

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP INTELLIGENCE AS A MEDIATOR IN THE IMPACT OF IQ, EQ, AND SQ ON DECISION-MAKING IN THE ROYAL MALAYSIAN POLICE

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ABSTRACT

Effective decision-making in law enforcement is intrinsically intricate, necessitating a multifaceted strategy that incorporates cognitive, emotional, and ethical factors. This study examines the mediating function of Leadership Intelligence (LI) in the correlation between Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) concerning Effective Decision-Making (EDM) within the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). The study examines significant deficiencies in comprehending the interplay of several types of intelligence and its impact on decision-making in high-stakes, ethically charged contexts. IQ facilitates problem-solving and logical thinking, EQ aids in emotional management and interpersonal relationships, while SQ guarantees compliance with ethical standards. The interaction among these intelligences and their integration via LI remains inadequately examined in law enforcement settings, despite their individual significance. The study employs a quantitative survey of RMP officers in Kuala Lumpur and utilises Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for data analysis, demonstrating that LI strongly mediates the associations between IQ and SQ with EDM, while not mediating the EQ-EDM relationship. These findings underscore the crucial function of LI in integrating cognitive, emotional, and ethical aspects to improve leadership effectiveness. The research emphasises the necessity for a harmonious development of IQ, EQ, and SQ to promote ethical leadership and enhance public confidence in law enforcement. It necessitates focused ways to develop LI, enabling leaders to manage intricate decision-making situations with integrity and flexibility.

Keywords: Leadership Intelligence, Emotional Quotient, Spiritual Quotient, Effective Decision-Making, Law Enforcement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) serves as a crucial law enforcement body (Ghazi et al., 2022), functioning in high-pressure environments that frequently require swift and intricate decision-making, accompanied by considerable ethical considerations. RMP officers play a crucial role in ensuring public safety (Akase & Kpera, 2024), preventing criminal activities, and effectively managing crises, all of which demand a high level of professionalism, integrity, and adaptability. For effective decision-making that is rooted in ethical principles, RMP leaders need to embody a distinctive combination of intelligence quotient, emotional quotient, and spiritual quotient. The evolution of intelligence theories in leadership highlights the significance of various intelligences, particularly Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ), in shaping effective and effective decision-making. Intelligence quotient, often referred to as IQ, serves as a traditional measure of problem-solving and analytical capabilities (Rose, 2023). It equips leaders with the necessary intelligence tools to effectively process information, investigate intricate situations, and formulate logical responses. Nevertheless, intelligence quotient by itself may fall short in addressing the interpersonal and ethical aspects inherent in law enforcement leadership. Emotional Quotient (EQ) serves as a vital asset, empowering leaders to effectively handle stress, foster trust, and adeptly manoeuvre through interpersonal relationships (Leeanansaksiri, 2022). The concept of Spiritual Quotient (SQ) is gaining recognition as a vital element in leadership (Karana et al., 2022), influencing individuals to make decisions that resonate with ethical values and a deeper sense of purpose.

This research explores the combined influence of intelligence quotient, emotional intelligence, and spiritual quotient on effective decision-making in the context of the RMP, with Leadership Intelligence serving as a mediating variable. LI denotes a leader's capacity to integrate intelligence, emotional, and spiritual quotient, enabling them to address complex situations with balance and ethical responsibility. Within the framework of the RMP, LI holds significant importance as it bolsters leaders' capacity to analyse and react to critical situations in a manner that is legally compliant, ethically robust, and attuned to the cultural and social nuances of Malaysia. The ethical obligations of the RMP emphasise the importance of leadership that goes beyond mere technical skills and compliance with procedures (Monteiro & Sousa, 2024). Leaders in law enforcement face the responsibility of making decisions that significantly affect lives and communities (O. Segovia, 2024), frequently navigating scenarios filled with moral complexity and competing interests. A comprehensive understanding of LI enables leaders to blend intellectual, emotional, and spiritual quotient, fostering ethical reflection and discernment that leads to effective and morally sound decision-making (Eyal & Berkovich, 2022). This study highlights an important area in law enforcement research by examining the interplay of IQ, EQ, and SQ on EDM, with LI serving as a mediator. This method establishes a basis for cultivating leaders who possess intelligence, emotional and spiritual quotient, while being steered by ethical values and a clear sense of purpose, in harmony with the overarching aim of improving the effectiveness and integrity of the RMP.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This research examines the impact of Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) on decision-making within the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), with Leadership Intelligence (LI) as a mediating factor. While effective leadership is critical for navigating crises and complex situations, the role of intelligence in law enforcement leadership remains underexplored.

IQ, a core cognitive ability, is vital in high-stakes law enforcement scenarios, aiding officers in assessing risks, formulating strategies, and understanding procedural structures. Officers with high IQ excel at recognizing patterns, managing information, and anticipating outcomes (Leusin et al., 2020). However, IQ alone may be insufficient for handling interpersonal conflicts and emotional regulation, highlighting the need for EQ and SQ integration in leadership.

EQ is crucial for recognizing, understanding, and managing emotions, particularly in stressful interactions with the public, victims, and colleagues (Aponte-Moreno, 2024; Dikopoltsev & Maystrenko, 2021). High EQ fosters trust, collaboration, and stress management, helping officers resolve disputes and maintain public trust during confrontations (Santiago, 2024; Kaluzniacky, 2004). It enables informed decision-making under pressure, creating a supportive and effective operational environment (Farsole Dhyani Vashi, 2023).

SQ, the capacity to align decisions with values, ethics, and purpose, provides an ethical framework for leadership (Moleka, 2021). It guides officers in making morally sound decisions that prioritize community welfare and uphold accountability. High SQ enhances empathy, ethics, and stakeholder awareness, essential for navigating moral challenges and addressing gaps in legal frameworks within law enforcement.

2.1 BALANCING IQ, EQ, AND SQ THROUGH LEADERSHIP INTELLIGENCE (LI)

Leadership Intelligence (LI) combines cognitive, emotional, and ethical dimensions to empower leaders in making sound decisions under complex and high-pressure conditions (Zadorozhny et al., 2024). In law enforcement, LI is essential as it enables leaders to integrate analytical thinking, emotional understanding, and moral reasoning. This balance ensures decisions are both logical and empathetic, fostering adaptability and moral courage crucial for maintaining public trust and delivering fair outcomes.

The integration of Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) through LI enhances leaders' ability to navigate crises effectively. IQ supports strategic planning and logical assessment, EQ promotes empathy and interpersonal management, and SQ guides moral reasoning to ensure ethical and legal adherence (Bayighomog & Arasli, 2022). Together, these dimensions strengthen a leader's capacity to address complex situations, safeguard public safety, and inspire trust. In the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP), LI facilitates Ethical Decision-Making (EDM) by harmonizing cognitive analysis, emotional regulation, and ethical reflection (Roycroft, 2021). High IQ enables officers to assess risks and predict outcomes, EQ fosters effective communication and stress management, and SQ provides a moral framework for navigating dilemmas not fully addressed by legal standards (Lestari & Sucipto, 2020). This comprehensive approach ensures decisions align with public service values. By integrating these forms of intelligence, LI enhances the RMP's ability to manage high-stakes scenarios while upholding safety, legality, and ethics. Leaders with strong LI handle crises with composure, consider long-term societal impacts, and strengthen public confidence in law enforcement (Dempsey et al., 2023). This approach ensures operational efficiency and reinforces trust in the institution's commitment to justice and community welfare.

2.2 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In law enforcement, analytical thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving are critical for quick, informed decisions in complex scenarios. Lasater et al. (2021) and Gonzales (2022) emphasize that high IQ levels help leaders absorb information, develop strategies, and make ethical decisions, forming the foundation of leadership intelligence (LI). IQ enhances LI among RMP officers by supporting effective and competent leadership.

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is equally vital, enabling leaders to manage emotions, build trust, and maintain composure under pressure. Goleman (2022) and Bakhshandeh (2023) highlight EQ's role in fostering collaboration and resilience, key components of effective LI. Leaders with high EQ make well-rounded decisions that strengthen team dynamics and organizational success.

Spiritual quotient (SQ), encompassing ethical reasoning and purpose-driven decision-making, is crucial in navigating morally intricate situations. Studies by Karg et al. (2022) and Fernandez et al. (2024) show that SQ enhances moral foundations and resilience, fostering ethically sound leadership. Stenmark (2022) and Akimas (2024) argue that integrating SQ with LI enables leaders to make strategic, ethical decisions in high-stakes contexts.

Recent research underscores LI's mediating role in leadership, combining IQ, EQ, and SQ for better decision-making. Studies by Alzoubi & Aziz (2021) and Eskaraeva (2022) demonstrate LI's ability to connect analytical, emotional, and ethical skills, essential for law enforcement leaders to navigate complex challenges effectively.

Therefore, study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Leadership intelligence mediates the relationship between Intelligent Quotient and Effective Decision Making among Royal Malaysian Police Officer.

H2: Leadership intelligence mediates the relationship between Emotional Quotient and Effective Decision Making among Royal Malaysian Police Officer.

H3: Leadership intelligence mediates the relationship between Spiritual Quotient and Effective Decision Making among Royal Malaysian Police Officer.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey approach to examine the connections between Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Leadership Intelligence (LI), and Effective Decision-Making (EDM) among Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) officers in Kuala Lumpur. A systematic survey method was chosen for its ability to efficiently gather data from a broad sample at a single moment, making it ideal for examining correlational connections. Validated scales were employed to assess each variable, guaranteeing precision and dependability in reflecting the constructs of interest.

3.1 SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

The research concentrated on junior RMP officers, particularly those assigned to the District Police Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, who often engage in tactical decision-making in the field. A carefully structured stratified random sampling approach was utilised to guarantee equitable representation of different subgroups within the officer population. Applying Krejcie and Morgan's formula for sample size determination, a target sample of 357 was set, considering an estimated population of 5,000 officers. A total of 409 responses were gathered, surpassing the necessary sample size and yielding a strong dataset for examination.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

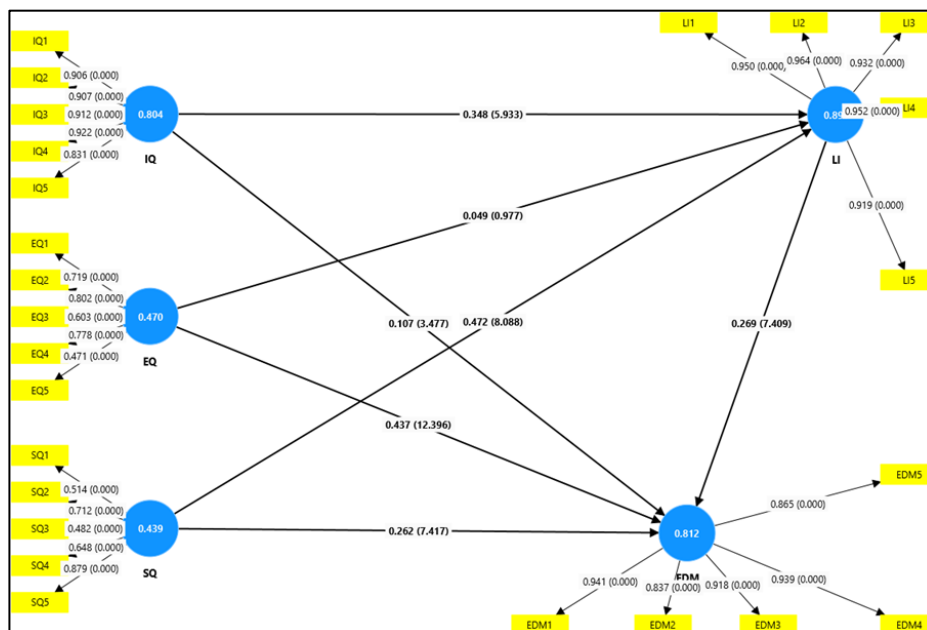
To explore the proposed relationships among variables, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed, carried out using SmartPLS 4.0 software. SEM was selected for its effectiveness in examining intricate relationships, encompassing both direct and mediating influences, across various constructs. The results as in Table 1.0 highlight the relationships between Emotional Quotient (EQ), Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Leadership Intelligence (LI), and Ethical Decision-Making (EDM).

The specific indirect effects of Spiritual Quotient (SQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Intelligence Quotient (IQ) on Effective Decision-Making (EDM) through the mediating variable, Leadership Intelligence (LI). The indirect effect of SQ on EDM through LI is positive and significant, as the confidence interval (0.073 to 0.171) does not include zero. This indicates that LI significantly mediates the relationship between SQ and EDM, meaning SQ improves EDM via its influence on LI. The indirect effect of EQ on EDM through LI is not significant, as the confidence interval (-0.013 to 0.043) includes zero. This suggests that LI does not significantly mediate the relationship between EQ and EDM in this model. The indirect effect of IQ on EDM through LI is positive and significant, as the confidence interval (0.063 to 0.128) does not include zero. This implies that LI serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between IQ and EDM, meaning IQ enhances EDM partially through its impact on LI.

Table 1.0: Specific Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	2.5% LLCI	97.5% ULCI
SQ -> LI -> EDM	0.127	0.124	0.073	0.171
EQ -> LI -> EDM	0.013	0.012	-0.013	0.043
IQ -> LI -> EDM	0.094	0.093	0.063	0.128

Figure 1.0: PLS Bootstrapping Graph for IQ, EQ, SQ, LI and EDM.



5.0 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The study underscores the critical role of Leadership Intelligence (LI) in enhancing effective decision-making (EDM) within the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). LI integrates the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual quotients (IQ, EQ, and SQ) to help leaders navigate complex and high-pressure situations, ensuring decisions that are not only analytically sound but also emotionally intelligent and ethically grounded. The findings highlight the significance of each quotient: IQ is essential for processing information, assessing risks, and formulating strategies, yet it alone may not address the interpersonal and ethical challenges in law enforcement. EQ is crucial for managing emotions, building trust, and fostering collaboration, while high EQ aids in stress management and interpersonal relationships, key to maintaining public trust. SQ provides a moral compass, guiding leaders to make decisions that align with ethical principles, especially in morally complex situations where legal frameworks may fall short.

The study also reveals that LI plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between IQ, SQ, and EDM. Specifically, the indirect effect of SQ on EDM through LI is positive and significant, indicating that SQ enhances EDM by influencing LI. Similarly, the indirect effect of IQ on EDM through LI is also positive and significant, demonstrating that IQ enhances EDM by positively influencing LI. However, the indirect effect of EQ on EDM through LI is not significant, suggesting that EQ does not directly influence EDM through LI in this model. These findings suggest that while EQ is essential in law enforcement leadership, it may not always function as a mediator in the decision-making process when compared to IQ and SQ.

These results have practical implications for the development of leadership within the RMP. The study suggests that RMP officers should focus on developing a balance of IQ, EQ, and SQ to improve leadership capabilities and decision-making. Leaders who cultivate strong LI will be better equipped to integrate these forms of intelligence, allowing them to navigate crises, uphold ethical standards, and maintain public trust. This holistic approach can enhance operational efficiency and ensure that decisions are legally sound, ethically responsible, and in line with community welfare standards, particularly in high-stakes, ethically complex situations. Ultimately, fostering LI among RMP leaders is a promising strategy for improving decision-making processes and leadership effectiveness.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of Leadership Intelligence (LI) in enhancing Effective Decision-Making (EDM) within the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP). By examining the mediating effects of LI on the relationship between Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ) with EDM, the study provides valuable insights into how leaders in law enforcement can integrate cognitive, emotional, and ethical intelligence to navigate complex decision-making scenarios. The findings demonstrate that IQ and SQ significantly improve EDM through their influence on LI, while EQ's influence via LI was not significant. This underscores the importance of cognitive and ethical intelligence in fostering effective and morally sound decision-making in high-pressure law enforcement environments.

7.0 SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on leadership intelligence, particularly in the context of law enforcement. It demonstrates that leadership in the RMP requires a balanced integration of IQ, EQ, and SQ, with LI serving as a crucial mediator in the decision-making process. By emphasizing the value of ethical and emotional intelligence, the study adds depth to understanding the leadership qualities that are essential for fostering public trust and maintaining law enforcement integrity. Moreover, the findings provide practical insights for the RMP and similar institutions, emphasizing the need for leadership training that incorporates these diverse intelligences to improve decision-making and ethical conduct in the field.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw conclusions about causal relationships or the long-term impact of Leadership Intelligence (LI) on Effective Decision-Making (EDM). Focusing on junior officers from the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) in Kuala Lumpur may also restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research could include a broader sample of officers from different regions and ranks to improve generalizability. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential bias, which could be addressed by incorporating observational data or feedback from supervisors.

Future research could explore the direct influence of Emotional Quotient (EQ) on EDM in law enforcement and investigate the role of factors like resilience and moral courage. It would also be valuable to examine the applicability of these findings in other law enforcement agencies or leadership domains. Longitudinal studies could further reveal how LI develops and impacts decision-making over time in evolving law enforcement contexts.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

This study's concept was developed by Mr. Amir Mat Angsar and Dr. Nor Fairuz Syazana Nor Fauzi, who significantly influenced the results and materials section. Mr. Amir Mat Angsar took charge of crafting the introduction, literature review, and methodology sections, in addition to performing the statistical analysis of the data.

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