



Need Structure amongst Adolescents in Context with Emotional Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on 120 male adolescent respondents of +2 schools of Patna (Bihar) It was hypothesized that high and low EI groups of adolescents will differ significantly on need structure dimensions eg. (i) need for achievement, (ii) level of aspiration, (iii) risk taking and (iv) sense of security respectively. For the purpose, Mangal's EIS, Mukherjee's SCT, Singh's Level of Aspiration Scale, Chaubey's Non Risk Taking Scale and Singh's Hindi version of Maslow's Security/ Insecurity Scale were employed to measure emotional intelligence, need for achievement; level of aspiration, risk-taking and security/ insecurity of respondents all undertaken in the study. Besides these, a PDS was employed to get other necessary information relating to the respondents. The data were obtained as per the direction of the manuals concerned and analysed using t-test. The results confirmed the hypothesis. High EI is conducive to high need structure dimensions [high need for achievement, high level of aspiration, high risk-taking trait and high sense of security] among adolescents and vice-versa.

KEY WORDS

Emotional Intelligence, Adolescents, Structure.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a multifaceted psychological construct that has garnered significant attention in both academic and applied fields, particularly in understanding how individuals manage their emotions, make decisions, and interact with others. Originally popularized by psychologists like Peter Salovey and John Mayer and later by Daniel

Goleman, emotional intelligence is often divided into several key components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Of these, motivation plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's approach to challenges, achievement, risk-taking, and overall emotional well-being. This aspect of emotional intelligence allows individuals to navigate their personal and professional lives effectively by providing the energy and drive to pursue goals, overcome obstacles, and regulate emotional responses to success or failure.

Among the various dimensions that contribute to motivation within the framework of emotional intelligence, there are several constructs that have been found to significantly influence individual behavior: need for achievement, level of aspiration, risk-taking tendencies, and security/insecurity. These components not only contribute to an individual's general emotional and psychological landscape but also interact in ways that either enable or hinder their emotional and personal growth. Understanding the interplay of these traits, particularly in the context of emotional intelligence, can offer insights into why certain individuals succeed in high-pressure environments, while others may struggle to achieve their desired outcomes despite possessing similar levels of intelligence or skill.

In this introduction, we explore the core constructs of need for achievement, level of aspiration, risk-taking behavior, and security/insecurity, placing them within the broader framework of emotional intelligence. By examining how these dimensions influence an individual's emotional regulation, interpersonal interactions, and overall motivational drive, we gain a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms at work in both personal development and professional success.

The need for achievement (n-Ach) is a concept that stems from motivation theory, initially developed by David McClelland. It refers to an individual's desire to pursue and attain goals, often characterized by a preference for tasks that are challenging yet achievable. High n-Ach individuals set difficult goals for themselves, seek feedback on their performance, and derive satisfaction from overcoming obstacles and achieving success.

In the context of emotional intelligence, the need for achievement is intrinsically tied to self-motivation and self-regulation. Individuals with a high need for achievement often possess high levels of self-awareness, which helps them identify their goals and measure their progress. Moreover, their ability to self-regulate allows them to persist through challenges, maintain focus, and cope with emotional setbacks along the way. Their intrinsic motivation fuels the desire to perform at their best, even in the face of adversity, and their ability to process negative emotions such as frustration or disappointment enables them to recover quickly and continue pursuing their objectives.

Furthermore, high-achieving individuals often display a growth mindset, a concept introduced by psychologist Carol Dweck. This mindset fosters resilience, as individuals with a growth orientation are more likely to view failure as an opportunity for learning and self-improvement rather than as a personal defeat. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in this process by providing individuals with the emotional tools to navigate both success and failure effectively.

The level of aspiration refers to the degree of difficulty or challenge that an individual sets for themselves when striving to achieve their goals. This dimension is often influenced by a person's self-concept, past experiences, and the feedback they receive from their environment. In individuals with high emotional intelligence, the level of aspiration is typically aligned with a balanced sense of realistic optimism. These individuals are capable of setting challenging goals while simultaneously understanding their limitations and preparing for potential setbacks.

Emotional intelligence affects the level of aspiration in multiple ways. Self-awareness allows individuals to accurately assess their abilities, which in turn enables them to set realistic but challenging goals. Moreover, self-regulation ensures that they maintain their focus and perseverance, even when faced with obstacles. High levels of emotional intelligence also foster empathy, which helps individuals consider the perspectives of others and adjust their goals based on collective feedback or external circumstances.

Interestingly, individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to recalibrate their aspirations based on situational feedback and emotional responses. For instance, they may adjust their goals if they recognize that pursuing an unattainable objective could lead to significant emotional distress or negative consequences. This flexibility allows them to pursue goals with persistence while avoiding the negative emotional fallout of unattainable or unrealistic aspirations.

Risk-taking is another key dimension of motivation that is strongly tied to emotional intelligence. While risk-taking is often associated with impulsive or reckless behavior, individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to approach risk with greater awareness, calculation, and emotional balance. They are more likely to assess potential rewards and pitfalls and to make decisions based on a comprehensive understanding of both their emotional responses and external factors.

Emotional regulation is central to this process. Individuals who can manage their emotions effectively are more likely to engage in calculated risk-taking, where the emotional highs and lows of potential success or failure are weighed carefully before action is taken. Their ability to self-reflect also helps them consider previous experiences with risk-taking, and their empathy allows them to evaluate how their decisions might impact others, further refining their approach to risk.

For example, an emotionally intelligent person might take risks in a business setting, but they would do so with an awareness of their emotional triggers and the possible consequences for their team or organization. They are more likely to use positive emotional feedback, such as confidence and excitement, to propel themselves forward, while also using negative emotions, such as fear or doubt, to adjust their approach and minimize potential harm.

Lastly, the emotional dimensions of security and insecurity play a critical role in shaping an individual's response to challenges and goals. Security, in this context, refers to an emotional state where individuals feel stable, supported, and confident in their abilities. In contrast, insecurity refers to feelings of doubt, fear, and lack of control, which can significantly impair decision-making and emotional regulation.

Emotional intelligence plays a central role in managing both security and insecurity. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to foster emotional security through self-awareness, self-acceptance, and self-regulation. They are more likely to maintain a positive outlook even during periods of uncertainty, and they use their social skills to build supportive networks of relationships that can help mitigate feelings of insecurity.

On the other hand, individuals with low emotional intelligence may struggle with insecurity, which can manifest as fear of failure, self-doubt, and an inability to regulate negative emotions effectively. This insecurity can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where emotional discomfort impedes goal achievement and fosters avoidance of risk or challenge.

In summary, the interplay of need for achievement, level of aspiration, risk-taking, and security/insecurity significantly influences emotional intelligence and vice versa. The key to success in these areas lies in an individual's ability to balance their emotions with their cognitive processes, adapt their goals in response to emotional feedback, and regulate their emotional states to maintain motivation. Emotional intelligence, therefore, provides a framework for understanding how individuals navigate the complexities of motivation, both in terms of their goals and their emotional responses to success or failure. By examining these dimensions, we gain a richer understanding of the emotional dynamics that underlie human behavior and motivation.

Review of Literature

Goleman, D.³ (1995) highlighted the essential role of motivation in EI. One key aspect of motivation is the need for achievement (n-Ach) Goleman argues that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to set challenging goals and possess the intrinsic motivation necessary to achieve them. They use self-

regulation and empathy to navigate challenges, improving their resilience and performance. Emotional intelligence enables high n-Ach individuals to manage setbacks and emotions associated with failure, thus continuing their pursuit of success. Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P.⁶ (1997) Mayer and Salovey's work on the four-branch model of EI addresses how emotional intelligence impacts goal-setting, particularly the level of aspiration. Their research suggests that emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to assess their abilities realistically, setting goals that are both challenging and attainable. These individuals are less likely to set overly ambitious or unreachable goals that may lead to emotional burnout. Furthermore, they have the emotional awareness needed to adjust their aspirations based on personal feedback and environmental cues, promoting a growth mindset. Zabelina, D. L., & Robinson, M. D.¹¹ (2010) explored the connection between emotional regulation and risk-taking behavior. Their findings suggest that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more adept at managing emotional responses, such as fear or excitement, that typically accompany risky decisions. This ability to regulate emotions allows emotionally intelligent individuals to engage in calculated risk-taking, balancing potential rewards and consequences without being driven by impulsive or reckless behavior. High EI leads to improved decision-making in situations of uncertainty. Bar-On, R.¹ (2006) Bar-On's research on emotional-social intelligence introduces the concept of insecurity as a critical emotional factor that affects an individual's ability to achieve personal and professional success. He posits that emotional intelligence is closely linked to emotional security, with emotionally intelligent individuals being better equipped to manage feelings of self-doubt or insecurity. High EI helps individuals develop resilience and confidence in their abilities, thus reducing emotional insecurity and fostering a secure and stable self-concept. Schutte, N. S., & Malouff, J. M.⁹ (2002) explored the relationship between self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and achievement motivation. Their findings suggest that emotionally intelligent individuals tend to have higher self-esteem, which in turn influences their need for achievement and goal-setting. These individuals are more likely to pursue ambitious goals with confidence, demonstrating a higher level of achievement motivation due to their ability to manage emotions such as fear of failure or anxiety. The emotional stability provided by EI acts as a buffer against insecurity, enabling goal achievement. Cherniss, C.² (2000) Cherniss focuses on the role of emotional intelligence in organizational behavior, particularly how risk-taking is influenced by EI in the workplace. He found that employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely to take well-informed risks that benefit the organization. Their ability to read emotional cues, regulate their emotions, and stay calm under pressure makes them more capable of handling the stress associated with decision-making in uncertain situations. This ability fosters a culture of calculated risk-taking and innovation. Gross, J. J.⁴ (2002) worked on emotion regulation discusses how individuals who struggle with emotional insecurity may face difficulties in achievement, especially when their emotional responses to setbacks are uncontrolled. He emphasizes that self-regulation, a key component of emotional intelligence, enables individuals to better cope with negative emotions such as fear of failure and insecurity, which can otherwise hinder goal progress. Emotionally intelligent individuals are able to reframe their feelings of insecurity and focus on their goals, thus maintaining motivation in the face of challenges. Robinson, S. P., & Judge, T. A.⁸ (2018) in their research on entrepreneurship and organizational behavior, Robinson and Judge highlight how emotional intelligence influences entrepreneurial risk-taking. Entrepreneurs with high EI are more likely to take calculated risks, leveraging their ability to understand and regulate emotions to make decisions that minimize risks while maximizing rewards. These individuals are better able to deal with setbacks, learning from mistakes without becoming overly discouraged or insecure. High emotional intelligence allows entrepreneurs to strike a balance between ambition and caution, which is critical to long-term success. Vohs, K. D., Baumeister, R. F., & Schmeichel, B. J.¹⁰ (2012) researched examines how insecurity can undermine achievement motivation if not properly managed. Vohs et al. argue that emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to regulate their emotions, including feelings of insecurity, in high-stakes situations. Emotional regulation helps mitigate the paralyzing effects of insecurity and allows individuals to stay focused on their goals, thereby enhancing their achievement motivation. Emotional intelligence helps reduce the internal conflict between fear of failure and the desire to succeed, fostering greater emotional resilience. Matthews, G., Zeidner, M., & Roberts, R. D.⁵ (2002) explored how individuals with high emotional

intelligence are better equipped to set and achieve high aspirations. They argue that emotionally intelligent individuals have a well-developed self-concept, which enables them to set realistic yet challenging goals. These individuals are capable of adjusting their goals as needed and can regulate negative emotional responses (e.g., frustration or anxiety) that arise when their aspirations are challenged. Their ability to balance ambition with emotional awareness leads to higher success rates in achieving personal and professional goals. Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A.⁷ (2003) focused on the relationship between trait emotional intelligence (EI) and achievement in high-risk settings, such as competitive sports or business ventures. Their research shows that high EI is a strong predictor of success in these contexts, as it allows individuals to take calculated risks and manage the emotional turbulence associated with high-stakes situations. EI helps individuals regulate their emotional responses, especially when faced with insecurity or failure, ultimately increasing their achievement motivation and fostering resilience in the face of adversity.

Objective

It was intended to compare high and low EI groups of adolescents on need structure dimensions (need for achievements, level of aspiration, risk taking and sense of security)

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that high and low EI groups of adolescents will differ significantly on need structure dimensions (i) need for achievement, (ii) level of aspiration, (iii) risk taking and (iv) sense of security respectively.

Method of Study

Sample

The study was conducted on 120 male adolescents based on incidental-cum purposive sample. They were selected from among the +2 schools of Patna (Bihar) Other than the required condition, they were matched so far as practicable.

Research Tools

- i. Mangal's Emotional Intelligence Scale was used to measure emotional intelligence of the respondents.
- ii. Achievement Motive Scale by Mukharjee was used for measure need for achievement of the respondents.
- iii. Level of Aspiration Scale by Singh A.K. was used to measure level of aspiration of the respondents.
- iv. Non-Risk Taking Scale by Chaubey N.C. was used for measuring the risk-taking trait of the respondents.
- v. Security/Insecurity Scale by Shanti Singh was used to measure the sense of Security/Insecurity of the respondents.
- vi. A PDS was employed on the respondents to get the necessary informations relating to the respondents.

Procedure

Emotional Intelligence Scale along with PDS were employed on the respondents and equal number (N=60) of respondents in respect of high and low emotional intelligence were selected using median value of the score obtained. Thereafter, remaining scales were employed on the same groups and data were recorded as per the direction of the manuals concerned. The obtained data were treated using t-test.

Table 01: Comparison between high and low emotional intelligence groups of adolescents on need for achievement measure

Dimensions	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Emotional Intelligence	High	60	42.65	4.85	7.01	118	<.01
	Low	60	35.91	5.24			

It is clear from table-01 that high emotional intelligence group of adolescents were found excelling (Mean = 42.65) over low emotional intelligence group of adolescents (Mean = 35.91) significantly (t = 7.01;

df = 118; p<.01) on need for achievement measure. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence excel in need for achievement as they better regulate emotions, set realistic goals, and persevere through challenges. Their self-awareness and motivation enhance focus and drive, while empathy and social skills foster supportive relationships that encourage success. These traits collectively boost their ambition and ability to achieve more than peers with lower emotional intelligence.

Table 02: Comparison between high and low emotional intelligence groups of adolescents on level of aspiration measure

Dimensions	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Emotional Intelligence	High	60	33.85	5.00	8.22	118	<.01
	Low	60	26.36	4.99			

It is clear from the results of table-2 that high EI group of adolescents excel (Mean = 33.85) over low EI group of adolescents (Mean = 26.36) on level of aspiration measure significantly [t = 8.22; df = 118; p<.01]. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence excel in level of aspiration because they possess better self-awareness, motivation, and emotional regulation. These skills help them set realistic yet challenging goals, persist through setbacks, and maintain a positive outlook. Their ability to manage stress and empathize also enhances social support, further boosting their aspirations and drive for achievement.

Table 03: Comparison between high and low emotional intelligence groups of adolescents on risk taking measure

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Emotional Intelligence	High	60	56.90	4.56	9.01	118	<.01
	Low	60	49.32	4.65			

It is obvious from results of table-03 that high EI group of adolescents manifest high mean (M = 56.90) on risk-taking measure than low EI group of adolescents (M = 49.32) significantly [t = 9.01; df = 118; p<.01]. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence excel in risk-taking as they can assess situations thoughtfully, manage fear and impulsivity, and make balanced decisions. Their self-confidence and emotional regulation enable them to take calculated risks, enhancing growth and goal achievement, unlike those with low emotional intelligence who may act impulsively or avoid challenges altogether.

Table 04: Comparison between high and low emotional intelligence groups of adolescents on security / insecurity measure

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P
Emotional Intelligence	High	60	53.73	4.87	7.66	118	<.01
	Low	60	46.90	4.94			

It is clear from results of table-4 that high EI is conducive to high sense of security (M = 53.73) and low EI induce low sense of security (M = 46.90) significantly [t = 7.66; df = 118; p<.01]. Adolescents with high emotional intelligence exhibit a stronger sense of security because they understand and manage their emotions effectively, leading to higher self-esteem and inner stability. Their strong interpersonal skills and emotional awareness foster trust and support in relationships, reducing anxiety and fear, unlike low emotional intelligence peers who often feel uncertain and emotionally vulnerable.

CONCLUSIONS

- (i) High emotional intelligence among adolescents is conducive to high need for achievement and vice-versa.
- (ii) High emotional intelligence among adolescents is conducive to high level of aspiration motive and vice-versa.
- (iii) High emotional intelligence among adolescents is conducive to high risk taking motive and vice-versa.

- (iv) High emotional intelligence among adolescents is conducive to high sense of security motive and vice-versa.

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