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Variety of Human Intelligence: Implications for Education and Self-Development

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ABSTRACT

The conventional education system has been dominated by an approach emphasizing logical-mathematical and linguistic intelligence, as measured through IQ tests. The theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) developed by Howard Gardner states that humans have eight types of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. This study aims to examine how the theory of Multiple Intelligences can be applied in the education and self-development system to accommodate the diversity of individual potential optimally. This research uses a literature study method by examining various scientific sources related to MI, education, and self-potential development. The study results show that the MI-based learning approach encourages the application of more diverse, inclusive, and adaptive teaching strategies to students' learning styles. On the other hand, individuals who understand their intelligence profile can design appropriate learning strategies, choose educational and career paths more consciously, and develop potential in a balanced personal and social aspect. MI theory expands the scope of holistic education and becomes an important foundation in shaping reflective, independent, and competitive individuals.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional understandings of human intelligence have tended to be limited to logical-mathematical and linguistic aspects, which are generally measured through standard IQ tests. This approach does not fully reflect the complexity and uniqueness of an individual's potential. In response to these limitations, Howard Gardner, a psychologist from Harvard University, developed the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) that identifies eight types of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

Gardner emphasizes that each individual has a unique combination of these various intelligences, which work synergistically and distinctively. This theory of multiple intelligences has great implications for the world of Education (Indria 2020). Traditional education systems prioritizing uniform methods and focusing on logical-mathematical and linguistic intelligence often cannot accommodate students with dominant intelligence in other fields. As a result, the potential of many students is not optimally facilitated, and often even overlooked. Gardner proposes a more inclusive approach to design learning that considers the diversity of intelligence as the basis for developing curriculum and teaching methods (Ibrahim et al., 2023). In addition, in the context of self-development, understanding the theory of multiple intelligences helps individuals to recognize their strengths and weaknesses more holistically. Thus, they can choose the education, profession, and learning path that best suits their potential and learning style (Astaman 2020). This approach is believed to be able to increase life satisfaction, productivity, and the quality of social and professional relationships. However, MI's theory is also inseparable from criticism.

Some psychologists and scientists question the validity of this overly broad concept of intelligence, even calling it a neuromyth because there is no strong enough neurological evidence to support the existence of a truly biologically separate intelligence. This critique encourages the importance of a scientifically evidence-based approach in designing effective learning strategies.

Various previous studies have examined the application of the theory of multiple intelligences (Multiple Intelligences/MI) in the context of education and self-development. Berliana and Atikah emphasized that teachers' understanding of the diversity of students' intelligence can increase motivation and learning outcomes through learning design and evaluation that is in accordance with the characteristics of each student's dominant intelligence (Berliana and Atikah, 2023).

This is in line with the findings of Musrizal et al., which show the importance of accommodating not only academic intelligence but also social, emotional, and intrinsic motivation aspects in learning in order to prepare students to face global challenges (Musrizal, Walidin, and Mahmud 2022). Furthermore, Sabulat et al. highlighted the importance of a learning environment that supports the development of all types of intelligence to shape students' personalities holistically (Sabulat, Satinah, and Rahman 2025). Outside the realm of formal education, Ribič dan Marič examine the influence of linguistic intelligence in the context of organizational leadership and find that leaders with high linguistic intelligence tend to build better relationships within teams despite the limited number of samples (Ribič and Marič 2023).

On the other hand, criticism of the MI theory also emerged from Waterhouse who questioned its scientific validity and referred to it as neuromyth. There is no neurological evidence to support the existence of intelligence working separately. He emphasized the importance of learning based on scientific evidence for higher effectiveness (Waterhouse 2023). Nevertheless, in general, these studies show that the concept of human intelligence has broad implications, both in learning strategies and individual self-development, which can be applied in various educational and organizational contexts.

Based on this description, the problems in this study focus on two main things. First, how can the education system be designed in such a way as to be able to accommodate the diversity of human intelligence in accordance with the theory Multiple Intelligences. This is important so that every student can learn and develop optimally according to their unique potential. Second, how the understanding of various intelligences can be utilized by individuals in the process of self-development so that they can recognize personal strengths and weaknesses and, in the end, can choose a more appropriate educational and career path according to their intelligence characteristics (Marpaung 2017).

With this research, it is hoped that a real contribution will be made that is beneficial to society, especially in forming an education system that is more inclusive and responsive to the diversity of individual potential. This research can be a foundation for educators, policymakers, and educational institutions in designing learning strategies that focus on cognitive aspects and other intelligences, such as interpersonal, intrapersonal, and kinesthetic. Broadly, the community will benefit by creating a generation that is more aware of its potential, able to adapt to change, and contribute optimally to social,

professional, and national life. This research is also expected to encourage a change in the educational paradigm from a uniform approach to an approach that respects the diversity and uniqueness of each individual.

2. METHOD

The research method used in this article is library research, which is research that aims to collect data and information from various relevant written sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other academic sources that discuss the theory of multiple intelligence, education, and self-development.

The data collection process begins with identifying and selecting credible and up-to-date sources obtained from libraries and scientific databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, Scopus, ResearchGate, and Elicit.ai. After that, the researcher conducts an in-depth content analysis of each source to explore the main concepts related to the variety of human intelligence and its implications in education and personal development. The collected data is then systematically synthesized to form a complete frame of thought, supporting arguments and discussions in the article. The data collection technique examines discourses from various literature, such as books, articles, and journals, to online information relevant to the research topic. Through this approach, this research aims to provide a strong conceptual understanding of the importance of recognizing and developing different types of intelligence as an integral part of the world of education and The process of character formation and individual self-potential (Abdurrahman 2024).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Variety of Human Intelligence

The Multiple Intelligences theory was developed by Howard Gardner in 1983 in his book Frames of Mind. Gardner defines intelligence as "the biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural context to solve a problem or create a product of value."

The theory challenges traditional views of intelligence that focus only on cognitive abilities, such as those measured through IQ (Nurhikmah, 2023). Instead, Gardner proposed that humans have different types of intelligence that work independently, and each individual has a unique intelligence profile based on their experiences and genetic factors. One type of intelligence put forward by Gardner is:

Figure 1. Component Multiple Intelligences Howard Gardner

Mathematical intelligence-logic

Mathematics-logic intelligence refers to a person's ability to think systematically and rationally, relying on skills in using inductive and deductive mindsets. Individuals with this intelligence can recognize relationships between various concepts, organize information logically, and solve problems involving numbers or mathematical patterns. They tend to be able to understand the rules of logic, identify hidden patterns, and connect seemingly unrelated facts or information. In addition, they are also skilled in making predictions or conclusions based on existing information and can solve problems in a structured and organized way. Students with math-logic intelligence typically enjoy activities that involve complex analysis and problem-solving. They enjoy engaging in activities that require them to think critically, test hypotheses and explore the cause and effect of an event or phenomenon.

They not only tend to be smart in mathematics and the exact sciences, but can also apply their logical abilities in a variety of life situations, such as solving puzzles or crafting evidence-based arguments. With the right approach, these skills can be further developed, supporting learners' ability to think more deeply and critically in a variety of academic and everyday life contexts (Ansori 2019).

Language Intelligence

Language intelligence refers to an individual's ability to use language effectively, whether in oral or written form, to convey ideas, ideas, or feelings. Individuals with high language intelligence have strong speaking and writing skills, are able to express themselves clearly and persuasively and understand the nuances of language well. They are also able to play with words, organize information in an easy-to-understand way, and adapt to various communication styles that suit the audience or situation at hand.

In addition, they have the ability to understand implicit meanings in communication, recognize complex language structures, and use them appropriately. Students with high language intelligence tend to enjoy various activities that involve language, such as reading books, writing stories or essays, writing poems, and composing aphorisms or speeches. They also often have the ability to remember and organize information conveyed verbally and easily understand and express abstract or complex ideas.

This language intelligence is important not only in academic contexts, such as essay writing or presentations but also in social and professional life, where effective communication is indispensable. With the right practice, students can further develop their language intelligence to create creative written works or become convincing speakers.

Musical Intelligence

Musical intelligence refers to an individual's ability to respond to and appreciate various elements of music, such as tone, rhythm, and sound quality. People with high musical intelligence tend to be very sensitive to the nuances of the sounds around them, whether they are heard in music or natural sounds. They can easily recognize changes in pitch (the pitch and low of the voice), rhythm, melody, and harmony.

In addition, they can imitate or create music with various musical instruments, even in contexts that are not always structured, such as improvisation. This intelligence allows individuals to understand and appreciate the beauty in sound, as well as express emotions or stories through the medium of music. Students with musical intelligence usually enjoy music-related activities very much, such as listening to songs, playing musical instruments, or even creating their own musical compositions. They often show exceptional skills when it comes to listening to and imitating rhythms or melodies, as well as having a strong musical sense that helps them understand and produce musical works.

This musical intelligence is not only limited to specific genres of music, but it can also include various forms of voice expression, including natural sounds or human conversation that have specific rhythms and patterns. Students with this intelligence can develop further through in-depth musical

practice and experience, and their abilities can be utilized in various fields, both in music education and other creative activities (Etnawati and Pamungkas 2022).

Visual-Spatial Intelligence

Visual-spatial intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand, remember, and manipulate objects and the space around them. People with high visual-spatial intelligence are able to see the relationships between objects in space in a very deep and clear way and can visualize images or patterns in their minds. They can easily depict objects from various perspectives, manipulate three-dimensional shapes in their imaginations, or even create physical models of the ideas they imagine.

This ability is often seen in professionals such as architects, graphic designers, or artists who work with form and space. Learners with visual-spatial intelligence are typically very proficient in activities that involve visualization, such as drawing, assembling objects, or solving space-based puzzles. They tend to enjoy activities that allow them to play with shapes, colors, and structures, such as building models and designing or manipulating physical objects.

In addition, they have the ability to identify patterns and relationships in their environment that may not be visible to others, as well as understand abstract concepts in a more concrete way. This visual-spatial intelligence is particularly useful in a variety of fields, including art, architecture, engineering, and science, where an understanding of space and objects is essential. With proper development, learners can improve these abilities to create innovative and original works.

Kinesthetic Intelligence

Kinesthetic intelligence includes the ability of individuals to use their bodies effectively in a variety of physical activities, both for communication and problem-solving purposes. People with this intelligence can move their bodies in a coordinated and precise manner, whether in sports, art, or other activities. They are adept at expressing ideas and emotions through body movements and have a high sensitivity to their body's balance, agility, and flexibility.

Individuals with kinesthetic intelligence tend to be more comfortable performing physical movement activities and exhibit better motor skills, such as in sports, dance, or performing arts. They can learn faster through hands-on experience and practice and use their bodies to express thoughts or feelings that are difficult to describe in words. Learners with kinesthetic intelligence tend to enjoy physical activities that allow them to move and express themselves through their bodies. They prefer to learn through activities that involve motor and touch skills, such as manipulating objects or participating in sports. For example, they can demonstrate excellence in sports such as badminton, soccer, or swimming, as well as in performing arts such as dance or drama.

Kinesthetic intelligence is also closely related to the ability to solve practical problems, in which body movement and physical coordination play an important role. Children with this intelligence are often quicker to understand and master physical skills and can learn more effectively through hands-on experiences involving their bodies. With proper development, these learners can channel their kinesthetic abilities in a variety of fields, such as athletics, art, and professions that require high physical skills (Mahmud et al. 2024).

Interpersonal intelligence

Interpersonal intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand the feelings, motivations, and needs of others, as well as the ability to interact with them effectively. People with high interpersonal intelligence tend to be sensitive to other people's facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice and can read social situations well. They have the ability to build strong relationships and trust with each other, communicate in a clear and empathetic way, and handle conflicts wisely.

This intelligence allows individuals to work together in a team, understand the perspectives of others, and create a harmonious and collaborative environment (Samsinar 2020). Learners with high interpersonal intelligence are usually very comfortable interacting with others and tend to be natural

leaders in groups. They are easy to socialize, understand their friends' feelings, and are often effective liaisons between individuals or groups. They are able to adapt their way of communicating according to different situations and audiences and can provide emotional support to others. This intelligence is particularly useful in areas involving social interaction, such as education, teamwork, leadership, and professions prioritizing service and human relationships. With proper development, these learners can become empathetic leaders and effective communicators.

Intrapersonal intelligence

Intrapersonal intelligence refers to an individual's ability to understand and recognize one's own feelings, thoughts, and motivations. People with high intrapersonal intelligence tend to have deep self-awareness, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and be able to assess themselves objectively. They also have the ability to manage their emotions effectively, maintain mental balance, and make decisions based on an understanding of themselves.

Individuals with intrapersonal intelligence are often more reflective and can assess their life experiences, which allows them to grow personally and professionally. Learners with high intrapersonal intelligence often enjoy time for introspection, self-evaluation, and thinking about how to improve themselves. They tend to be more aware of what they want in life and have a strong motivation to correct their shortcomings and develop their potential. They can face personal challenges with calmness and skills in managing stress or anxiety.

This intelligence is essential in helping individuals set goals, plan for the future, and overcome internal barriers that may hinder their personal development. With the right support and development, these learners can become more independent and thoughtful and have the ability to continue to develop over time.

Naturalist Intelligence

High naturalist intelligence typically shows a deep interest in nature, sensitivity to environmental changes, and the ability to recognize, classify, and understand natural elements such as plants, animals, and other environmental phenomena. An interest in outdoor activities, the ability to make keen observations about their environment, and attention to environmental and nature conservation issues are some of the characteristics shown by people of naturalistic intelligence. They tend to enjoy activities such as gardening, exploring the forest, or observing animals, and often show empathy for living things and the surrounding environment. With this ability, they can comprehensively understand and classify various components of nature. Developing naturalist intelligence in students in education can be achieved through learning approaches that involve direct interaction with nature, such as field observation activities, conservation projects, or the use of environment-based learning media. Methods like these enhance students' understanding of the subject matter and foster a sense of love and responsibility for nature, preparing them to become environmentally conscious individuals.(Aulia Rahma Fatihah, Pratika Rindriani, Endang Siregar, Sri Indriani Harianja 2023)

Existential Intelligence

In the theory of Multiple Intelligences developed by Howard Gardner, existential intelligence is one of the categories of intelligence. Existential intelligence is concerned with a person's ability to understand profound questions about the meaning of life, the purpose of existence, and man's relationship to the universe. People with existential intelligence tend to be particularly interested in investigating philosophical questions and finding answers to questions about the nature of human existence. In addition, they often consider the moral and ethical consequences of their choices and actions. Those with existential intelligence have a long-term perspective, think about cause and effect, like to help others, and are very sensitive to social problems. They often think about life, death, and the purpose of life, and seek to understand things like the soul, life after death, and relationships with higher powers.

Developing existential intelligence in students in education can be achieved using a learning approach that involves self-reflection, in-depth discussion, and the integration of life values. These methods enhance students' understanding of the subject matter and instill a sense of love and responsibility for nature, preparing them to become active and environmentally caring people.

3.2 Implications for Education

The theory of Multiple Intelligences, developed by Howard Gardner, has significantly impacted the world of education, particularly in how educators understand and manage the learning process. One of the main implications of this theory is the need for an individualized approach to education. Each student has a unique intelligence profile, so the teaching method must be tailored to the needs and strengths of each student. For example, students with visual-spatial intelligence may have an easier time understanding concepts through pictures, diagrams, or visualizations, while students with kinesthetic intelligence are more effective at learning through physical activity or hands-on projects. This approach increases learning effectiveness and helps students feel valued and motivated to learn in a way that best suits their learning style. Diversification of learning methods is an important key in the application of multiple intelligence theory. Teachers can use a variety of teaching strategies to reach all types of intelligence in the classroom. For example, visual aids such as videos or infographics can help students with visual-spatial intelligence understand the material more deeply. On the other hand, practical experiments and field activities can improve students' understanding of logical-mathematical and naturalistic intelligence. Music-based activities, such as songs or rhythms, can also be used for students with musical intelligence. This multimodal approach makes learning more inclusive and engaging for all students, regardless of their dominant intelligence type (Salim et al. 2024).

Theory Multiple Intelligences It also encourages the creation of a dynamic classroom atmosphere and supports creativity. In traditional education systems, there is often pressure to achieve certain academic outcomes by using uniform and rigid teaching methods. However, this theory encourages educators to provide space for students to explore their potential according to their individual learning styles. For example, teachers can integrate art projects, group discussions, or independent research in the curriculum to provide opportunities for students to apply their various intelligences in relevant contexts. This approach increases motivation to learn and helps students develop social and emotional skills essential for their future success (Ardiana 2022). Furthermore, the application of the Multiple Intelligences theory opens up opportunities to expand assessment methods in schools. In traditional education systems, student success is often measured only through written tests or standardized exams, which reflect a fraction of their abilities.

By adopting this approach, teachers can use various assessment forms, such as oral presentations, art projects, scientific experiments, or interactive games, to holistically evaluate students' abilities. For example, a student with kinesthetic intelligence can demonstrate their understanding through physical activities, such as assembling machinery or conducting practical demonstrations. Overall, the application of Multiple Intelligences theory in education provides a great opportunity for educators to design a more relevant and holistic learning experience for each student.

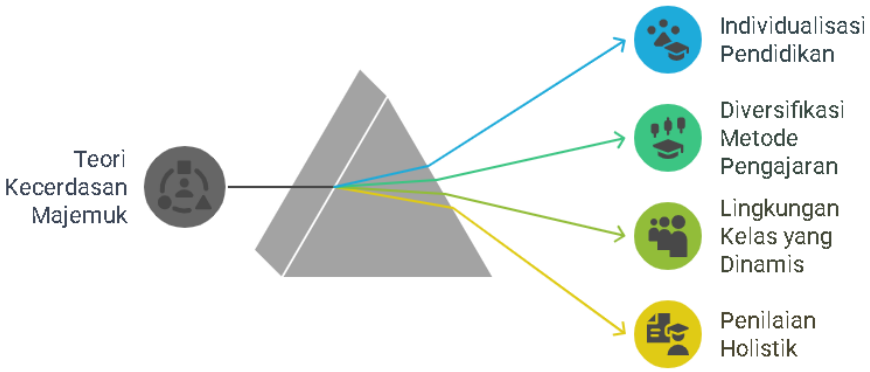

Figure 2. Student Potential Through Multiple Intelligences

By respecting the diversity of human potential and creating a learning environment that supports exploration and creativity, education helps individuals reach their best potential and contributes to the development of a more inclusive and highly competitive society. This theory encourages us to see students as unique individuals with various strengths, who need to be encouraged and facilitated to thrive in different aspects of their intelligence (Asnidar 2021).

3.3 Self-Development Through A Variety of Intelligence

The understanding of the variety of human intelligence proposed by Howard Gardner has profound implications for the development of the individual. By recognizing that each person has a unique combination of different types of intelligence, individuals can better understand their potential and how best to develop it. This understanding is beneficial not only in academic contexts, but also in everyday life, career, and social relationships. One of the first steps in self-development is to recognize one's dominant intelligence.

By knowing the most dominant type of intelligence, individuals can choose educational and career paths that better suit their talents and interests. For example, individuals with high linguistic intelligence may find satisfaction and success in professions such as writers, journalists, or language teachers. In contrast, individuals with kinesthetic intelligence are better suited for careers as athletes, dancers, or craftsmen. By choosing a path that suits their dominant intelligence, individuals can not only achieve success but also feel more satisfaction in the work they are engaged in. However, self-development does not stop at the recognition of dominant intelligence (Rohani, Nurhalizah, and Ritonga 2023).

Theory Multiple Intelligences It also encourages individuals to develop skills in other areas that may not be their natural strengths. For example, a person who naturally has logical-mathematical intelligence may feel less confident in interpersonal skills. However, by recognizing the importance of interpersonal intelligence in social and professional life, individuals can improve their social abilities. This can be done through communication training, leadership courses, or even group therapy. This process not only expands the individual's skills but also helps them become more flexible and adaptive in a variety of situations. In addition, self-development also involves understanding the learning style of each individual. The theory of Multiple Intelligences shows that everyone learns in a different way. Some may be better at learning through hands-on experience (kinesthetic), while others prefer to read or listen to information (linguistics) (Muhajarah 2022).

Individuals can develop more effective and enjoyable learning strategies by understanding their own learning styles. For example, a student with visual-spatial intelligence might use a concept map or diagram to help understand the subject matter, while a student with musical intelligence might utilize songs or rhythms to recall information. Understanding the variety of intelligence can also strengthen a person's social and emotional relationships. Individuals who are aware of the uniqueness of their intelligence tend to value differences among others more, creating a more inclusive and supportive

social environment where everyone feels valued for their unique contributions. In a professional context, understanding and interacting with others effectively (interpersonal intelligence) is essential for building strong networks and collaborating successfully. Finally, self-development through various intelligences also plays a role in life's search for meaning and purpose. Individuals who engage in activities that match their intelligence tend to feel more motivated and satisfied (Saihu 2022). For example, a person with naturalistic intelligence may find satisfaction in environmental conservation work or biological research. When individuals engage in activities that suit their strengths, they feel happier and more satisfied with their lives as a whole.

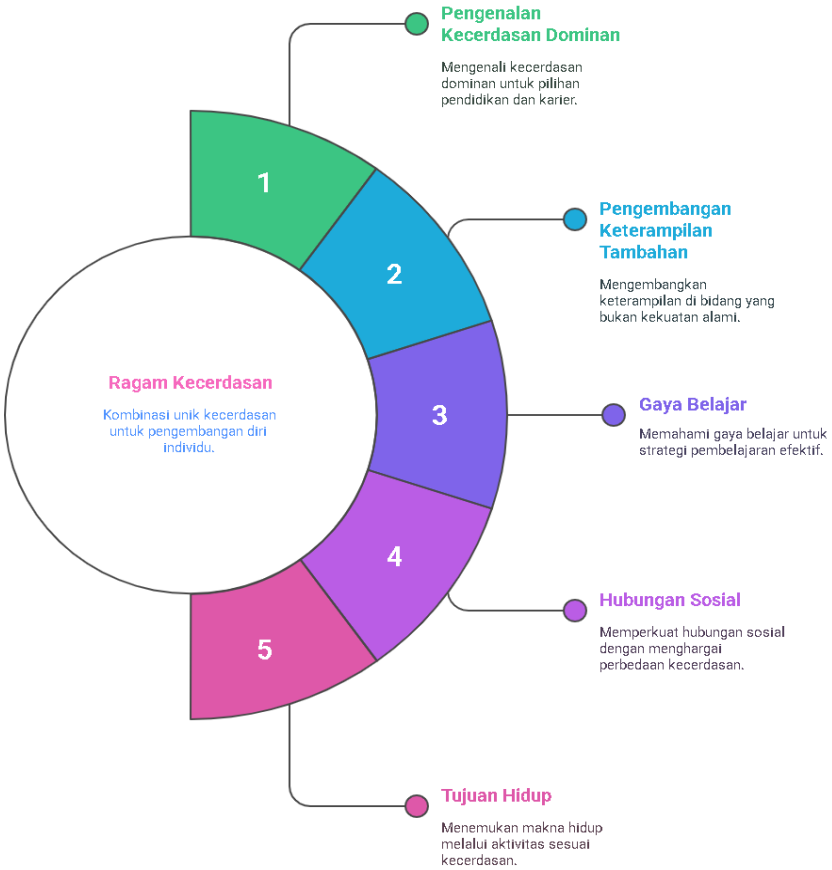

Figure 3. Self-Potential Through Multiple Intelligences

Overall, understanding the diversity of intelligence provides a powerful tool for individuals to explore their full potential and develop themselves holistically. By recognizing each other's strengths and weaknesses and creating an environment that supports personal growth, individuals can achieve balance in various aspects of their lives academically, professionally, socially, and emotionally thereby creating a more meaningful, fulfilling, and fulfilling life (Rifai, Heroniaty, and Hayatunnufus 2023).

4. CONCLUSION

The Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory developed by Howard Gardner offers a new understanding of human intelligence as something pluralistic and diverse. Gardner identifies eight main types of linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligence that can all develop uniquely in each individual. This view rejects the concept of a single intelligence measured only by IQ tests and instead emphasizes that everyone has a unique combination of intelligence. With this approach, human potential is seen more holistically and holistically, giving all individuals room to develop according to their strengths. In the world of

education, the implications of MI theory are huge. Teachers are required to no longer use uniform learning methods but must adjust teaching strategies based on the diversity of students' intelligence. Learning becomes more personalized, varied, and enjoyable when students are given the opportunity to learn in a way that suits their style and strengths, be it through movement, music, pictures, or group discussions.

In addition, assessment methods also need to be expanded to assess academic ability and appreciate other skills that reflect non-traditional intelligence. This will create a more inclusive, creative, and empowering learning environment for all students. In terms of self-development, this theory is an important guide for individuals to recognize and hone their potential more consciously. Knowing the dominant intelligence can help a person determine the most suitable educational and career path while also motivating them to develop other aspects of intelligence to become a more adaptive and balanced person. This understanding also strengthens the quality of social and emotional relationships, as it encourages individuals to appreciate the differences and strengths of others better. Thus, the theory of Multiple Intelligences is relevant to the educational context and contributes greatly to shaping resilient, reflective, and meaningful individuals in their social and professional lives.

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