ENHANCING EFFECTIVE DECISION-MAKING THROUGH LEADERSHIP INTELLIGENCE: A STUDY OF IQ, EQ, AND SQ AMONG ROYAL MALAYSIAN POLICE OFFICERS

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates how Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) influence Effective Decision-Making (EDM) in the context of the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). This study tackles significant deficiencies in the decision-making processes of law enforcement by examining the interplay between conventional cognitive intelligence and the often-overlooked emotional and spiritual intelligences, which are becoming essential for fostering resilience, leadership, and ethical choices in demanding situations. Law enforcement officers frequently encounter intricate, ethically sensitive situations where their choices influence community confidence and security. Conventional intelligence assessments do not adequately reflect the complexities of decision-making, particularly in high-pressure situations. The research issue focusses on exploring how these three facets of intelligence enhance the officers' capacity to make swift, informed, and ethically responsible choices in times of crisis. This study builds on previous research that emphasises the significance of emotional intelligence in professional environments by incorporating spiritual intelligence, which enhances ethical judgement and moral clarity, crucial for effective police work. The study employs Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory as a foundation to investigate the complex aspects of intelligence and its direct influence on EDM. The study employs data analysis tools such as SmartPLS to uncover significant positive relationships among IQ, EQ, SQ, and EDM. This indicates that integrated intelligence training may improve the decision-making capabilities of RMP officers when faced with ethically complex scenarios. This research emphasises the importance for law enforcement agencies to create training initiatives that cultivate a harmonious blend of cognitive, emotional, and ethical intelligence, ultimately enhancing decision-making and outcomes for public safety.

Keywords: Effective Decision-Making (EDM), Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Royal Malaysian Police (RMP)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement encounters unique and complex challenges in decision-making, as officers often work in high-pressure situations that significantly affect public safety and community trust (Dempsey et al., 2023). Traditional evaluations of intelligence, like the Intelligence Quotient (IQ), frequently do not adequately capture the intricate emotional, ethical, and social aspects that are present in these situations. Recent research highlights the importance of Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) as crucial elements in improving effective decision-making (EDM) within police contexts. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is gaining recognition as a fundamental element of successful leadership and decision-making, contributing to around 58% of job success in diverse fields (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). In a similar vein, SQ is recognised for its role in promoting ethical, value-oriented decision-making, which is essential in situations that demand high ethical standards and proactive community involvement (Martínez et al., 2021).

This research seeks to investigate the combined influence of cognitive, emotional, and social intelligence on effective decision-making in the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), employing Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory as a foundational framework. The emphasis on RMP is warranted due to the distinctive characteristics of law enforcement duties, which require rapid yet deliberate decision-making in critical situations. Officers frequently encounter ethically intricate scenarios, where their choices can significantly impact public perception and trust. Furthermore, the framework of RMP and its crucial function in upholding national safety and security present an excellent opportunity to explore the significance of multidimensional intelligence in the decision-making process.

This research aims to offer practical insights for enhancing RMP's training and development programs through an objective analysis of the interplay between IQ, EQ, and SQ. It promotes a well-rounded strategy for these intelligences to improve decision-making effectiveness, especially in crucial law enforcement situations. This research provides a foundation for comprehending the interplay between IQ, EQ, and SQ in enhancing officers' abilities to make ethical, judicious, and effective decisions in high-pressure situations. Moreover, the results seek to fill current voids in training approaches, highlighting the necessity for thorough programs that combine these intelligences to cultivate a more robust and ethically sound police force.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent research, the importance of Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) as complementing intelligences in effective decision-making (EDM) has been brought to light (Mtambalike, 2017). Emotional intelligence (EQ), which encompasses abilities such as self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, is an essential component of job performance (Antonopoulou,

2024). It enhances an individual's capacity to effectively manage interpersonal dynamics and stress (Zhang & Zhang, 2022). In high-pressure professions such as law enforcement, these competences help officers make better decisions in a variety of situations, which in turn affects the dynamics of the team and the public's trust (Roys, 2023). The ability to manage moral complexity and cultivate a larger perspective that is aligned with ethical principles and community welfare is made possible by superior intelligence (SQ) (Kim & Kim, 2024), which is an essential component of ethical and value-driven decision-making. SQ has been demonstrated to improve the decision-making abilities of leaders by incorporating moral accountability into their responsibilities (Wang, 2024), according to research conducted in the field of leadership. A synergistic impact on leadership effectiveness is suggested by the combined benefits of intelligence, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence (IQ, EQ, and SQ). This is because EQ has a beneficial influence on strategic decision-making by boosting collaboration and consensus, while SQ fosters a long-term, ethical outlook (Kim & Loewenstein, 2020). Incorporating training in IQ, EQ and SQ can be of considerable advantage to organisations such as the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). This training can improve officers' capacities for resilience, decision accuracy, and ethical grounding, so strengthening their ability to respond to complex social interactions and crises (Mohd Nazri & Othman, 2023).

Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory, introduced in the 1990s, emphasizes the role of EI—recognizing, understanding, and managing emotions—in effective leadership and decision-making (Goleman, 1995). This study applies Goleman's model to assess leadership among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers, exploring IQ, EQ, Spiritual Quotient (SQ), and Leadership Intelligence (LI) as essential components. While IQ aids cognitive tasks, EQ, including empathy and social skills, is crucial for resilience and motivation. Integrating SQ can enhance ethical decision-making, and high LI enables leaders to inspire and navigate social dynamics, supporting effective decisions and public safety.

To support the application of Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory in modern contexts of leadership and decision-making, recent studies have highlighted the importance of emotional and social competencies in effective leadership. Goleman's concept, while foundational, continues to be expanded. For instance, contemporary research affirms that EI significantly impacts leaders' adaptability, resilience, and interpersonal effectiveness, crucial for managing complex social and ethical issues (Cherniss & Goleman, 2020; Boyatzis & McKee, 2021). Additional research links EQ with improved decision-making, particularly under stress, supporting Goleman's view on EQ's impact (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2019).

	SELF Personal Competence	**OTHER** Social Competence
Recognition	**Self-Awareness** Emotional Self-Awareness Accurate Self-Assessment Self-Confidence	**Social Awareness** Empathy Service Orientation Organizational Awareness
Regulation	**Self-Management** Self-Control Trustworthiness Conscientiousness Adaptability Achievement Drive Initiative	**Relationship Management** Developing Others Influence Communication Conflict Management Leadership Change Catalyst Building Bonds Teamwork and Collaboration

Source: Delgoda, L., & Weerasinghe, T. D. (2021). Gender differences in emotional Intelligence: moderating role of organizational culture. Journal of Human Resource Management Perspectives, 6(1), 59-82.

This literature review synthesizes current research on Malaysia's COVID-19 response, covering epidemiological patterns, public health measures, and hospital infrastructure. Findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions, evidence-based treatments, and continuous research to mitigate the pandemic's impact (Chen, 2021; Hoque et al., 2022). Effective leadership was crucial, particularly among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers, where leadership styles such as inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation influenced key decision-making processes (Hassan et al., 2023). Collaborations between law enforcement and government agencies, especially in enforcing movement restrictions, were instrumental in safeguarding public health (Rashid et al., 2023). Leadership qualities such as communication of health guidelines, effective risk mitigation, and adaptability were vital. Research underscores that leaders' timely, informed decisions positively impacted public health outcomes, while delays or inconsistencies risked undermining public confidence (Natalia, 2023; Lim et al., 2022). Metrics assessing leadership effectiveness included COVID-19 case trends, adherence to guidelines, and public trust indicators such as staff morale and public feedback (Khalid & Munir, 2023; Azmi & Chong, 2022). Thus, strong leadership, particularly in crisis management, has been shown to be crucial for maintaining public trust and mitigating pandemic impacts.

2.0 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT (IQ) AND EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

IQ is a measure of cognitive abilities like logical reasoning, problem-solving, and information processing (Malaei, 2024). It reflects a person's capacity for abstract reasoning and applying knowledge to new situations but does not include social or emotional skills (Alharbi, 2023). Research links IQ with effective decision-making, particularly in high-pressure roles. Vander Pal (2021) shows that higher IQ enhances decision-making in contexts like investments, emphasizing cognitive skills for complex information processing. However, higher-IQ individuals may take longer to make decisions, affecting both speed and quality. Schirner, Deco, and Ritter (2023) confirm that high IQs improve analytical abilities crucial for data interpretation and decision-making. Based on this, hypothesis 1 has been developed for this study.

H1: Intelligence Quotient (IQ) has a significant positive relationship with effective decision-making among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2.1.2 EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT (EQ) AND EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

EQ, or emotional quotient, refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage both one's own and others' emotions. It is key to interpersonal skills, empathy, self-regulation, and social competence, boosting leadership and team dynamics (Stein, 2024; Six Seconds, 2021). Studies by Khalisah (2023) and Okwe (2020) demonstrate EQ's role in decision-making, linking it to job performance, leadership, and decision-making styles. Khalisah (2023) shows that higher EQ aids in quick yet thoughtful decisions under pressure, while Okwe (2020) highlights EQ's importance in leadership and high-stress settings, improving outcomes by enhancing empathy, emotional regulation, and conflict management. For RMP officers, higher EQ can improve decision-making by fostering empathy, stress management, and social insight. Therefore, hypothesis 2 has been develop as below:

H2: Emotional Quotient (EQ) has a significant positive relationship with effective decision-making among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2.1.3 SPIRITUAL QUOTIENT (SQ) AND EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Spiritual quotient (SQ) refers to the ability to incorporate values, ethics, and a sense of purpose into decisions and actions (Moleka, 2021). It plays a crucial role in areas requiring ethical judgment, fostering trust and teamwork (Koch, 2024). SQ involves self-awareness, purpose, and holistic thinking, which are vital for roles requiring ethical sensitivity and community engagement (Kerr Henkel, 2021). Research by Tiwary & Rao (2020) and Puspitacandri et al. (2020) highlights SQ's impact on creativity, ethics, and intuition, shaping decision-making by providing moral clarity. For lower-ranking RMP officers, higher SQ could improve ethical decision-making by encouraging consideration of societal impacts and fostering a strong sense of purpose and morality in complex situations.

H3: Spiritual Quotient (SQ) has a significant positive relationship with effective decision-making among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Based on previous studies and the application of Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory in modern leadership and decision-making contexts, the research framework developed for this study is as follows:
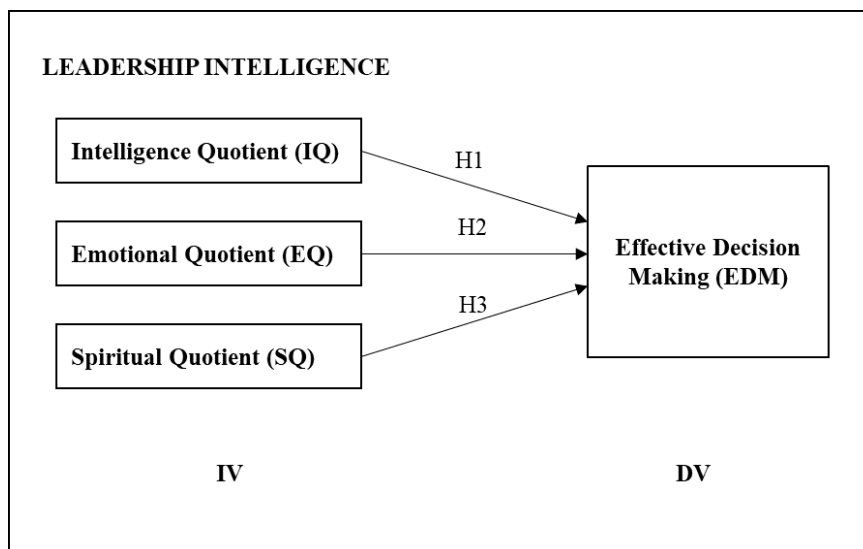

Figure 1.0 Research Framework

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employs a structured research methodology, including participant selection, questionnaire design, data collection, and analysis to explore constructs such as IQ, EQ, SQ, and EDM. A preliminary assessment using SPSS ensured the reliability and relevance of the tools. The analysis, conducted with SmartPLS 4.0, evaluated model reliability and validity through internal consistency, convergent and discriminant validity, and structural model analysis, including checks for collinearity and path significance. The focus is on subordinate officers at the District Police Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, using disproportionate stratified random sampling to ensure representation across subgroups. A total of 409 responses were received, surpassing the required 357 samples based on Krejcie and Morgan's formula for a population of 5,000. Data collection tools include the SISRI-24 for spiritual intelligence (King, 2008; validated by Anbugeetha, 2015), BEIS-10 for emotional intelligence (Davies et al., 2010; validated by Beduna & Perrone-McGovern, 2016), and a decision-making tool based on Kramarenko's (2022) work on effective decision-making.

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 1.0 shows that most respondents are men (83.1%), with women making up 16.9%. The largest age group is 36-45 years (44.5%), followed by 26-35 years (32.3%). Smaller groups include 56 and above (11.7%), 18-25 (7.8%), and 46-55 (3.7%). Most respondents hold the rank of Corporal (53.1%), followed by Lance Corporal (18.8%) and Sergeant (15.9%). Fewer hold the rank of Constable (10.0%), Sub-inspector (1.5%), or Sergeant Major (0.7%). District-wise, the majority are from IPD Brickfields (23.0%), followed by IPD Cheras (19.1%) and IPD Dang Wangi (18.8%). In terms of service years, 35.2% have served 6-10 years, and 29.1% have over 21 years. The remaining respondents are distributed across the 0-5 years (12.0%), 16-20 years (16.6%), and 11-15 years (7.1%) categories.

Table 1.0: Demographic Profiles

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Men	340	83.1%
	Women	69	16.9%
	Total	**409**	**100.0%**
Age	18-25	32	7.8%
	26-35	132	32.3%
	36-45	182	44.5%
	46-55	15	3.7%
	56 and above	48	11.7%
	Total	**409**	**100.0%**
Rank	Constable	41	10.0%
	Lance Corporal	77	18.8%
	Corporal	217	53.1%
	Sergeant	65	15.9%
	Sergeant Major (SM)	3	0.7%
	Sub-inspector (SI)	6	1.5%
	Total	**409**	**100.0%**
District	IPD Dang Wangi	77	18.8%
	IPD Brickfields	94	23.0%
	IPD Cheras	78	19.1%
	IPD Sentul	73	17.8%
	IPD Wangsa Maju	50	12.2%
	IPD Putrajaya	37	9.0%
	Total	**409**	**100.0%**
Years of Service	0-5 years	49	12.0%
	6-10 years	144	35.2%
	11-15 years	29	7.1%
	16-20 years	68	16.6%
	21 years and above	119	29.1%
	Total	**409**	**100.0%**

Table 1.1 shows the mean and standard deviation for four key variables measured in the study with 409 respondents. IQ had a mean of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.660, indicating high scores with some variation. EQ scored a mean of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.456, reflecting strong emotional intelligence with less variation. SQ had a mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.415, showing high spiritual intelligence with low variation. EDM had a mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.496, suggesting effective decision-making with moderate variation. Overall, the respondents displayed strong IQ, EQ, SQ, and EDM, with moderate to low variability.

Table 1.1: Mean and Standard Deviation

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intelligence Quotient	409	4.11	0.660
Emotional Quotient	409	4.12	0.456
Spiritual Quotient	409	4.01	0.415
Effective Decision Making	409	4.05	0.496

4.2 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

In the context of structural equation modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS, the results in Table 1.2 illustrate the evaluation of validity for the constructs under study. Cronbach's Alpha (α) measures internal consistency reliability, indicating how well the items within each construct correlate. High values (above 0.7) suggest good reliability, with EDM (0.942), IQ (0.939), and LI (0.944) showing excellent reliability. However, EQ (0.720) and SQ (0.691) display lower values, suggesting moderate reliability. Composite Reliability (CR) also evaluates internal consistency, considering the different item loadings. A CR value above 0.7 signals acceptable reliability, with EDM (0.955), IQ (0.953), and LI (0.944) demonstrating excellent reliability. Both EQ (0.811) and SQ (0.789) meet the threshold, although SQ shows lower reliability compared to the other constructs. Dijkstra-Henseler's Rho (ρA) provides a conservative estimate of reliability, with all constructs, except for EQ (0.747) and SQ (0.755), demonstrating acceptable to excellent reliability. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the variance captured by a construct relative to measurement error, where values above 0.5 are considered good. EDM (0.811) and IQ (0.804) exceed this threshold, while EQ (0.470) and SQ (0.439). The AVE should ideally exceed 0.5; however, a value of 0.4 is acceptable if the composite reliability is greater than 0.6. For this research, the convergent validity of the construct is considered satisfactory as the discriminant validity resulted above 0.6 (Fornell & David, 1981).

Table 1.2: Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Dijkstra-Henseler's Rho (ρA)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
EDM	0.942	0.955	0.947	0.811
EQ	0.720	0.811	0.747	0.470
IQ	0.939	0.953	0.952	0.804
SQ	0.691	0.789	0.755	0.439

4.3 PATH COEFFICIENT ANALYSIS

Table 1.3: Path Coefficient – T values, P values

	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
EQ -> EDM	15.341	0.000
IQ -> EDM	5.479	0.000
SQ -> EDM	9.714	0.000

The path coefficients, T-values, and P-values in the results from SmartPLS provide strong evidence of significant relationships between the constructs in the model. The path coefficient quantifies the strength and direction of the relationship, and in this case, the relationships between Emotional Quotient (EQ), Intelligence Quotient (IQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) with Effective Decision-Making (EDM) are all positive and significant. The T-values for the paths from EQ to EDM (15.341), IQ to EDM (5.479), and SQ to EDM (9.714) are well above the critical threshold of 1.96, indicating that these relationships are statistically significant (Hair et al., 2017). Additionally, the P-values for all paths are 0.000, which is below the significance threshold of 0.05, confirming that the observed effects are highly statistically significant (Hair et al., 2017). These results suggest that EQ, IQ, and SQ all play important and significant roles in influencing EDM in the studied population.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study aligns with existing research emphasizing the significance of Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) in enhancing Effective Decision-Making (EDM) within the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). The results indicate strong, statistically significant relationships between these forms of intelligence and EDM, confirming the findings of earlier studies. Emotional Quotient (EQ), which improves emotional regulation and empathy, plays a crucial role in decision-making, particularly under high-pressure situations. Khalisah (2023) and Okwe (2020) highlight that EQ enhances intuitive and effective decision-making, especially in organizational and leadership settings. Similarly, this study demonstrates that EQ contributes significantly to EDM, supporting its importance in law enforcement (Roys, 2023). Spiritual Quotient (SQ) was also found to significantly influence EDM. Previous research by Kim & Loewenstein (2020) and Martínez et al. (2021) suggests that SQ fosters ethical decision-making and moral clarity, which aligns with this study's findings on its impact in law enforcement contexts. The role of SQ in guiding officers' moral and ethical perspectives was similarly emphasized by Kim & Kim (2024), supporting the notion that high SQ improves ethical decision-making in complex situations. Furthermore, Intelligence Quotient (IQ) continues to be a critical factor in decision-making, as it supports cognitive tasks like problem-solving and critical thinking.

Research by Schirner, Deco, and Ritter (2023) has demonstrated that individuals with higher IQs exhibit stronger analytical and decision-making abilities. This study reinforces that IQ plays a key role in the cognitive aspects of EDM, particularly in situations requiring rapid, logical decision-making. In conclusion, the study confirms that the integration of IQ, EQ, and SQ leads to more effective decision-making, as found in similar research across various domains. The results suggest that tailored training programs that enhance these intelligences could significantly improve decision-making capabilities within the Royal Malaysian Police, ultimately fostering ethical, efficient, and informed leadership.

6.0 SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This research investigates how Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) collectively influence Effective Decision-Making (EDM) in the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). The results carry important consequences for improving decision-making strategies within law enforcement, especially in challenging and ethically nuanced scenarios. Conventional approaches to decision-making frequently focus on cognitive skills (IQ), but studies have progressively underscored the importance of emotional intelligence and social intelligence in fostering ethical, empathetic, and socially responsible choices. This study delves into the relationship between various types of intelligence, providing a deeper insight into the elements that affect effective decision-making. This, in turn, aids in the creation of improved training programs for RMP officers. These insights are essential for developing a more ethical, resilient, and effective law enforcement agency capable of addressing the complexities of contemporary policing, including building community trust and managing ethically ambiguous situations.

This research enhances existing knowledge by applying Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory within a particular law enforcement setting, providing insights into how IQ, EQ, and SQ collectively influence decision-making processes among police officers. This offers concrete evidence for the significance of incorporating emotional and spiritual intelligence into the professional growth of law enforcement personnel, indicating that the fusion of these intelligences improves officers' capacity to make well-informed, balanced, and ethical choices. Moreover, the findings indicate that enhanced emotional intelligence can assist officers in navigating stress and interpersonal dynamics, while elevated social intelligence fosters a more profound reflection on the wider societal consequences of their choices.

Furthermore, the research highlights its practical significance by focussing on the development of customised training programs for law enforcement. These programs focus on combining cognitive, emotional, and ethical intelligence as essential elements, allowing officers to cultivate a comprehensive skill set that enhances their decision-making capabilities. Through the presentation of strong empirical evidence, validated by sophisticated analytical methods such as SmartPLS SEM, the research enhances theoretical comprehension while offering practical recommendations for enhancing law enforcement practices. Ultimately, it promotes a thorough strategy for officer training, cultivating individuals who are not only skilled problem-solvers but also emotionally aware and ethically sound leaders, ready to tackle the intricacies of contemporary policing.

7.0 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is limited by its focus on a single agency, the Royal Malaysian Police, which may limit generalizability to other forces. Self-reported data introduces potential biases, and the sample only includes subordinate officers from Kuala Lumpur, not higher-ranking or rural officers. The cross-sectional design captures only a snapshot, making it difficult to assess causal relationships. Additionally, the study does not account for other factors like training or organizational culture that may influence decision-making. Future studies could expand the sample to include different ranks, regions, and agencies for broader applicability. Longitudinal research could explore how IQ, EQ, and SQ evolve over time and affect decision-making. Research could also investigate other factors like leadership, training, and the work environment in shaping decision-making. Finally, studies could assess the real-world impact of these intelligences on actual outcomes and explore interventions to improve decision-making in law enforcement.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

9.0 AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Mr. Amir Mat Angsar and Dr. Nor Fairuz Syazana Nor Fauzi developed the idea and had an important role in the result and material section. Mr. Amir Mat Angsar crafted the introduction, literature, method and performed the statistical analysis of data.

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