Abstract

American public school students who, by definition of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are emotionally disturbed (ED), often display difficulties with internal control characteristics and behaviors reflecting poor internal controls. This dissertation attempts to review the literature on emotional intelligence (EI) and how it may impact students with ED, particularly as they experience poor internal control characteristics. After review of the literature, a 12-week study of students with ED from a private school in the State of Maryland was completed. The 12-week study included EI interventions based upon Gwen Doty’s EI learning strategies for students grades K-8. The study included students ranging from 11 to 14 years of age and grades six through eight. The data was collected based on an ANCOVA to determine whether there were statistical differences between the experimental group and control group. After implementing the EI strategies and calculating statistical data, there were no statistical differences noted as a result of the study. The hypothesis was not supported, which may have been due to a very small sample size as well as threats to validity. However, future research in this area is needed as there is evidence to support beneficial claims for EI—social and emotional learning—upon students of all backgrounds and disabilities as well as grade and age levels.