

## ABSTRACT

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TENDENCIES TO ASCRIBE LOCUS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT BETWEEN TWO GROUPS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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The focal point of the study was to investigate if statistically significant differences existed between two groups of students--those identified as "Emotionally Impaired," and those identified as "Regular"--in terms of their ascriptions of locus of responsibility regarding both academic successes and failures.

The two groups of students, ages twelve to fifteen, were: a group who were not "Emotionally Impaired" were for purposes of this study identified as "Regular" (n=27). The other group, drawn from the same population, had been identified as "Emotionally Impaired" (n=21) according to criteria established by P.L.

94-142. Both groups attended middle school in a midwestern city.

The Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale was the tool used in estimating students' beliefs. A high score represents internal responsibility, a low score, external responsibility. The values of t test were computed to determine if statistically significant differences existed between groups on the means compared. The values of z-score for items' proportions were computed to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the two groups on each item.

According to study findings, no statistically significant differences existed between the "Emotionally Impaired" and the "Regular" groups in terms of their locus of responsibility ascription. Statistically significant differences ( $\alpha=.05$ ), or differences close to being significant ( $\alpha=.07$ ), between the two groups were found on eleven of thirty-four items. Examination of these item-by-item differences displayed a possible tendency for greater proportions of EI students to ascribe locus of responsibility for intellectual achievement to external sources.