Chapter-1

Introduction

Social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviours are interconnected constructs that have garnered significant attention in psychological research. Social intelligence refers to an individual's ability to effectively perceive and navigate social situations. While moral disengagement involves the cognitive reconfiguration and rationalization of unethical actions. Similarly, rule-breaking behaviours encompass actions that violate societal norms and laws. Numerous studies have investigated the association between social intelligence and moral disengagement, highlighting the intricate interplay between these factors. According to researches individuals with higher levels of social intelligence tend to exhibit lower levels of moral disengagement (Leidner et al., 2010). These results indicated that individuals who possess a greater understanding of social dynamics are more inclined to uphold moral principles and refrain from engaging in unethical conduct. Furthermore, moral disengagement has been found to be a significant predictor of rule-breaking behaviors. According to numerous studies, rule-breaking behaviours including lying, cheating, and other deviant behaviour show a positive link with moral disengagement (Hyde et al., 2010). This suggested that those who engage in cognitive process that justify immoral behaviour are more likely to violate social standards and norms.

Social Intelligence

"According to Thorndike, social intelligence pertains to the skill of comprehending and effectively handling individuals of various genders and ages, enabling wise actions in human interactions. Social intelligence, often recognized as people skills or tact, involves the capability to communicate proficiently with others.

It is an acquired skill and requires self-awareness, situational awareness, and an understanding of social dynamics. Social intelligence refers to the ability to grasp and effectively comprehend social circumstances. It is a collection of cognitive and affective abilities that people can use to regulate social dynamics, develop and maintain relationships, and interpret social hints and manifestations. Success in a variety of areas of life, including as intimate partnerships, the workplace, and leadership, depends on social intelligence. Experts suggest that social intelligence comprises four significant components. The first factor pertains to Communication Skills, encompassing the ability to actively listen, comprehend both the literal and emotional aspects of spoken words, engage in effective interpersonal communication, express thoughts and emotions clearly, and exhibit tact in social interactions. According to (Stanger & Backhouse, 2020), effective communication skills are essential for social intelligence as they facilitate meaningful interactions and enable individuals to convey their thoughts and emotions accurately. The second factor involves familiarity with social roles and rules, which entails being conscious of the numerous, often unspoken conventions governing various interactions and situations, as well as understanding how to appropriately navigate different social contexts. It involves understanding and interpreting the unspoken rules, expectations, and cultural norms that govern social interactions. Socially aware individuals are sensitive to the needs and concerns of others, and they can adapt their behavior accordingly (Goleman, 2006). The third aspect concerns understanding motivation, which involves deciphering the underlying messages and intentions behind a speaker's statements or behavior. For instance, it involves being able to perceive the contradiction between someone assuring that everything is fine while tears stream down their face. Even in complex situations, individuals with strong social

intelligence can comprehend the intricacies and nuances involved. Last is impression control that is understanding how other people will react to you and acting in a way to leave the impression you desire are two aspects of this talent.

Emotional intelligence means having the ability to comprehend and regulate both personal and others' emotions, emotional intelligence plays a vital role in social intelligence. Within emotional intelligence, there are four subdomains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, strengths, and weaknesses is an essential aspect of self-awareness. This is a crucial component of social intelligence because it enables people to be aware of how their emotions and behaviours affect others and how to choose reactions to social circumstances consciously. Being able to control one's own emotions and behaviours in reaction to social situations is a key component of self-management. Emotionally regulated individuals can handle stress, frustration, and conflicts constructively, maintaining composure and making rational decisions (Reynolds et al., 2014). Individuals must be able to regulate their emotions and impulses in order to prevent unfavourable consequences in social interactions, which call for a high level of self-control and discipline. Understanding and recognising other people's emotions and behaviours and underlying motivation behind these cues is also an important component of social awareness. This includes being conscious of social cues including voice tone, body language, and facial expressions. Similar to this, relationship management calls for fostering positive relationships with others. In order to develop and maintain healthy relationships, people must be able to understand and respond to the needs and feelings of others. This requires a combination of empathy, communication, and conflict-resolution skills. In general , social intelligence is the ability to use interpersonal skills effectively to achieve one's

goals and objectives. This calls for the capacity for persuasion, effective communication, and conflict resolution Skills. Success in many facets of life depends on a sophisticated combination of skills called social intelligence. By developing and strengthening these skills, people can become better communicators, leaders, and connection builders.

Rule Breaking

Rules are officially recognised notions on what should or shouldn't be done in particular situations (Argyle et al. 1981). A rule is a predetermined principle, regulation, or direction that directs behaviour or activities in a particular circumstance or field. Rules can be formal or informal, and diverse methods, such as social norms, legal systems, or institutional policies, can be employed to enforce them. Rules are put in place in many areas of life, including as sports, education, the government, and business, in order to promote justice, safety, and order. Commonly, people view obeying the law as an essential part of having social and ethical duty.

Failure to carry out, implement equitably, or keep an eye on rules and regulations that govern or have an impact on the daily lives and activities of common citizens (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2011). Rule violation might happen accidentally or on purpose. It might be a personal activity or something the body chooses to undertake or not do. The term "rule-breaking behaviour" refers to conduct that deviates from social norms, rules, or laws that are meant to maintain order and encourage prosocial behaviour in society. Such conduct might range from minor transgressions, like littering, to more serious behaviours, like stealing or violent crime. While certain rule-breaking actions, like civil disobedience, may be relatively harmless or even advantageous, others may have negative effects on both the person and society at large.

There are certain causes of rule-breaking conduct, the contributing variables, and the possible consequences of such behaviour that effect both individuals and society. Lack of self-control is one of the most frequently reported causes of rule-breaking behaviour (Tangney et al., 2004). Some people may suffer with impulsivity or have trouble with delaying gratification, which causes them to do behaviours that are pleasurable in the moment but may have unfavourable long-term effects (Piquero & Moffitt, 2005). For instance, a person who is struggling with addiction might use drugs even though he is aware that doing so is illegal have negative effects on his health. Another reason that can encourage rule-breaking behaviour is feeling of injustice and deprived. People may feel justified in breaking rules or laws to get their voices heard if they believe that they are not being treated properly or that their needs and concerns are being disregarded. Civil disobedience is an example of this, where people deliberately break the rule or law to raise attention to social or political issues. Peer pressure is a third element that may encourage rule-breaking behaviour. Particularly adolescents and young adults may be greatly influenced by their peers and exhibit rule-breaking conduct in an effort to fit in or be accepted by their social group. This might result in behaviours like drug use or underage drinking, which are frequently accepted as norms among some peer groups (Haynie, 2001). The presence of situational factors that increase the likelihood of breaking the law is another potential cause of rule-breaking behaviour. People may be more inclined to theft or engage in other illegal activities if they are having financial difficulties or believe that their chances of being caught or punished are less (Tyler, 2006).

It is crucial to keep in mind that not all rule-breaking action is motivated by adverse factors. There are times when people disobey the law to protest unjust or antiquated social norms and promote beneficial social change. People who willfully

break the law to draw attention to issues like injustice or prejudice are regularly seen engaging in this type of action in social justice or civil rights campaigns (Ring & Hurst, 2019). Regardless of the motivations behind it, breaching the rules can have a significant impact on both individuals and society as a whole. People who violate laws or social norms may face legal repercussions, including fines, imprisonment, or other types of punishment (Bandura, 2016). But breaching the law can have serious social and economical repercussions, such as strained or strained relationships, lost of employment chances, or limited access to resources like housing and healthcare. Furthermore, breaking the law in society can make people lose faith in social institutions like the police, which can lead to reduced cooperation and heighten conflict between the individual and the state. In a society, breaking the law can result in a rise in crime and social unrest, which can have negative effects on communities. For example, areas with high crime rates can see a decline in property value, a reduction in job opportunities, and a rise in social isolation.

Moral Disengagement

Albert Bandura used the term first time "moral disengagement" to describe eight interconnected cognitive mechanisms that allow us to disregard our internalised moral standards and act immorally without experiencing negative consequences (Bandura, 1999). Moral disengagement is a psychological process through which people distance themselves from their moral values and engage in activities or behaviours that are morally dubious without experiencing guilt or responsibility for their actions. The moral disengagement processes dissociate our internal standards from how we interpret our conduct, rendering them useless. It is the process through which people defend their immoral or destructive behaviour to themselves and others. It refers to a collection of mental and behavioural strategies that people use to justify

their immoral actions, stave off feelings of guilt or shame, and uphold a positive self-concept. According to Bandura, moral disengagement is a complex process that encompasses a variety of cognitive and behavioural techniques that let people ignore their moral principles and rationalise their damaging behaviour.

Social cognitive theory describes eight MD practices: Moral justification, euphemistic labelling, advantageous comparison, displacement, diffusion of responsibility, blaming the victim, distorting the consequences, dehumanisation and they were grouped into four broad domains. The first category focuses on cognitive restructuring, which involves redefining one's behaviour in a way that avoids perceiving it as immoral through moral justification (using noble ends or moral purposes to justify unethical means), euphemistic labelling (describing negative actions in a manner that downplays their harmful nature or makes them seem more respectable), or advantageous comparison (portraying a wrongdoing as less severe by comparing it to a worse or more negative act). The second crucial aspect, minimizing one's agentive role, entails distancing or obscuring personal responsibility for harmful actions by either shifting the blame onto authorities or diffusing responsibility among others involved. The third set of mechanisms for moral disengagement operates by distorting or misrepresenting the consequences of one's actions, such as minimizing, ignoring, or misinterpreting the negative or harmful effects. The fourth domain involves dehumanization (depriving the victim of their human qualities and equal worth) or victim-blaming, serving as a means to reduce moral distress by believing that the victim deserves their suffering.

Relationship between Social Intelligence and Moral Disengagement

Social intelligence is the ability to deal with and navigate social situations successfully. It includes various skills like social observation, communication, and

empathy, are included. Moral disengagement, on the other hand, refers to the psychological process through which people rationalise and justify their unethical behaviour. Several cognitive strategies are employed, including moral justification, euphemism labelling, and displacement of responsibility. It is a complex relationship because there are many factors that affect how social intelligence and moral disengagement are related. Understanding the relationship between social intelligence and it can be accomplished, for example, by looking at the ways in which it may either cause or prevent moral disengagement. On the one hand, those who have strong social intelligence might be more advantageous. On the one hand, persons with high social intelligence may be better able to understand and value the opinions and feelings of others, which may make them more sympathetic and less likely to act immorally. Also, social intelligence may encourage cooperation and dialogue, which can assist people in resolving disagreements and finding win-win solutions without the need for moral disengagement (Dodge & Godwin, 2013)

The moral atmosphere in which people function may also have an impact on the link between social intelligence and moral disengagement. Those with high levels of social intelligence may be more inclined to follow moral norms and less prone to participate in moral disengagement in circumstances where those norms are obvious and strictly enforced. In contrast, highly socially competent people may be more likely to engage in moral disengagement in contexts where moral standards are uncertain or leniently enforced since they may see less social consequences for their immoral actions (Pellegrini et al., 2018). Furthermore, the relationship between social intelligence and moral disengagement may also be influenced by individual personality characteristics. For instance, regardless of their level of social intelligence, people with high empathy and prosocial conduct may be less likely to participate in

moral disengagement. Similarly , people with strong moral beliefs and a strong feeling of personal responsibility may be less vulnerable to the cognitive techniques of moral disengagement even if they have high levels of social intelligence.

Relationship between Social Intelligence and Rule Breaking Behaviors

Understanding and successfully navigating social events and interactions are referred to as social intelligence skills. There are numerous qualities required, including emotional intelligence, empathy, communication, and interpersonal skills. Any behaviour that disobeys laws, rules, or social norms is referred to as "rule-breaking behaviour." These habits, which are influenced by a variety of factors, including social intelligence, can have a negative impact on individuals as well as society at large. Research suggests that there is a complex link between social IQ and rule-breaking actions. On the one hand, those who have high social intelligence may be better equipped to manage social interactions and relationships, which can reduce the likelihood that they'll break the law. Conversely, persons who have a high level of social intelligence might also be better able to take advantage of social norms and expectations, which increases the likelihood that they may break the law (Burt, 2012).

One way social intelligence can affect rule-breaking behaviours is through its impact on emotional control. High social intelligence individuals usually have better impulses and emotion control, which might reduce their propensity to behave impulsively or break the law. People with high social intelligence may be better able to detect and respond to the emotions of others, which may reduce the risk of conflicts that could lead to rule-breaking behaviours (Baranik et al., 2016). Another area where social intelligence might influence rule-breaking behaviour is in social norms and expectations. High social intelligence individuals are frequently better at comprehending and navigating the implicit expectations and norms of social

situations, which can help them succeed in these contexts. People with high social intelligence might also be more conscious of the ways in which social norms can be exploited, and they might be more inclined to break the rules if they believe doing so will benefit them in some way (Duffy et al., 2016).

Additionally, research has shown that the development of moral judgement and decision-making may be influenced by social intelligence. Socially knowledgeable individuals may be more likely to consider the emotional and social ramifications of their choices, which can reduce the likelihood that they would break the rule. However, those with high social intelligence may also be more likely to break the rule if they believe doing so is justified by their own moral convictions. Furthermore, social intelligence can influence how people perceive and respond to leaders and other people in positions of authority. People with high social intelligence may be better able to understand the social dynamics of power and authority, which may make it easier for them to deal with hierarchical structures. However, persons with high social intelligence may also be more likely to break the rule if they think the rule is being applied unfairly or unjustly by the authorities. The association between social intelligence and rule-breaking behaviours can also be influenced by context. People with high social intelligence may be better equipped to adapt to a variety of social contexts and situations since different social environments need different abilities and strategies.

Relationship between Moral Disengagement and Rule-breaking Behaviours

Some empirical evidences support the relationship between social intelligence and rule-breaking behaviours. The relationship between the moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviours can be explained through the process of moral justification. Those who break the rules can justify their acts by explaining moral reasons to make

them seem more morally righteous or even desirable (Hinduja & Patchin, 2018). For instance, a person who shoplifts may defend his behaviour by claiming that he cannot afford the products taken or that the business they stole from is a major firm with substantial financial resources. The individual can then minimise his sense of guilt or responsibility by rationalising his actions. Another way through which moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviours are interrelated is dehumanization. People are more prone to act in ways that hurt or exploit others when they believe they are less than human. For instance, someone who thinks of homeless people as lazy or undeserving may act in ways that hurt them more frequently, such robbing them or denying them access to assistance. Dehumanization can also take place on a broader scale, for example, when nations or groups see one another as less than human, which can result in conflict or racial killing (Waytz & Epley 2012)

Several factors, in addition to moral disengagement, can also affect rule-breaking behaviours. The social environment in which the behaviour occurs is also a factor. Whether or not people break the rules depends in large part on social norms and peer pressure (Hyde et al., 2010). For instance, a person may be more inclined to break the rules if they are among others who do the same because they may feel pressured to follow the group's standards. Many theoretical viewpoints and empirical evidences support the relationship between social intelligence, rule-breaking behaviours and moral disengagement.

Theoretical perspective

Understanding and successfully navigating social events and relationships is referred to as "social intelligence." Moral disengagement, on the other hand, refers to the psychological process through which people rationalize and justify away their unethical behaviour. Any behaviour that disobeys laws, rules, or social norms is

referred to as "rule-breaking behaviour." It is possible to conceptualise moral disengagement and social intelligence as two sides of same coin. Social intelligence improves one's ability to understand and interact with others, but it may also be used to manipulate or take advantage of others. On the other hand, moral disengagement enables people to justify their harmful behaviour, but it can also lead to a breakdown in social relationships and a lack of empathy for other people. There are various theoretical explanations for the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviours.

The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

Cognitive dissonance theory explained the association between social intelligence and rule-breaking as well as moral disengagement. According to this notion, individuals make an effort to act and think consistently. Cognitive dissonance develops when there is a conflict between a person's moral ideals and their participation in unethical action which produces discomfort and psychological tension. Social intelligence is the capacity to comprehend and successfully negotiate social situations, which includes being aware of cultural norms and comprehending other people's points of view. Individuals having high social intelligence are more likely to comprehend the moral implications of their decisions and have greater empathy for others. On the other hand, moral disengagement refers to a psychological process that lets people justify or explain their unethical behaviour, so lowering the experience of cognitive dissonance. People are able to distance themselves from the negative impacts of their behaviour and prevent feeling guilty or ashamed by using cognitive strategies including moral justification, euphemism labelling, and responsibility displacement. Due to their awareness of social standards, empathy for others, and ability to consider multiple viewpoints, people with higher levels of social

intelligence are thus less likely to participate in moral disengagement and disobey the law. There is an inverse association between social intelligence and moral disengagement because people who experience cognitive dissonance between their moral convictions and unethical behaviour are motivated to change their behaviour.

Cognitive Empathy Hypothesis

According to the Cognitive Empathy Theory, people with higher levels of social intelligence have a better ability to understand and adopt other people's perspectives. In turn, this capability lessens their propensity for moral disengagement. The ability to understand and take into account the emotions and thoughts of others is a function of a variety of skills, including perspective-taking, emotional comprehension, and empathy. This hypothesis contends that people with high social intelligence are better at recognizing the possible harm that their actions may cause to others. They are better able to understand the effects of their actions because they can precisely imagine the emotional and psychological effects on other people or groups. These people find it harder to distance themselves from moral principles as a result of their heightened sense of responsibility and accountability brought on by their increased cognitive empathy. Furthermore, those who have high social intelligence are more likely to have a strong set of prosocial traits and interpersonal abilities. They are better at resolving problems and preserving healthy relationships because they have a stronger awareness of moral standards and ideals. As a result, individuals are less likely to use moral disengagement tactics, such as cognitive rewiring and justification, to detach themselves from unethical behaviour. Instead, because of their better ability to understand others' perspectives and empathise with them, they are more likely to act morally.

Self Control Theory

      Criminal scientists Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson developed the self-control theory, provides an explanation for rule-breaking and delinquent behaviour based on individual's capacity for self-control. According to this hypothesis, people with low self-control are more likely to break the law, whereas people with high self-control are more likely to follow social standards and the law. On the other side, social intelligence refers to the ability to understand and successfully negotiate social situations. It includes abilities like empathy, perspective-taking, and reading social clues. Socially intelligent people are more able to understand the effects of their acts and form moral judgements. Albert Bandura, a psychologist, defined moral disengagement as the mental processes that enable people to rationalise and justify their unethical behaviour. When people engage in moral disengagement, the moral control systems that often prevent them from breaking the law are disengaged. This could mean employing tactics like moral justification, downplaying the consequences of their actions, and placing blame on others. When the self-control hypothesis, social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviours are taken into account, it is evident that those with low self-control are more likely to participate in moral disengagement. Due to their lack of self-control, they find it difficult to resist instant temptations, and moral disengagement serves as a cognitive defence for them to to engage in rule-breaking behaviour .

      However, social intelligence might act as a mitigating factor in this dynamic. Individuals having high social intelligence are more likely to be aware of how their actions could influence others and to empathise with them. Social norms are strengthened as a result, and individuals are better able to maintain behavioural control even in the face of temptations or circumstances that promote moral

disengagement. The self-control theory concludes by suggesting that those with weak self-control are more prone to engage in rule-breaking behaviour. Moral disengagement enables justification and acceptance of such behaviour by acting as a cognitive defensive mechanism. However, social intelligence promotes moral thinking and aids in the internalisation of cultural norms, which lessens the likelihood that people will engage in rule-breaking behaviour.

Chapter 2

Literature review

Understanding and successfully navigating social events and relationships is referred to as "social intelligence." Moral disengagement, on the other hand, refers to the psychological process through which people rationalize and justify away their unethical behaviour. Any behaviour that disobeys laws, rules, or social norms is referred to as "rule-breaking behaviour." There are various researches that explain the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviours. Numerous empirical supported the idea that moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour are related. For instance, Bandura et al, 1996 study found that those who scored highly on moral disengagement were more likely to engage in illegal actions like lying and stealing. In addition, the study found that those who scored highly on moral disengagement were less likely to feel guilt or sorrow for their deeds, which shows that moral disengagement can decrease the negative emotional consequences of breaking the law. Similarly in another study by Frick and colleagues, 2014 moral disengagement of a sample of young people was found to be positively correlated with delinquent behaviour. The study also found that moral disengagement was connected to other criminal behaviour risk factors, such as a poor self-control, lack of empathy and criminal record.

In a study conducted on young Italian teenagers, the relationship between relational violence, social comparison, and moral disengagement was examined. The researchers used self-report questionnaires to collect information on relationship aggression, social comparison, and moral disengagement. The results of the study demonstrated a strong correlation between relational aggressiveness and moral disengagement among the participants. The researchers found that social comparison

acted as a mediating factor in the relationship between relational aggressiveness and moral disengagement. According to the findings, moral disengagement may have an impact on relationship violence, and social comparison may strengthen this relationship (Gini & Pozzoli, 2013).

Another study investigated the relationship between bullying behaviour, moral disengagement, and empathy in teenagers. The researchers gathered data on bullying, moral disengagement, and empathy using self-report questionnaires. The results of the study showed a negative correlation between bullying behaviours and empathy. The researchers found that moral disengagement acted as a mediating factor in the relationship between empathy and bullying behaviour. According to the results, teens who have high empathy levels may be less likely to engage in bullying activity, and moral disengagement may have an effect on the relationship between empathy and bullying behaviour (Espejo et al., 2020). The Childhood Moral Disengagement Scale (CMDS) is currently being developed and validated among Dutch youngsters. The researchers used self-report questionnaires to collect data on moral disengagement. According to the study's findings, the CMDS was a valid and trustworthy measure of young people's moral disengagement. Additionally, the researchers found a strong correlation between aggressive behaviour and moral disengagement (Pellegrini et al., 2018).

An investigation of the relationship between moral disengagement and social intelligence in the context of cyber bullying was conducted (Zych et al., 2020). According to the study's results, social intelligence was negatively connected with moral disengagement in the context of cyberbullying, meaning that those with higher levels of social intelligence were less likely to display behaviours that allow them to disengage morally from cyberbullying. A further finding of the study was that there

were gender differences in moral disengagement and social intelligence, with female students surpassing male students in both categories. The findings of this study suggest that in the context of cyberbullying, social intelligence might serve as a defence against moral disengagement. The research stresses the importance of taking into account gender differences in social intelligence and moral disengagement when talking about cyberbullying.

In order to determine the connection between social intelligence and criminal behaviour, a study was conducted in which eighty criminals participated and provided answers to inquiries concerning their social intelligence and criminal history. The findings revealed a negative correlation between criminal behaviour and social intelligence, indicating that criminal behaviour was less likely to occur in those with higher social intelligence. The results of the study suggest that social intelligence may play a significant role in deterring criminal behaviour (Petruccelli et al., 2016). Concentrating on improving social intelligence abilities may help people get through difficult social situations without committing crimes. Another study conducted to learn more about the relationship between social intelligence and teenagers' deviant behaviour. The results showed a negative correlation between social intelligence and deviant behaviour, which meant that those with higher social intelligence were less likely to engage in deviant behaviour. According to the study's findings, social intelligence may be beneficial in preventing adolescent misbehaviour. If adolescents can develop social intelligence skills, they may be better able to navigate social situations without engaging in antisocial behaviour (Vanzalk et al., 2013)

Another study was conducted to learn more about the relationship between social intelligence and bullying behaviours in adolescents. In the study, middle school students took part and responded to questions about their social intelligence and

history of bullying behaviour. The results show a negative correlation between bullying behaviour and social intelligence, which means that those with higher social intelligence are less likely to bully others. The findings of this study suggest that social intelligence may be essential in preventing young people from engaging in bullying activity. If adolescents possess social intelligence abilities that enable them to communicate effectively and comprehend the perspectives of others, they may be less prone to engage in bullying behaviour (Cook et al., 2010).

A study was carried out to investigate the relationship between social intelligence and teen substance use (Duffy et al., 2016). Participants responded to a questionnaire about their social intelligence and substance use history. The results showed a negative correlation between social intelligence and substance use, which means that those with higher social intelligence were less likely to use drugs. According to the study's findings, social intelligence may serve as a barrier to adolescent substance use. If adolescents develop social intelligence skills, they may be better able to endure peer pressure and navigate challenging social situations without turning to substance use. Another study investigated the relationship between social intelligence and cheating behaviour among college students. Students responded to queries on their social intelligence and prior incidences of cheating. The results showed a negative correlation between social intelligence and cheating conduct, which meant that those with higher social intelligence were less likely to commit fraud. The findings of this study suggest that college students should be encouraged to develop their social intelligence because doing so can help them cultivate academic honesty by learning social intelligence skills (Kim & Cohen, 2015). A study investigated the connection between rule-breaking in sports and moral disengagement. Researchers who conducted a study of high school athletes

discovered a favourable correlation between moral disengagement and breaking the law. Also, they discovered that athletes with high levels of moral disengagement were more likely to defend their rule-breaking actions (Shields et al., 2015).

Moral disengagement is the process by which people mentally distance themselves from the ethical implications of their behaviour. Researchers discovered that athletes with high levels of moral disengagement were more inclined to break the rules by purposefully fouling opponents or using performance-enhancing medications. The researchers contend that moral engagement-focused interventions may be successful in reducing rule-breaking in sports. Another study investigated the connection between university students' moral disengagement and academic dishonesty (Shu & Wang, 2019). Researchers who conducted a study of university students in China discovered a favourable correlation between moral disengagement and academic dishonesty. They also discovered that academic pressure and self-efficacy acted as mediators in the association between moral disengagement and academic fraud. According to the study, interventions that attempt to lessen moral disengagement and academic pressure may be successful in lowering academic dishonesty among university students.

A meta-analysis to investigate the link between workplace deviation and moral disengagement. After reviewing papers, the researchers discovered a favourable correlation between moral disengagement and workplace deviation. Also, they discovered that while workplace misbehaviour was less severe, there was a stronger correlation between moral disengagement and workplace deviance. According to the study, treatments that attempt to lessen moral disengagement may be successful in lowering workplace (Baranik et al., 2016). Another study conducted to investigates the link between adolescent cyber bullying and moral disengagement. The results of a

study revealed that moral disengagement had a favourable relationship with cyber bullying. They also discovered that the link between empathy and cyber bullying was mediated by moral disengagement. The researchers hypothesise that therapies meant to lessen moral disengagement and boost empathy may be successful in lessening teen cyberbullying (Kowalski & Limber, 2013).

Indigenous Researches

There are some Indigenous researches that explain the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviours. In a research positive link between the negative social intelligence traits and rule-breaking behaviours and negative correlation between the positive social intelligence traits and rule-breaking behaviour was found. The results of the t-test showed that late adolescents were more prone than early adolescents to engage in rule-breaking behaviour (Naeem, 2014). Another study found a negative correlation between parental supervision and moral disengagement. On the other side, it was discovered that there was a strong correlation between cyberbullying and moral disengagement. As expected, students' cyberbullying was positively and strongly correlated with moral disengagement (Ramadan, 2019).

Another research found the connection between academic dishonesty and moral disengagement among Pakistani business students. The data from 366 students who participated in the survey employed by the researchers revealed a statistically significant positive link between moral disengagement and academic dishonesty. Particularly, students with higher moral disengagement scores were more inclined to cheat in class. Also, the study discovered that students who believed that academic dishonesty was common were more inclined to involve in moral disengagement and rule breaking behaviours (Thau et al., 2020).

Rationale

This research explained the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule breaking behaviours of university male students because rule-breaking behavior is very prevailing in Pakistan that leads many other social problems like rise in crime and social unrest, which can have adverse effects on communities. Furthermore, areas with high crime rates can see a decline in property value, a reduction in job opportunities, and a rise in social isolation.

This study was significant in various ways: first, it provided a great opportunity to understand that how social intelligence and moral disengagement and rule breaking behavior are interrelated. According to previous studies social intelligence, rule breaking and moral disengagement are interrelated. Because the only way to be intelligent is to be able to think out of the box. So, some people think it's essential to bend and break the rules. This problem can be dealt by enrich knowledge about the problems and strategies to solve the problem. Second, not much work was present regarding the social intelligence, rule-breaking and moral disengagement among the university male students in Pakistan as well as in West. That's why this area needed to be explored and this study filled the gap in knowledge in Pakistani context and added to the literature. And lastly, social intelligence and rule breaking had been explored in adolescents but none of the available research compared it in university male students. So this research filled this gap also.

Aim

The aim of this study was to find relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule breaking behaviours in university male students.

Objective

This research is designed:

1. To assess the association between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students.

2. To determine the predictive association between the social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students.

Hypothesis

Keeping in view the study objectives, the following hypothesis have been formulated:

1. There will be significant negative correlation between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students.

2. There will be significant positive correlation between moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviours in university male students.

3. Social intelligence will act as negative predictor of rule-breaking in university male students.

4. Moral disengagement will act as positive predictor of rule-breaking in university male students.

Methodology

Research Design

Correlational research design was used to determine the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviours in university male students.

Sampling Strategy

The sample was selected through convenient sampling technique from different universities of Lahore (the second largest city of Pakistan and the fifth largest city in South Asia, composed of diverse population around ten million people) and the data was collected with their consent.

Sample

Two hundred and ninety (290) university male students, ranging in age from 19 to 25 years (*M = 20.94 & S.D = 1.72*) were selected from different universities of Lahore, Pakistan through convenient sampling. The entire sample belonged to South Asian cultural background.

Inclusion Criteria

Sample was taken from the age group of 19-25 years. The sample included only university students enrolled in different government and private universities of Lahore, doing bachelors in any field.

Exclusion Criteria

Students who are married were excluded from this study.

Operational Definitions of Variables

Following are the operational definitions of study variables.

Social Intelligence

Social intelligence is the ability to comprehend and interact effectively with others in various social contexts. It encompasses skills such as accurately perceiving and interpreting nonverbal cues understanding and empathizing with others' emotions and perspectives, and appropriately adjusting one's own behavior to align with social norms and expectations (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Moral Disengagement

Moral disengagement describes eight interconnected cognitive mechanisms that allow us to disregard our internalised moral standards and act immorally without experiencing negative consequences (Bandura, 1999).

Social cognitive theory describes eight MD practices and they were grouped into four broad domains.

The first category: It focuses on cognitive restructuring, which involves redefining one's behavior in a way that avoids perceiving it as immoral through moral justification (using noble ends or moral purposes to justify unethical means), euphemistic labeling (describing negative actions in a manner that downplays their harmful nature or makes them seem more respectable), or advantageous comparison (portraying a wrongdoing as less severe by comparing it to a worse or more negative act) (Bandura, 1999).

The second category: It involves minimizing one's agentive role, entails distancing or obscuring personal responsibility for harmful actions by either shifting the blame onto authorities or diffusing responsibility among others involved (Bandura, 1999).

The Third category: It operates by distorting or misrepresenting the consequences of one's actions, such as minimizing, ignoring, or misinterpreting the negative or harmful effects (Bandura, 1999).

The fourth category: It involves dehumanization (depriving the victim of their human qualities and equal worth) or victim-blaming, serving as a means to reduce moral distress by believing that the victim deserves their suffering (Bandura, 1999).

Rule Breaking

Failure to carry out, implement equitably, or keep an eye on rules and regulations that govern or have an impact on the daily lives and activities of common citizens (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2011).

Measures

Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) (Silvera et al., 2001)

TSIS is 21 item scale which includes 3 self-report sub scales. TSIS is basically used to measure social intelligence i.e. social skills, social awareness and information processing. These three sub-scales further contain 7 item each. The scores range from extremely poor to extremely well. The Cronbach's alpha values for the subscales of social skills, social awareness and information processing are 0.85, 0.72 and 0.79 respectively. It is a seven-point Likert and participants are required to rate the items on seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ('describes me very poorly') to 7 ('describes me very well') i.e. "I can predict other people's behaviour". This scale is very valid and reliable.

Moral Disengagement Scale for Adults (MDS-A) (Saif & Riaz, 2021)

MDS-A is 20 item scale which includes 6 sub scales. MDS-A is basically used to measure moral disengagement i.e. Diffusion of Responsibility and Distortion

Disregard and Minimization of Consequences, Dehumanization and Attribution of Blame, Displacement of Responsibility, Advantageous Comparison, Euphemistic Labelling and Moral Justification with Cronbach's alpha values of .77, .75, .60, .72, .30, .55 respectively. These six sub-scales further contain 4, 4, 3, 3, 3, 3 item each respectively. All the six subscales of MDS-A has moderate to high Guttmann split-half reliability (r_{shg} = .537 to .836). It is a five-point Likert and participants are required to rate the items on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree'). This scale is very valid and reliable (Saif & Riaz, 2021).

Rule-breaking Scale (RBS) (Saleem & Subhan, 2018)

RBS is a 20 item scale and is basically used to measure rule-breaking behavior. It is a four-point Likert scale and participants are required to rate the items on four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (' never ') to 4 ('always'). It has high split half reliability (.876). This scale is very valid and reliable (Saleem & Subhan, 2018).

Demographic Information Form

Demographic Information Form included all the basic information of the participants, name, age, gender, education, family system, marital status, institution name, city etc.

Procedure

For the purpose of the research, the scales taken for the study were used after ensuring their permission granted by the authors. Sample was taken from different universities of Lahore. To begin the data collection process, permission was taken from the higher authority of COMSATS. Participants were made aware of the study's objectives and the time required to complete the questionnaire. The participants completed the demographic sheet after receiving an introduction and an informed consent form, and were then instructed to independently and honestly complete the

TSIS, rule-breaking scale, and MDS-A. It took 10 to 15 minutes to complete the survey. Complete instructions on how to fill out the surveys were given to the participants. Ethics were taken into account while conducting the study and collecting the data. Their confidentiality had been ensured. After the data collection it was entered in SPSS to analyse the data by applying various statistical analyses. The results were analysed honestly.

Ethical Considerations

Thesis Committee approved the present study of the Department of Humanities, COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore campus. The study participants were briefed about the objective of the current study, and online informed consent was also taken from the participants. They were also informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary. If they wanted to withdraw from the study at any point, they were free to do so without any penalty. They were told that the personal information they shared would be kept confidential and would only be used for research purposes. Moreover, the safety and respect of the participants were also considered. No participants' safety or dignity was compromised in the research. In addition, the confidentiality and privacy of the participants were also assured.

Data Analysis Plan

This study section addresses preliminary analysis, descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis. The missing values, outliers, and random responses were identified and cleaned out in a preliminary analysis. Then, descriptive analysis was run to calculate the frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Then, inferential analysis was performed, including Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis.

Chapter-4

Results

Mean and standard deviation of demographics are calculated below.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Demographics Variables of the Study Sample (n=290)

Variables	*M*	*S.D*	*f*	*%*
Age	20.9379	1.71588	-	-
Number of siblings				
Two			57	19.7
Three			94	32.4
More than three	-	-	139	47.9
Birth Order				
Only Child			14	4.8
First Child			84	29.0
Middle Child	-	-	35	46.6
Youngest Child			155	19.0
Residential area				
Rural			81	27.9
Urban	-	-	209	72.1
Family System				
Nuclear			101	34.8
Joint	-	-	184	63.4

Note. M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, f = Frequency

Table 1 shows the descriptive characteristics of the sample. In the current study, the participants were young adults between 19 to 25 years; the mean age (n=290) was 20.94 years, and the standard deviation was 1.71. The study's total sample comprised 290 young adults. The reported number of siblings ware divided into three categories. Two siblings comprised 19.7% (n=57) of the sample, 32.4% (n=94) were students with three siblings. Students with more than three siblings constituted 47.9% (n=139) of the sample. The birth order of the participants was divided into four categories. In this study, 4.8% (n=14) of the participants were only child, 29% (n=84) of the participants were first born, middle child comprised 46%

(n=35) of the sample and 19% (155) were youngest children. Residential area was categorized as rural 27.9% (n=81) of the sample and urban 72.1% (n=209). Family system was divided into two categories: nuclear setup comprised 27.9% (n=101) and 63.4% (n=184) were participants with joint family setup.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistic of Study Variables

Study variables	n	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Social Skills	7	14.00	49.00	30.3517	6.32240
Social Awareness	7	7.00	44.00	24.6172	6.61615
Social Info processing	7	18.00	49.00	36.1414	6.18996
Mor.Dis	20	23.00	127.00	49.6621	15.71358
Rule Breaking	20	25.00	94.00	44.4690	16.66484

Note. n=Number of Items, M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation

The mean, ranges and standard deviations of the study variables were calculated and shown in table 2.

The mean score and standard deviation of social information processing is greater than the mean and standard deviation of social skill and social awareness. The mean score and standard deviation of moral disengagement is comparably greater than the rule breaking.

Table 3

Correlation between Social Intelligence, Moral Disengagement and Rule-Breaking

Behaviour

Study Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Social Intelligence					
1.Social Skills	-	.210**	.375**	.065	.001
2.Social Awareness		-	.010	-.211**	-.199*
3.Social Info processing			-	-.002	-.060
4.Moral Disengagement				-	.623**
5.Rule Breaking					-

Note. *=p<.05, **=p<.01

      Correlation between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour was calculated as shown in Table 3. Results from Table 3 showed that social intelligence was negatively correlated with moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour. Which means students with high social intelligence are less likely to engage in moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour. Furthermore moral disengagement was positively correlated with rule-breaking behaviour. Which explained that students engaged in moral disengagement are more likely to involve in rule-breaking behaviors.

Table 4

Social Intelligence and Moral Disengagement Predicting Rule-Breaking

Predictors	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	SE	t	B	SE	t	B	SE	t
No. of siblings	-.002	1.38	-.03	-.01	1.39	-.17	.07	1.05	1.75
Birth order	.08	1.28	1.43	.08	1.28	1.48	.08	.95	1.82
Family system	-.03	1.73	-.50	-.02	1.74	-.40	.04	1.30	.82
Residential area	.05	2.46	.76	.05	2.46	.85	.05	1.84	1.16
SI				-.07	.08	-1.26	-.11	.06	-2.45**
MD							.67	.05	15.47***
R^2	.02			.02			.46		
Model fit	F(5,285) = .97			F(6,284) = .08			F(7,283) = 35.86		

Rule breaking was predicted from social intelligence after controlling the potential confounding demographics. In model 1 the potential confounding demographics (no.of siblings, birth order, family system and residential area) were controlled. These variables were added in model 1 they contributed for percent variance in explaining for rule-breaking. After controlling these demographic variables in model 1, social intelligence was added in model 2 to predict rule-breaking. When social intelligence was added in model 2 it was found that it is not a significant predictor of rule breaking. Incremental variance due to social intelligence was .02 or 2% in explaining rule-breaking. Then moral disengagement was added in model 3 to predict rule-breaking. When moral disengagement was added it turned out to be a significant positive predictor of rule-breaking. Incremental variance due to moral disengagement was .46 or 46% in explaining rule-breaking.

Chapter-5

Discussion

The objective of the present study was to determine the association between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students. Other than that, the research also aimed to explore the predictive association between the social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students. The present research findings demonstrated the link between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour. This part of the current research aims to discuss the current results in light of the previous studies, theories, and local context. One of the present study hypotheses explored the negative association between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students. The results proved negative association between social intelligence', moral disengagement and rule-breaking in university male students. There can be certain factors that could explain the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour such as moral identity. Previous research also supported current study findings as a study published in the Journal of Business Ethics found that individuals with higher levels of social intelligence were less likely to engage in unethical behavior in the workplace. The study published in the Journal of Business Ethics explained the relationship between social intelligence and unethical behavior in the workplace. The results of the study indicated a significant negative correlation between social intelligence and unethical behavior. In other words, individuals with higher levels of social intelligence were found to be less likely to engage in unethical behavior in the workplace (Thau et al., 2020). This finding suggests that individuals who possess better social skills and are more attuned to others' emotions and perspectives are more likely to make ethical

decisions and engage in morally upright behavior in their professional settings. The study also explored potential mediating factors that could explain the relationship between social intelligence and unethical behavior. The researchers found that moral identity, which refers to the importance an individual places on being a moral person, partially mediated the relationship between social intelligence and unethical behavior. This suggests that individuals with higher social intelligence may have a stronger moral identity, leading to a reduced likelihood of engaging in unethical behavior. While this particular study did not focus specifically on university students, it provides insights into the relationship between social intelligence and rule-breaking behaviors.

Result of present study were also consistent with the study by Pellegrini et al., 2018, examined the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement (the tendency to deactivate moral self-regulatory processes), and aggressive behavior in adolescents and found that individuals with high social intelligence were less likely to engage in moral disengagement and aggressive behaviour. Although it doesn't directly address rule-breaking behaviors, it provides insights into the association between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and negative behaviors. The results of current study were also supported by research carried out by Wallace et al, 2013. They found that individuals with higher social intelligence were less likely to engage in unethical behavior at work. Similarly another study explored the higher levels of social intelligence were associated with lower levels of aggressive behaviors among Iranian university students. These findings suggest that higher social intelligence may be linked to lower levels of rule-breaking behaviors in various contexts (Zych et al., 2020).

Secondly it was hypothesized that moral disengagement will positively correlate with rule-breaking behaviour. Many research had also shown that higher levels of moral disengagement is associated with increased engagement in rule-breaking behaviors. Some relevant studies include: A study by Gini et al. 2007 demonstrated that moral disengagement positively correlated with different forms of bullying behavior among Italian adolescents. Similarly another research affirms the results of present study. This study investigated the role of social intelligence in preventing socially driven aggressive behaviors in adolescence and found that socially intelligent people are more likely to prevent socially driven aggressive behaviors (Zych et al., 2020). It doesn't focus specifically on rule-breaking behaviors or university students, it provides insights into the potential mitigating effect of social intelligence on negative social behaviors.

Hence it was hypothesize that moral disengagement will act as positive predictor of rule-breaking, which is also supported by many researches. A research had shown that moral disengagement is positively associated with rule-breaking behaviors. A study published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence examined the relationship between moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviors in adolescents and found that higher levels of moral disengagement were related to increased engagement in rule-breaking behaviors (Wallaca et al., 2013). These studies indicate that higher levels of moral disengagement may contribute to an increased likelihood of engaging in rule-breaking behaviors. These studies provide some insights into the associations between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and negative behaviors in different populations. While there may not be specific studies focusing on the relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors in university male students, we can draw on related research.

Given the negative association between social intelligence and rule-breaking behaviors, it is reasonable to expect that higher levels of social intelligence would be related to lower engagement in rule-breaking behaviors, even in the context of university male students. Additionally, moral disengagement has been found to be positively associated with rule-breaking behaviors, suggesting that individuals who are more morally disengaged are more likely to engage in rule-breaking behaviors.

The current study's findings were also justified in the light of different theoretical frameworks. One theoretical framework that supports the negative relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors is the Social Information Processing (SIP) model. The Social Information Processing model suggests that individuals engage in a series of cognitive steps when interpreting and responding to social situations. These steps include encoding social cues, interpreting social cues, formulating goals, generating responses, and evaluating outcomes. The model argues that individual differences in social information processing can influence social behaviors, including rule-breaking behaviors. The SIP model suggests that individuals with higher levels of social intelligence are more likely to accurately interpret social cues, including the moral implications of their actions. This, in turn, leads to greater awareness of the potential negative consequences of rule-breaking behaviors. Individuals with higher social intelligence are also better equipped to empathize with others and understand the social norms and expectations that govern their behavior. As a result, they are less likely to engage in moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviors (Thau et al., 2020).

Social cognitive theory is another theoretical framework supporting the hypothesisof present study. Bandura's social cognitive theory proposes that human behavior is influenced by a complex interplay between personal factors,

environmental factors, and cognitive processes. According to this theory, individuals acquire and develop their behavior through the continuous interaction between these three factors. Bandura's social cognitive theory suggests that individuals with higher levels of social intelligence are more likely to have a well-developed moral compass. They are better able to understand and internalize societal values, norms, and ethical standards. Consequently, individuals with higher social intelligence are less likely to engage in moral disengagement mechanisms to justify or rationalize their rule-breaking behaviors. They are more aware of the potential harm caused by their actions and are motivated to abide by the rules and moral principles. In contrast, individuals with lower levels of social intelligence may struggle to comprehend the social cues, norms, and expectations. They may find it difficult to fully grasp the impact of their actions on others or society as a whole. As a result, they may be more prone to moral disengagement mechanisms as a way to justify or downplay the negative consequences of their rule-breaking behaviors.

Limitations and Suggestions

Like all other studies, the present study also has some limitations and drawbacks that can be rectified in future research. There could be biasness in responses of participant due to social desirability to conform to social expectations that can effect validity of results. Secondly the study sample only included young adults, excluding children, teenagers and middle-aged adults. According to the statistics (Statistia, 2020), 34.82% of the population in Pakistan is between the ages of 0-14, 60.83% are between the ages of 15-64, and 4.35% are over the age of 65. So, if this sample was also included, we could generalize the results to a broader category of individuals living in Pakistan. On that account, it is recommended and suggested to

explore social intelligence, moral disengagement and rule-breaking different age groups simultaneously in the future.

Other than that, the data was collected from the urban areas in the current study. Thus, the results cannot be generalized to the population of rural areas as well. According to Trading Economics (2021), 62.84% of the population in Pakistan is from rural areas. That being so, individuals from rural areas should at least comprise 50% of the study population. Furthermore, a cross-cultural study could also be carried out by collecting data from other cultures and comparing it with Eastern culture. The findings would be more diverse in that case and could be generalized globally.

Implications and Benefits

Research social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors in university male students can have several implications and benefits for the researchers, practitioners, and academic institutions. Present research can help gain a better understanding of the complex relationship between social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors. It sheds light on how these factors are interconnected and how they influence each other. Similarly by identifying the negative association between social intelligence and moral disengagement, researchers can develop strategies and interventions to prevent rule-breaking behaviors among university male students. These interventions can focus on enhancing social intelligence skills and promoting moral reasoning, empathy, and prosocial behavior.

The research findings can also contribute to the promotion of moral development in university male students. By recognizing the role of moral disengagement in rule-breaking behaviors, educators and institutions can design programs and curricula that foster ethical decision-making and moral reasoning skills.

Social intelligence encompasses various skills, such as empathy, perspective-taking, and effective communication. Research in this area can highlight the importance of developing these skills and provide guidance on how to enhance social intelligence among university male students. Improved social skills can have positive implications beyond reducing rule-breaking behaviors, including better interpersonal relationships and improved academic performance.

Research findings can inform policies and practices within universities and educational institutions. For example, institutions can incorporate social intelligence training into their programs or create supportive environments that promote ethical behavior. This can lead to a more positive campus climate and a reduction in rule-breaking incidents. While the research may focus on university male students, the implications can extend beyond this specific population. The insights gained from studying social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors can have broader applications in different contexts, such as workplace settings or other demographic groups. This research can contribute to the development of interventions and strategies that target rule-breaking behaviors across various populations. In general, research social intelligence, moral disengagement, and rule-breaking behaviors in university male students can provide valuable insights and benefits. It can inform prevention strategies, promote moral development, enhance social skills, guide institutional policies, and have broader implications for different contexts and populations.

Conclusion

The overall findings of the current study concluded that social intelligence is negatively associated with moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviour and moral disengagement is positively associated with rule-breaking behaviors. The

present study is a novel, and unique contribution to society and academia as social intelligence, moral disengagement have not been explored together before. This research provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between these factors. The findings suggest that social intelligence plays a significant role in shaping individuals' ethical decision-making processes and subsequent behaviors. Students with higher levels of social intelligence exhibit a greater understanding of social norms, empathy towards others, and the ability to effectively manage interpersonal relationships. Consequently, they are more likely to internalize moral standards and engage in rule-abiding behaviors.

On the other hand, moral disengagement is found to be associated with increased propensity for rule-breaking behaviors among university male students. Those who engage in moral disengagement strategies, such as moral justification, minimization of harm, and displacement of responsibility, tend to detach themselves from ethical considerations and justify their rule-breaking actions. The research further highlights the significance of social intelligence as a protective factor against moral disengagement and subsequent rule-breaking behaviors. Higher levels of social intelligence can foster a stronger adherence to moral principles, leading to decreased engagement in rule-breaking activities. Conversely, lower levels of social intelligence may contribute to a greater likelihood of moral disengagement and an increased propensity for rule-breaking behaviors. These findings have important implications for educational institutions and policymakers. Interventions aimed at enhancing social intelligence among university students could potentially reduce moral disengagement and rule-breaking behaviors. Promoting social intelligence through various strategies, such as social skills training, fostering empathy, and creating a supportive social environment, may lead to a more ethical and harmonious campus community.

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