



## Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency, and Interpersonal Difficulties in Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to find the relationship between Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency (Negative and Positive), and Interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults. A purposive sample of 350 Young Adults (Men=175, Women=175) was approached from public and private universities of Lahore, Pakistan. Three scales were applied to assess the variables, Rejection Sensitivity (ARSQ), Positive and Negative Urgency subscales of the UPPS-P Scale, and Interpersonal Difficulties (Interpersonal Problems Circumplex IRT). Through statistical analyses, including Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis, and t-test, the study determined the correlation, prediction, and gender differences in these psychological constructs. The results concluded that Rejection Sensitivity did not have a significant relationship with Interpersonal difficulties, but Urgency had a significant relationship with Interpersonal difficulties. Results indicated that among socio-demographic variables family systems proved a significant positive predictor of interpersonal difficulties. Similarly, Urgency also proved a significant predictor of Interpersonal Difficulties while Rejection Sensitivity did not. There was a gender difference observed in Rejection Sensitivity only that showed women scored higher than men. This research will help offer a deeper understanding of the relationship between these variables and help in aiming to contribute to mental health outcomes and overall well-being of young adults.

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## 1. Introduction

This research was conducted to investigate the connections between three important psychological concepts: Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency, and Interpersonal Difficulties in Young Adults. Although each of these variables has been connected to different mental health problems, their combined effects on interpersonal functioning have not been investigated. It aims to address the relationship of Rejection Sensitivity and Urgency, both positive and negative with Interpersonal Difficulties and to see these constructs as predictors of interpersonal difficulties. Furthermore, this study aims to look into potential gender differences in these aspects.

### 1.1. Rejection sensitivity

The term "rejection sensitivity" deals with an individual's increased vulnerability and unpleasant emotional reaction to the potential or perception of rejection by others. It is correlated with a strong aspiration to fit in and a fear of exclusion, leading to extreme sensitivity to indications of rejection, even when they are not deliberate or obvious. Rejection plays a significant role in not only interpersonal social relationships but also social dynamics and groups (such as friends, parents, romantic partners, peers, etc.) that hold significance individually and are significant to the person. Chango et al. (2012) Not being accepted or chosen or rejection itself is painful. However, it is more than just a painful experience. Meanwhile, specifically, the initial rejections that a person faces are considered a factor influencing their eventual success

and their interactions with others that follow. Hence, it is unsurprising that individuals have a heightened sensitivity to possible signs of rejection (Chango et al., 2012).

This situation relies on two underlying beliefs. Initially, the concept of acceptance-rejection is a crucial aspect of understanding rejection sensitivity, as it suggests that people need one another to survive (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010). Social connections contribute to overall health, including mental and physical wellness. Hence, potential dangers to the lack of these connections motivate individuals to behave in ways that benefit everyone. Therefore, being accepted and avoiding rejection are viewed as sources of motivation (Lynch, 2009). The second assumption states that rejection results from our biopsychosocial past. Therefore, because of our innate biological responses to perceived dangers, we develop a tendency to anticipate. In simpler terms, the individual might understand how to prepare for potential rejection from specific individuals (like parents) or specific social circles (such as classmates) (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010). Rejection sensitivity can manifest in various ways, such as reluctance to express one's opinions, avoidance of social situations, social anxiety, and difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships. It is said to be more difficult for individuals to navigate romantic and social interactions when they are extremely sensitive to perceived rejection. Moreover, rejection sensitivity may end up as a self-fulfilling prophecy where the fear of rejection leads to individuals acting in a certain way resulting in rejection (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010). RS and urgency, both positive and negative, may have a complex interconnection due to their effects on controlling emotions and impulsive actions.

### **1.2. Urgency**

There are said to be two different aspects when it comes to the concept of urgency in psychology, which are: positive urgency and negative urgency (Lynam et al., 2006). When experiencing good feelings, including joy or excitement, there may arise a tendency to behave impulsively, this is known as Positive Urgency. People who have high Positive Urgency may act impulsively, are more likely to take risks, or act extra when they are happy. Negative urgency is said to be a personality trait that has gained a lot of attention in psychology, this may be because of the part it plays in impulsive behavior when individuals encounter negative emotions. Urgency, whether it be positive or negative, is strongly connected to interpersonal issues because it leads to impulsive actions during emotionally intense circumstances. When people feel a strong sense of urgency, they tend to act without thinking about the possible outcomes of their actions. This could result in behaviors like aggression, sharing inappropriate information, or isolating oneself in social situations, causing strain in relationships and leading to conflicts (Cyders & Smith, 2007). Negative urgency, specifically, can lead individuals to react aggressively or destructively in response to overwhelming negative emotions, resulting in harm to relationships and heightened interpersonal conflicts (Whiteside & Lynam, 2001). Additionally, acting impulsively in a positive manner can lead to overly enthusiastic or dangerous actions that others may see as careless or unwise, adding to social complexities and causing misunderstandings or disputes (Smith & Cyders, 2016).

### **1.3. Interpersonal Difficulties**

Interpersonal difficulties include a pyramid of issues influencing an individual's capacity to establish, maintain, and explore social relationships successfully. Interpersonal difficulties refer to the challenges and issues people experience in their social interactions and relationships. These challenges can be shown in different ways, encompassing issues with communication, conflicts, social anxiety, assertiveness, trust issues, and troubles in shaping and keeping up with relationships. At its core, interpersonal difficulties entail problems related to establishing and maintaining meaningful and fulfilling connections with others. This includes the capacity to understand, empathize, communicate, and negotiate with individuals across diverse social contexts, such as family, friends, romantic relationships, and professional environments. Numerous psychological theories shed light on interpersonal difficulties, offering diverse perspectives on the underlying causes and potential solutions to these issues. Social cognitive theory highlights the role of cognitive processes in interpersonal difficulties. Negative cognitive biases can lead individuals to misinterpret the intentions of others and react inappropriately to social cues, contributing to social challenges (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Attachment theory, pioneered by John Bowlby, suggests that early caregiver-infant relationships profoundly influence an individual's attachment style in adulthood. People with insecure attachment styles may grapple with issues related to intimacy, trust, emotional regulation, and overall interpersonal difficulties (Bowlby, 1969).

Interpersonal difficulties can be strongly connected to both rejection RS and urgency. RS is the inclination to interpret and overreact to possible rejection in social settings (Berenson et al., 2009). People with high rejection sensitivity often see unclear social signals as signs of rejection, causing strong emotional responses and difficulties in relationships. In the same way, urgency, especially negative urgency, includes impulsive responses to anxiety or distress (Cyders & Smith, 2007). These spontaneous reactions can appear in social situations as hasty or emotion-based actions, leading to challenges in sustaining positive relationships.

Interpersonal difficulties can have profound and far-reaching implications in an individual's life. In personal relationships, they can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and feelings of isolation and alienation. In professional settings, interpersonal challenges might impede teamwork, effective communication, and career advancement. These difficulties can also affect an individual's self-esteem, overall emotional well-being, and mental health. Chango et al. (2012) explored how rejection sensitivity in late adolescence acts as a vulnerability factor for developing depressive symptoms in their study on Relational Stressors and Depressive Symptoms in Late Adolescence. The writers emphasize relational stress factors, especially those that happen in peer connections, during the final stage of adolescence, which is crucial for development. They suggest that people with higher RS levels may be more prone to developing depressive symptoms when facing these relational stressors. The research uses a group of young adults to investigate how rejection sensitivity is connected to symptoms of depression. It indicates that individuals who have high RS tend to perceive uncertain social interactions as rejection, causing increased emotional distress. Additionally, the research emphasizes that this increased emotional turmoil, triggered by perceived rejection, could raise the likelihood of experiencing depressive symptoms. The findings underscore the significance of considering rejection sensitivity as a vulnerability factor in understanding how late adolescents navigate the challenges of peer relationships and their influence on mental well-being. This research further aids in the broader knowledge of the factors that contributed to depressive symptoms during the late adolescent years.

Zulfiqar, Khan and Saleem (2023) hypothesized that RS would predict lower PWB, and that high self-esteem would mitigate this negative impact. The results deemed that RS was indeed a significant predictor of poorer PWB. Furthermore, high self-esteem seemed to have a substantial negative correlation with RS and helped buffer its detrimental effects on PWB. The findings also revealed that certain groups, such as boys, emerging adults, those from nuclear family systems, and individuals with more friends, reported higher levels of psychological well-being compared to their counterparts. Porcelli, Koch and Mendle (2023) conducted research with the main aim to examine the role of negative urgency in interpersonal relationship difficulties among adolescents. Data was analyzed from 272 youth. The following research focused on longitudinal and cross-sectional associations of NU with interpersonal problems dealing with mothers, fathers, and peers. Data predicted that negative urgency was more associated with peers and mothers as opposed to fathers. Elevated depressive symptoms indicated significant direct associations between negative urgency and peer relationships over four months. The research concluded the widespread influence of negative urgency on interpersonal problems across diverse relationships.

#### **1.4. Rationale**

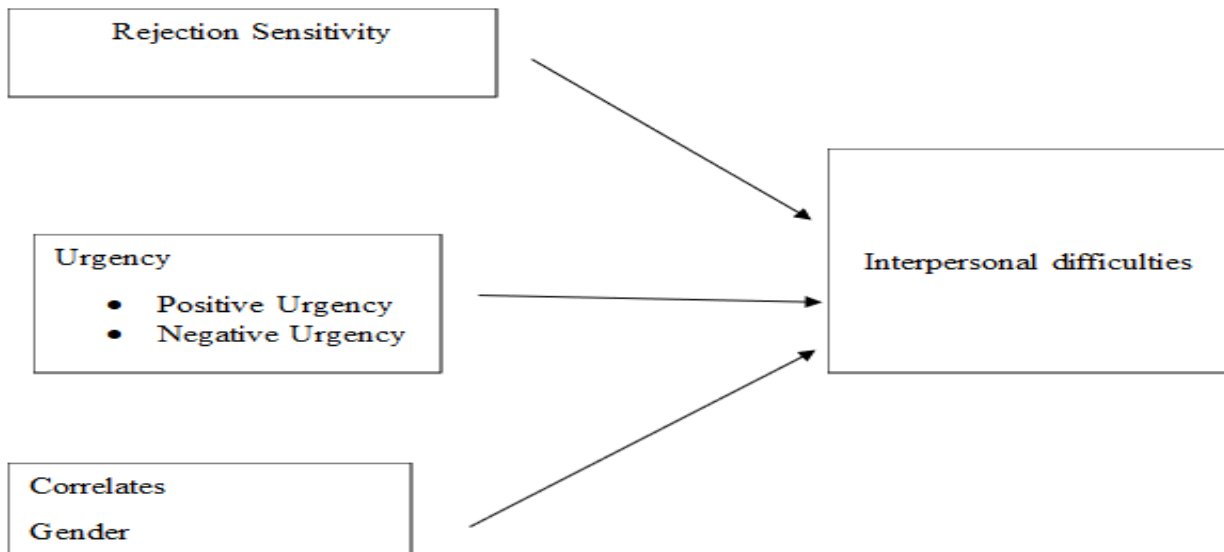
Young adults frequently suffer difficulties related to rejection sensitivity, in which they are concerned about being disliked. Strong emotional reactions and social scenario avoidance might result from this fear. Furthermore, they could behave rashly when very happy (positive urgency) or upset (negative urgency), which could strain their relationships. Understanding rejection sensitivity, urgency, and interpersonal difficulties among young adults is essential in addressing mental health and social dynamics in Pakistan. This specific research will help further our knowledge of the impact of these psychological factors on the well-being of young Pakistanis. The goal is to improve the mental health outcomes and well-being of Young Adults by addressing these specific psychological processes.

#### **1.5. Hypotheses**

1. There is a significant relationship between rejection sensitivity, urgency, and interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults.
2. Rejection sensitivity and Urgency would predict interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults.

3. There is a gender difference regarding all study variables in Young Adults.

**Figure 1: Proposed Model**



## 2. Method

### 2.1. Research Design

It is a Correlational research design with cross-sectional research design. A correlational research method includes two or more variables that are observed and then a statistically significant relationship between them is found out.

### 2.2. Participants

In this study, a purposive sampling approach was utilized specifically focusing on young adults who fulfilled the inclusion criteria related to the research aims. Purposive sampling is beneficial for detailed investigation within a particular group (Palinkas et al., 2015). According to the G-Power online calculator, 350 participants are recruited for this research from Lahore, Pakistan. Out of this sample, 175 were men and 175 were women.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.**

| Variables             | M(SD)       | f(%)     |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Age                   | 21.36(1.96) | -----    |
| Education in years    | 15.27(1.12) | -----    |
| Marital Status        |             |          |
| Single                | -----       | 302(86)  |
| Married               |             | 38(11)   |
| Others                |             | 10(3)    |
| Gender                |             |          |
| Male                  | -----       | 175(50)  |
| Female                |             | 175(50)  |
| Family System         |             |          |
| Nuclear               | -----       | 214(61)  |
| Joint                 |             | 136(39)  |
| Birth Order           |             |          |
| First born            |             | 98(28)   |
| Middle born           | -----       | 148(42)  |
| Last born             |             | 91(26)   |
| Only Child/Twin       |             | 13(4)    |
| Employed              |             |          |
| No                    | -----       | 281(80)  |
| Yes                   |             | 69(20)   |
| Medical Illness       |             |          |
| No                    | -----       | 338(97)  |
| Yes                   |             | 12(3)    |
| Psychological Illness |             |          |
| No                    | -----       | 350(100) |
| Yes                   |             | 0(0)     |

|                    |       |         |
|--------------------|-------|---------|
| Psychological Help |       |         |
| No                 | ----- | 348(99) |
| Yes                |       | 2(1)    |

### 2.3. Inclusion Criteria

- Young Adults who are not diagnosed with a psychological disorder.
- Young Adults who are residing in Lahore, Pakistan.
- Young adults who can read and write English.

### 2.4. Exclusion Criteria

- Young adults that have any cognitive or physical impairment.
- Young Adults with substance abuse or dependence, as this can significantly affect impulsive behaviours.

### 2.5. Materials and Measures

#### 2.5.1. Demographic research.

A demographic sheet was developed to get information about the participants. The participants answered questions like age, gender, marital status, socioeconomic status,

#### 2.5.2. Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire, Adult version (Berenson et al., 2009)

RS is a trait that involves expecting rejection with feelings of anxiety. The A-RSQ Berenson et al. (2009) is a revised version of the RSQ by Downey and Feldman (1996) used to measure RS. It is composed of 9 potential scenarios. Participants rate how anxious they are about the result of each scenario and how probable they think their significant other will react with rejection in each scenario. The RSQ shows strong internal consistency regarding reliability, often with a Cronbach's alpha over 0.80. The RSQ shows strong internal consistency regarding reliability, often with a Cronbach's alpha over 0.80, suggesting that its items are consistently linked. In terms of validity, the RSQ demonstrates construct validity by aligning with related measures and theory as anticipated, thus affirming its validity for evaluating rejection sensitivity in people.

#### 2.5.3. UPPS-P Scale (Lynam, Smith, Whiteside, & Cyders, 2006).

The UPPS-P is a revised and expanded version of the UPPS Impulsive Behavior scale (Whiteside & Lynam, 2001). Developed by Lynam, Smith, Whiteside, and Cyders in 2006, it includes an additional dimension, Positive Urgency, along with the original four pathways assessed in the earlier version of the scale. These pathways are Negative Urgency (formerly Urgency), (lack of) Premeditation, (lack of) Perseverance, and Sensation Seeking. Respondents rate their agreement on a scale that begins from 1 (agree strongly) to 4 (disagree strongly). Of relevance to the study is the Positive and Negative Urgency subscale, which is the subscale is used in this research after getting permission from the Author. Each consists of 12 items.

#### 2.5.4. The Inventory of Interpersonal Problems Circumplex IRT (Sodano & Tracey, 2011)

The IIP-C-IRT is an assessment tool designed to provide a detailed assessment of interpersonal challenges. This tool is a modification and enhancement of the original Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP), specifically incorporating Item Response Theory (IRT) as its core measurement framework. It is 32 items Likert type scale. It has four subscales with 8 items on each scale. It has adequate psychometric properties to use both for clinical and non-clinical populations.

#### 2.5.5. Procedure

After taking formal approval from BOS, ERC, BAS&R, and IRB data collection was started. Permission to use the three scales was also obtained from related authors with due credit with the reference. The participants that met the inclusion criteria were given the questionnaire along with the demographic sheet after informed consent was taken. Their rights were explained to them as participants, and they were informed that their confidentiality would be assured. Participants who were unwilling to participate were not forced.

#### 2.5.6. Ethical Considerations

- An informed consent was taken beforehand.
- The participants were told of their rights.

- They clarified that they will not be receiving any monetary incentives in return.
- They were told that all the information taken from them will be kept private and their confidentiality will be assured and maintained.
- The information obtained was only used for research purposes.

### 3. Results

This study aims to find the relationship between Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency (Negative and Positive), and Interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults. 175 men and 175 women were recruited for this study through questionnaires. They were informed about the purpose and the inclusion criteria of the study, along with their rights and responsibilities as a participant, prior to filling the survey. Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to do analysis of the data. The results generated after running Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Multiple Hierarchical Regression, and Independent Sample t-test are explained in this chapter. Table 1 shows the psychometric properties of the measures used in the study.

**Table 2: Psychometric Properties of Study Variables (N=350)**

| Variables                     | M     | SD   | Range (Min-Max) | $\alpha$ | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Rejection Sensitivity         | 16.87 | 6.71 | 3-38            | .83      | .31      | -.49     |
| Negative Urgency              | 2.54  | .44  | 1-4             | .84      | -.06     | .65      |
| Positive urgency              | 2.44  | .50  | 1-4             | .84      | -.36     | .56      |
| PA (Domineering-Controlling)  | 1.58  | .88  | 0-4             | .83      | .08      | -.60     |
| BC (Vindictive-Self Centered) | 1.81  | .82  | 0-4             | .82      | .15      | -.30     |
| DE (Cold-Distant)             | 1.76  | .88  | 0-4             | .82      | -.03     | -.52     |
| FG (Socially Inhibited)       | 1.79  | .91  | 0-4             | .83      | .22      | -.40     |
| HI (Nonassertive)             | 1.83  | .82  | 0-4             | .84      | .24      | -.11     |
| JK (Overly Accommodating)     | 1.82  | .84  | 0-4             | .84      | .15      | -.58     |
| LM (Self Sacrificing)         | 1.93  | .86  | 0-4             | .86      | -.12     | -.18     |
| NO (Intrusive-Needy)          | 1.70  | .86  | 0-4             | .86      | -.08     | -.60     |
| Interpersonal Difficulties    | 1.78  | .58  | 0-3             | .86      | -.27     | .20      |

Note: M= Mean; SD= Standard Deviation.

Cronbach’s alpha values in Table 1 reveal that the subscales of all scales in the current study vary in reliability from poor to excellent. The data displayed a normal distribution, with skewness and kurtosis values within the acceptable range of  $\pm 1.96$ . After checking the psychometric properties of the variables, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to find the correlation between them. The results are reported in Table 2 as follows

**Table 3: Correlations for Study Variables (N=350)**

| Variable | n   | M     | SD   | 1 | 2   | 3      | 4      | 5     | 6     | 7      | 8      | 9      | 10     | 11     | 12     |
|----------|-----|-------|------|---|-----|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| RJ       | 350 | 16.87 | 6.71 | 1 | .04 | -.28   | -.13*  | .04   | -.09  | -.00   | -.00   | -      | -.063  | -.01   | -.09   |
| NU       | 350 | 2.54  | .44  |   | 1   | .51*** | .15**  | .16** | .11*  | .25*** | .21*** | .19*** | .10    | .13*   | .23*** |
| PU       | 350 | 2.44  | .50  |   |     | 1      | .19*** | .19** | .19** | .18*** | .07    | .10    | .07    | .18*** | .22*** |
| PA       | 350 | 1.58  | .88  |   |     |        | 1      | .39** | .39** | .28*** | .22*** | .32*** | .29*** | .45*** | .63*** |
| BC       | 350 | 1.81  | .82  |   |     |        |        | 1     | .41** | .44*** | .35*** | .34*** | .26*** | .40**  | .66*** |
| DE       | 350 | 1.76  | .88  |   |     |        |        |       | 1     | .42*** | .33*** | .37*** | .33*** | .30*** | .66*** |
| FG       | 350 | 1.79  | .91  |   |     |        |        |       |       | 1      | .53*** | .46*** | .45*** | .32*** | .73*** |
| HI       | 350 | 1.83  | .82  |   |     |        |        |       |       |        | 1      | .47*** | .42*** | .28*** | .66*** |
| JK       | 350 | 1.82  | .84  |   |     |        |        |       |       |        |        | 1      | .54*** | .41*** | .72*** |
| LM       | 350 | 1.93  | .86  |   |     |        |        |       |       |        |        |        | 1      | .39*** | .68*** |
| NO       | 350 | 1.70  | .86  |   |     |        |        |       |       |        |        |        |        | 1      | .66*** |
| ID       | 350 | 1.78  | .58  |   |     |        |        |       |       |        |        |        |        |        | 1      |

Note: M=Mean; SD= Standard Deviation, RJ= Rejection Sensitivity, NU= Negative Urgency, PU= Positive Urgency, PA= Domineering-Controlling, BC= Vindictive-Self Centered, DE= Cold-Distant, FG= Socially Inhibited, HI= Nonassertive, JK= Overly accommodating, LM= Self Sacrificing and NO= Intrusive-Needy, ID= Interpersonal Difficulties; \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 2 represents the relationship between Rejection sensitivity, Subscales of Urgency (Negative and Positive), and the eight subscales of Interpersonal difficulties (PA Domineering-Controlling, BC Vindictive-Self Centered, DE Cold-Distant, FG Socially Inhibited, HI Nonassertive, JK Overly accommodating, LM Self Sacrificing and NO Intrusive-Needy) and the overall Interpersonal difficulties. The results revealed that there was no significant relationship between the Adult Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire and all subscales of Interpersonal difficulties except PA Domineering-Controlling which revealed a positive weak significant relationship, but no significant relationship was found with Interpersonal difficulties overall. The results also revealed no significant relationship between the Negative Urgency subscale of the UPPS-P Scale with

subscale LM Self Sacrificing of Interpersonal difficulties (IIP-CIRT), it also showed a weak to moderate the positive significant relationship of Negative Urgency with subscales PA Domineering-Controlling, BC Vindictive-Self Centered, DE Cold-Distant, JK Overly accommodating and NO Intrusive-Needy, meanwhile, it showed a strong positive significant relationship with FG Socially Inhibited, HI Nonassertive and overall Interpersonal Difficulties. It also revealed that in terms of Positive Urgency subscale of UPPS-P, it had no significant relationship with subscales HI Nonassertive, JK Overly accommodating, LM Self Sacrificing and meanwhile had a strong positive significant relationship with subscales PA Domineering-Controlling, BC Vindictive-Self Centered, DE Cold-Distant, FG Socially Inhibited, NO Intrusive-Needy and Overall Interpersonal Difficulties. This means the higher the score on Positive and Negative Urgency Subscales, the higher the score will be on the subscales of interpersonal difficulties overall. After finding correlations between study variables, multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to find the predictors of the Rejection sensitivity and subscales of Urgency (Negative and Positive).

**Table 4: Multiple Linear Regression Showing Rejection Sensitivity and subscales of Urgency (Negative and Positive) as Predictors of Overall Interpersonal Difficulties. (N=350)**

| Variable              | Overall Interpersonal Difficulties |      |       |       |              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------|-------|-------|--------------|
|                       | B                                  | SE   | t     | p     | 95% CI       |
| Education             | -.08                               | .028 | -1.49 | .13   | [-.097 .013] |
| Gender                | -.02                               | .06  | -.550 | .583  | [-.160 .090] |
| Marital Status        | .021                               | .070 | .397  | .691  | [-.111 .167] |
| Family System         | .142                               | .065 | 2.606 | .01** | [.041 .296]  |
| Rejection Sensitivity | -.01                               | .01  | 1.70  | .09   | [-.02 .00]   |
| Negative Urgency      | .22**                              | .08  | 2.73  | .01** | [.06 .39]    |
| Positive Urgency      | .14                                | .07  | 1.86  | .06   | [-.01 .27]   |

Note. CI= confidence interval; LL= lower limit; UP= upper limit; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the factors influencing Overall Interpersonal Difficulties. The Durbin Watson value of 1.85 indicated that the assumptions of independent error were satisfied since it fell within the range of 1-3. The absence of perfect multicollinearity was also verified by examining the tolerance value and confirmed as all values were higher than 0.02. To test the predictability of socio demographic variables, education, gender, marital status and family system were entered and results showed only family system is a positive predictor of interpersonal difficulties. Further rejection, sensitivity and urgency were entered to see whether they proved significant predictors or not. results indicated that the regression model was significant,  $R^2=.07$ ,  $F(3,346) = 8.98$ ,  $p<0.001$ . From the three variables added, Rejection Sensitivity and Positive Urgency emerged not to be a predictor of Overall Interpersonal Difficulties. Meanwhile, Negative Urgency emerged to be a positive predictor of Overall Interpersonal Difficulties, which means the higher the score on NU, the more the Overall Interpersonal Difficulties.

**Table 5: Independent Sample T-Test Showing Gender Differences. (N=350)**

| Variables | Men   |      | Women |      | t(df)         | p    | Cohen'd |
|-----------|-------|------|-------|------|---------------|------|---------|
|           | M     | SD   | M     | SD   |               |      |         |
| RS        | 16.11 | 6.02 | 17.63 | 7.28 | -2.12(336.02) | .04* | 0.23    |
| NU        | 2.53  | .39  | 2.56  | .49  | -.59(330.22)  | .56  | 0.07    |
| PU        | 2.44  | .42  | 2.45  | .58  | -.8(318.87)   | .94  | 0.02    |
| ID        | 1.82  | .59  | 1.74  | .57  | 1.30(348)     | .19  | 0.14    |

Note: M=Mean; SD= Standard Deviation, RS=Rejection Sensitivity, NU=Negative Urgency, PU=Positive Urgency, ID=Interpersonal difficulties. ; \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

The results of the independent sample t-test showed that there were no significant gender differences in the Negative Urgency and Positive Urgency subscales of UPPS and overall Interpersonal difficulties. Meanwhile, gender difference was present in Rejection Sensitivity (ARSQ) with Females (M=17.63) showing more Rejection sensitivity as compared to men (16.11).

#### **4. Discussion**

The research was conducted to find the relationship between Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency, and Interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults. It also examines the role of RS and Urgency as predictors of Interpersonal distress. It further aims to examine the gender differences in Rejection Sensitivity, Urgency, and Interpersonal difficulties.

H1: There is a significant relationship between rejection sensitivity Negative Urgency and interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults.

The first hypothesis posited that rejection sensitivity, along with subscales of urgency (negative and positive), would have a significant relationship with various subscales of interpersonal difficulties in young adults. The results provided mixed support for this hypothesis. The study found no significant relationship between the Adult Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire and overall interpersonal difficulties. These findings are a little different if compared with previous research that has consistently shown a link between RS and interpersonal problems (Ayduk et al., 2000; Downey & Feldman, 1996). However, a weak but significant positive relationship was observed between RS and the PA (Domineering-Controlling) subscale of interpersonal difficulties. The results revealed no significant relationship between negative urgency and the self-sacrificing subscale of interpersonal difficulties. However, negative urgency showed weak to moderate positive significant relationships with the domineering-controlling, Vindictive-Self Centered, Cold-Distant, overly accommodating, and Intrusive-Needy subscales. These findings align with previous studies indicating that NU, or the tendency to act impulsively in response to negative emotions, is associated with maladaptive interpersonal behaviors (Cyders & Smith, 2007; Whiteside & Lynam, 2001). The inclination to act rashly when faced with extremely positive emotions may lead individuals to engage in behaviors that disrupt social harmony and exacerbate interpersonal problems (Cyders & Smith, 2007). The lack of significant relationships with Self-Sacrificing (LM) may indicate that self-sacrificing behaviors are less influenced by impulsive or rejection sensitivity, potentially being driven by altruistic motives or cultural norms instead. Vindictive-self-centered (BC) and Cold-Distant (DE) subscales showed significant relationships with urgency traits, which aligns with prior research linking impulsivity to maladaptive social behaviors such as hostility and withdrawal. Mixed findings for Overly Accommodating (JK) might reflect the dual nature of this behavior while accommodating may reduce immediate conflict, it could also reflect a lack of assertiveness influenced by rejection sensitivity or impulsivity in certain contexts. Strong relationships between Socially Inhibited (FG) and Nonassertive (HI) subscales with urgency traits highlight the role of emotional impulsivity in undermining confidence and assertiveness in social interactions. Significant associations with Intrusive-Needy (NO) suggest that impulsivity might drive excessive dependency and intrusive behaviors, potentially as a coping mechanism for rejection sensitivity.

H2: Rejection sensitivity and Negative Urgency would likely predict interpersonal difficulties in Young Adults.

The second hypothesis proposed that rejection of sensitivity and negative urgency would predict interpersonal difficulties in young adults. Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to test this hypothesis. The regression model was significant, indicating that the predictors collectively explained a significant portion of the variance in overall interpersonal difficulties ( $R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(3,346) = 8.98$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The assumptions of independent error and no perfect multicollinearity were met, as indicated by the Durbin-Watson value (1.85) and tolerance values greater than 0.2, respectively. One possible explanation could be that the impact of rejection sensitivity on interpersonal difficulties is mediated by other factors not accounted for in the model, such as social support or coping strategies. The significant predictive power of negative urgency on interpersonal difficulties has important theoretical implications. According to the UPPS-P model of impulsivity (Cyders & Smith, 2007; Whiteside & Lynam, 2001), urgency reflects an inclination to act rashly under intense emotional states.

H3: Gender difference in Young Adults related to all study variables.

The results of this research offer important new perspectives on the gender differences in young adults' rejection sensitivity, negative urgency, and interpersonal difficulties. The results showed a significant gender difference in rejection sensitivity, with females demonstrating higher levels compared to males, which is consistent with earlier research. This is consistent with earlier



studies showing that women are often more perceptive to relational cues and sensitive to rejection from others (London et al., 2007). Additionally, sociocultural elements like gender norms may make women more sensitive to rejection since they put more pressure on them to uphold relationships and social connections (Downey & Feldman, 1996). The possible impact of various factors like cultural norms, socialization processes, and individual differences on the development of emotion regulation and impulsivity. Although there was no noticeable variation between genders in terms of negative urgency in this specific group, differences in how negative emotions are expressed and controlled across genders could still affect interpersonal relationships and mental health (Cross, Copping, & Campbell, 2011). In Pakistan, sociocultural norms significantly influence the development of gender differences in rejection sensitivity. Women are frequently expected to place familial and social unity first, which can increase their awareness of rejection and relationship conflicts. On the other hand, men might be taught to demonstrate emotional strength and self-sufficiency, which could hide their weaknesses. These societal norms strengthen traditional gender roles and influence how rejection sensitivity and associated constructs are perceived among different genders (London et al., 2007). Moreover, cultural stigma associated with emotional expression can particularly impact men, shaping the way they handle and convey negative feelings like urgency, which in turn affects interpersonal relationships.

#### **4.1. Limitations and Suggestions**

The data that was recruited was only from Lahore. This can act as a limitation as it consists of only the city and not countrywide. Future research could include a more diverse population from different provinces and cities of Pakistan. Only young adults are included in the study sample. The results do not apply to people in different stages of life, such as teenagers, middle-aged adults, or the elderly, because the sample was limited to a certain age range. There may be other variables influencing the relationship between rejection sensitivity, urgency traits, and interpersonal difficulties that were not accounted for in the study. Factors such as personality traits, environmental influences, and genetic predispositions could play a significant role.

#### **4.2. Implications and Future Direction**

The findings of this study can contribute to the domain of psychopathology and behavioral sciences as well. The research yielded results that may have several important implications for both clinical practice and in future research. Clinically significant associations between different dimensions of rejection sensitivity, urgency (both positive and negative), and interpersonal difficulties suggest that therapeutic interventions addressing social and emotional challenges in young adults should consider these factors. Additionally, understanding that negative urgency predicts general relationship difficulties highlights the need for interventions that focus on emotion regulation and impulse control. For researchers, these results highlight the need to further investigate the mechanisms underlying these associations, perhaps using longitudinal studies to assess causality and changes over time. Future researchers also can find out moderating and mediating roles of emotional regulation to identify the psychological underpinnings of these variables. Given that the research sample consists of young adult students, the findings are particularly relevant for educational institutions. Universities can use this information to develop programs and services that support students' mental health and social skills, ultimately improving their academic and social success.

### **5. Conclusion**

The findings of this study revealed several important relationships and predictors between rejection sensitivity, urgency (negative and positive), and interpersonal difficulties among young adults. Although rejection sensitivity was not strongly linked to general interpersonal problems, it did have a slight correlation with Domineering-Controlling. Individuals with higher negative urgency tend to face greater interpersonal challenges due to impulsive reactions to negative emotions, as shown by strong positive relationships with various subscales of interpersonal difficulties. Higher levels of positive urgency are linked to greater interpersonal difficulties as shown by significant positive relationships with various subscales and overall interpersonal difficulties. Regression analysis also verified that negative urgency was a notable predictor of general interpersonal challenges. Even though there weren't any noticeable gender disparities in Urgency and interpersonal problems, females had higher scores in rejection sensitivity.

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