Effect of Emotional Intelligence on the Achievement Motivation,
Psychological Adjustment and Scholastic Performance of
Secondary School Students

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The raison d’être of the present study is to understand the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) on the achievement motivation, psychological adjustment and scholastic performance of secondary school students. For this study, a sample of 450 urban male students of the tenth standard from Jaipur district were studied using Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar, Achievement Value and Anxiety Inventory (AVAI) by Mehta and Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) by Sinha and Singh. In addition, the total percentage of marks achieved by these students in the tenth standard board exams conducted by the Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan, was taken as the index of their scholastic performance. Results revealed a significant effect of EI on the achievement motivation and educational adjustment of students. However, EI did not have a significant effect on the emotional adjustment, social adjustment and scholastic performance of students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence (EI), Achievement Motivation, Adjustment and Scholastic Performance

Instances are witnessed in our day-to-day life wherein the brightest of the students in a class do not succeed later in their lives to the degree that their less intellectual counterparts do. These examples are particularly evident in various fields like education, politics, business and administration (Singh, 2002). But then, a question arises: Other than intelligence, what is it that helps a student to succeed in life? Which human quality is it that helps students to function better in all spheres, ranging from career to personal life? The answer may lie in the quotient of intelligence that facilitates the handling of the emotions of self and others effectively; this is popularly known as emotional intelligence (EI). It ensures smooth sailing in the turbulent waves of life and is more important than merely having intelligence alone (Brown, 1996; Goleman, 1995; Reiff, 2001; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Salovey and Mayer (1990) define EI as the ability to: (a) perceive and express emotion, (b) use emotion to facilitate thought, (c) understand and reason with emotion and (d) regulate emotion in self and others. These researchers conceptualize EI as a mental ability that pertains to an individual’s capacity to process and reason with and about emotion-laden information. Understanding one’s own emotional processes can have far-reaching effects for social functioning and quality of life. Richardson (2000) indicated that young people who lack social and emotional competence might end up becoming self-centred and unable to empathize with and relate to others. In contrast to Intelligence Quotient (IQ), which is considered relatively stable and unchangeable, researches indicated that EI is acquired and developed through learning and repeated experience at any age; hence, it can be nurtured in individuals (Ashtorth, 2001; Cooper, 1997; Goleman, 1995). Looking at the significance of EI in handling life stresses, it can be judged in terms of its impact on the achievement motivation, adjustment and scholastic performance of students.

Achievement motivation can be defined as the striving to increase, or keep as high as possible, one’s own capability in all activities in