

# **The Relationship between Socio-Emotional Status and Academic Achievement among Students**

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## **Abstract**

School is a significant element in the lives of children and youth since it serves as a meeting place for different aspects of their lives – academic, emotional and social. This review discusses the reciprocal influences that exist between these aspects and specifically, between the student's socio-emotional functioning and their academic achievement.

Traditionally, most efforts have been invested in cognitive achievement and in ways to ensure optimal performance (Zeidner, 2010). Since academic success demands more than academic skills and competencies (DiPerna & Elliott, 2002), research studies have examined the relationship between student achievement and different academic variables, including: social competencies and emotional abilities, perceptions of self, motivational factors and degree of involvement in learning. These and other constructs can be seen as desirable educational outcomes in and of themselves and which may in turn, promote students' academic achievement and impact upon their overall functioning both in school and out.

The present review, thus, seeks to present theoretical factors and models alongside empirically-based research that examines the relationships between various variables connected to socio-emotional and academic functioning in school. First, due to the recognized importance of perceptions of self (Eccles, 2004), in this review we will relate to different perceptions of self that are important in academic life, including: academic self-perception and academic self-efficacy, perceptions related to student motivation including attribution styles and achievement goals. The review suggests that these factors

have a direct influence on students' engagement in learning and on the emotions they arouse during the process, and on their achievements.

In light of the interrelationship that exists between emotional functioning and achievement and due to the fact that the school environment confronts the student with different challenges which arouse both positive and negative emotions, various emotional abilities found to be essential for adaptive functioning in school will be examined. These include: emotional intelligence, regulation of emotion and emotional resilience. The review indicates that the student's emotional abilities have considerable weight with respect to how their feelings, thoughts and behavior are managed and this, in consequence, affects their socio-emotional state as well as their engagement in learning and academic achievement. The review also shows that achievement affects the students' self-perception and the way they experience school.

Daily coping with school demands takes place within a social context and this has a definitive influence on students' performance and achievements as well as on their emotional functioning. The review presents different aspects that are related to social functioning, including the sense of belonging and acceptance in the peer group; also discussed is the interrelationship that exists between social functioning and academic performance, which interface in a meaningful way during various collaborative teaching methods. It would appear that collaborative learning affords students real-time practice of social skills whose acquisition further promotes academic achievement.

The manner in which the education system relates to learners' cognitive diversity shapes the learning environment and has a significant impact on different emotional, motivational and social aspects related to learning and achievement. While different approaches stress the benefits of difference and heterogeneity and exploit this diversity in the service of learning, other methods view it as a disadvantage and seek to reduce it by dividing the school and the classes into tracks, proficiency clusters and ability and achievement groupings. Therefore, different ways of responding to cognitive diversity will be reviewed while raising fundamental educational issues and presenting research that demonstrates the different effects these approaches have on students.

Finally, identification of various factors underlying functioning in school as well as empirical examination of the interrelationships that represent a basis for developing various interventions. Thus, in reviewing the different relationships, research will be presented that has examined the impact of different intervention and teaching methods on social and emotional facets and a chapter will be devoted to describing specific interventions developed over the years. The review shows that while different interventions emphasize academic goals and focus on providing a direct response to cognitive diversity, other interventions place academic goals right alongside goals in the socio-emotional realm, or focus exclusively upon the latter. This, based on the research-supported assumption that advancing students in this area is likely to advance them in academic areas as well and moreover, to contribute to their success and general development.