SD = 10.25). Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This finding converges clearly with Mansour (2018), who confirmed significant differences in social intelligence favoring humanities specializations—including psychology—on the grounds that the subject matter of these disciplines refines skills for understanding the self and others. The result also aligns with Bar-On (2006), who demonstrated the superiority of helping-profession individuals on dimensions of empathy and social responsibility over those in technical communication fields.

This finding does not fundamentally contradict Grieve et al. (2013), who pointed to convergence in digital skills across specializations: the gap between the two group means (83.20 vs. 78.03) reflects superiority in overall social intelligence, not merely in the technical-digital domain—an area in which Media and Communication students remain competitive, as Schutte et al. (2011) suggested in demonstrating their superior capacity for impression management and social network construction.

The researcher attributes these differences to the fact that Psychology students undergo systematic, methodological training in active listening, emotional recognition, contextual

interpretation, and the analysis of what lies behind words and within texts—all foundational competencies for social intelligence. By contrast, the Media and Communication Sciences curriculum tends toward mastering technical tools, crafting media messages, and managing digital platforms, which may privilege technical intelligence at the expense of the depth of direct interpersonal connection. It is also notable that the higher standard deviation among Media and Communication students (10.25 vs. 7.31) reveals greater within-group variability in social intelligence levels, possibly attributable to the diversity of academic tracks and varying degrees of exposure to humanistic content within this specialization.

5.3. Hypothesis Three: Differences by Daily Internet Usage Hours

The third hypothesis posited that no significant differences exist among students in social intelligence within the context of digital transformation according to the variable of daily Internet usage hours. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test this hypothesis; results are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics by Daily Internet Usage Hours

Usage Category	N	M	SD
5 hours or fewer	30	80.60	9.02
Between 5 and 10 hours	29	80.83	9.54
More than 10 hours	21	80.57	8.75
Total	80	80.94	9.03

Table 8: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences by Daily Internet Usage Hours

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.20	2	6.10	0.07	.93
Within Groups	6440.48	77	83.64		
Total	6452.68	79			

The results fully supported the null hypothesis: no statistically significant differences were found among the three usage categories ($F = 0.07$, $p = .93$). The mean scores were strikingly similar across groups, ranging from 80.57 to 80.83.

This finding aligns notably with Grieve et al. (2013), who demonstrated that digital skills have become cross-disciplinary, and that intensive Internet users develop a shared digital sensitivity regardless of specialization. It also converges with Sailinova et al. (2024), who found that contemporary digital environments impose on all users the acquisition of flexible empathy and virtual social adaptation skills, regardless of the extent of temporal exposure. Similarly, the finding resonates with Abd al-Latif (2020), who observed that high usage intensity ultimately leads to a form of equalization among users in digital communication patterns—though that observation was made in a cautionary context concerning the decline of face-to-face communication skills.

The most probable explanation for this finding is that the temporal quantity of Internet use is no longer the decisive determinant of digital social intelligence; rather, the quality of content and the

nature of interactions constitute the real difference. A student who spends limited hours in deep interpersonal online engagement may demonstrate higher social intelligence than one who spends extended hours passively consuming entertainment content. Moreover, prolonged immersion in the digital environment subjects all students to a unified system of digital language—emoticons, abbreviations, and platform-specific communicative norms—thus narrowing the gaps that might otherwise result from differences in usage hours, and enabling students to converge on what may be termed a 'shared digital baseline' of virtual social communication skills.

6. Limitations of the Study

The generalizability of the present findings is subject to the following limitations:

- Geographic and institutional scope: The study was confined to the University of M'sila; results may differ in other universities or regions with varying digital infrastructure.
- Sample size: The total sample (N = 80) limits generalization, and the 'more than 10 hours' group (n = 21) is relatively small.
- Instrument: The scale was constructed specifically for this study and requires further validation across different contexts before it can be adopted as a standardized tool.
- Variables not examined: The study did not address mediating variables such as the types of applications used or socioeconomic status.
- Methodological scope: The research design relied on the total scale score without analysis of sub-dimensions, which obscures potentially valuable information.

7. Conclusion

Against the backdrop of the accelerating transformations that the world is witnessing at the intersection of digital change and higher education, this study illuminated a psychologically and socially significant phenomenon: social intelligence within the context of digital transformation among female students at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of M'sila.

Proceeding from three principal hypotheses and employing appropriate statistical tools, the study yielded a set of meaningful findings that enrich theoretical understanding and open promising applied horizons. The results showed that students demonstrate a high level of digital social intelligence, indicating that the university environment—with its diversity of interactions and richness of digital and human experiences—constitutes a fertile incubator for the growth and development of this competence.

The study also revealed that academic specialization leaves a distinct imprint on the level of digital social intelligence: Psychology students outperformed their counterparts in Media and Communication Sciences, affirming that systematic knowledge formation and deep training in understanding human psychology and interaction dynamics produce a more firmly grounded and deeply influential social intelligence. Conversely, the study established that the temporal quantity of Internet use does not produce meaningful differentiation in digital social intelligence levels, thus pointing to the quality of usage as the more profound and impactful determinant.

Taken together, this study constitutes a scientific contribution to the Arabic psychological and educational literature in a field of ever-growing importance. It invites a reconsideration of how digital technology is employed within the university space—not merely from the standpoint of mastering the tool, but from the standpoint of deepening human awareness of the other and preserving the essence of human communication at the heart of the digital revolution.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the researcher offers the following practical recommendations and future research proposals:

- The need to integrate specialized educational modules in digital social intelligence within interdisciplinary courses shared across humanities specializations, so that this competency does not remain the exclusive domain of a single program, but becomes a shared skill cultivated across the faculty.
- Designing targeted training workshops for Media and Communication Sciences students that strengthen deep digital interpersonal communication skills, with the aim of narrowing the discovered gap with Psychology students—specifically by focusing on the humanistic dimension of the media message rather than the technical dimension alone.
- Directing university counseling units toward developing preventive programs that address 'digital isolation' and improve the quality of digital interaction, while alerting students to the fundamental distinction between digital efficiency and genuine social depth, and encouraging balanced communication between physical and virtual spaces.
- Capitalizing on the high level of digital social intelligence exhibited by students as a springboard for promoting constructive social engagement via digital platforms in service of community and academic life.
- Replicating the study on larger samples spanning multiple Algerian universities to test the generalizability of findings beyond the local context of the University of M'sila.
- Conducting gender-comparative studies (male vs. female) and comparisons across different academic levels for a more comprehensive understanding of the variables influencing digital social intelligence.
- Investigating the nature of digital applications used (social, educational, or entertainment) as a more nuanced and precise explanatory variable than mere usage hours—a direction clearly implied by the third hypothesis findings.
- Examining variability in the sub-dimensions of digital social intelligence—such as self-other awareness, relationship management, and digital empathy—across different university specializations, rather than relying solely on the total scale score.
- Employing mixed-methods designs that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture the lived experiences of students and trace the ways in which they exercise digital social intelligence in their academic and daily lives.

In closing, social intelligence in the age of digital transformation is no longer an academic luxury or an elite intellectual concern; it has become an indispensable competency for navigating the challenges of the twenty-first century. The university institution bears full responsibility for cultivating, preserving, and directing it toward constructive human ends.

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