

Hybrid Psychology

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Research Article





This article is published in Nairobi, Kenya by Royallite Global in the *Hybrid Journal of Psychology*, Volume 3, Issue 1, 2022

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Article Information

Submitted: 24th May 2022
Accepted: 18th July 2022
Published: 2nd August 2022
Conflict of Interest: No conflict of interest was reported by the authors
Funding: None

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Examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making on social justice by headteachers in Dagoretti South Sub-Sounty

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Abstract

Leadership is a complex area of education experienced by school head teachers in Dagoretti South sub-county. This paper focuses on head teachers' self-assessment of their emotional intelligence (EI) as a factor in decision-making regarding social justice education (SJE) in the learning sector. To achieve this, the paper carried out a study that employed a quantitative correlation research design. The investigation targeted both public and private primary school head teachers. They represent the effect of decision-making on a population of 43,568 learners. A total of 132 primary schools were targeted, where the census sampling technique was used. Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) and Proactive Decision-Making (PDM) tools were used to collect data. Statistical analysis was conducted using the SPSS software version 20. The findings showed that emotional intelligence affects decision-making on social justice education issues. The study concluded that, there is a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and decision-making. This implied that in their self-assessment effort, school head teachers with high emotional intelligence components demonstrated personal and professional abilities for social change. The study recommends that education policy makers could relate EI development to good leadership and decision-making.

Keywords: decision-making, emotional intelligence, head teachers, learning institutions, public schools, private schools, social justice

How to Cite:



Nanjowe, N. M., Mbogo, R., & Ireri, N. (2022). Examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making on social justice by headteachers in Dagoretti South Sub-Sounty. *Hybrid Journal of Psychology*, 3(1). Retrieved from https://royalliteglobal.com/psychology/article/view/866



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Public Interest Statement

The authors sought to explain school head teachers' self-assessment on the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making on social justice education in Dagoretti South Sub-County. Further, the study showed that people with high emotional intelligence in components of self-awareness, self-regulation, social-awareness and social skills have the capacity to make better decisions on issues of Social Justice Education. This is a significant study area since we are all confronted by the need to be emotionally intelligent in making decisions not only in schools, but in every sphere of life.

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is considered an influence to decision-making where, Eisenfuhr (2011) considers decision-making (DM) as the practice of deliberating from a number of options to attain the anticipated outcome. School management's primary function is decision-making. School head teachers need to understand that DM is core to the success of the institutions they head. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), emotional intelligence is "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). The ability to relate with self and others emotionally generates a quest for understanding how to handle emotions and enhance human relationships.

Goleman (2013) reiterates that punitive cases, bullying, violence and drug addiction in schools can lessen with high emotional intelligence among school children. When students' educational needs are not well addressed, their academic performance will be negatively affected. In any case, lack of educational justice exposes a considerable number of students to poor educational achievement in Kenya (Gituro, 2011). Therefore, promoting EI and academic performance improves behavior (Goleman, 2013). The interplay of EI and decision-making becomes a subject of interest in this paper to establish the role these two variables play in school leadership.

Since it is not easy to detach emotions from leadership, there is a need to understand how EI relates to leadership decisions (Johnson, 2016; Kurtoglu, 2017). The quality of team relationships is enhanced through EI (Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2002; Zhou & George, 2003). Coetzer (2016), who believes that EI is as important as IQ and therefore, needs to be given reasonable attention, supports this view. This is because emotions often dictate the decisions people make. EI people arrive at given decisions by thinking about the emotions they may evoke. There is an anticipation of the kind of emotions they want to see after making the decision. Some determine that "individuals differ in systematic ways in how they experience emotions, how they differentiate among emotions and how much emotional information they can process" (Hess & Bacigalupo, 2011, p. 715).

Fernandez (2007) observes that the extent to which candidates' emotional intelligence is measured in making top executive hiring decisions, has a momentous impact on the final success or collapse of those executives. The emotionally intelligent manager is competent and benefits the organization by contributing to better decision-making. They contemplate various options and incorporate probable responses of others, to add value to their decisions.

In their quest to prepare tomorrow's crop of adults who are productive, socially fit and well-groomed citizens, school heads adopt a clear understanding of what their learners need. They facilitate their learners to reach their full potential through education and social adjustments. Children who can grasp greater life opportunities, enriched with global intellectual openings, attract stronger socio-economic fabric and cultivate talents in every area of life. The head teachers' decisions on social justice policies affect the schools' development trajectory. This is especially on how the school responds to the opportunities of school development and how it settles problems that hamper the achievement of the school's objectives (Hidayat, 2014).

As school Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), head teachers drive change, lead people, shape results, build coalitions and build businesses. This implies that they are the chain link piece that is





critical for the growth of any school. Research has however, shown that the higher one climbs the leadership ladder, the more waning their emotional intelligence. Travis Bradberry, the cofounder of TalentSmart EQ, which is the leading provider of EI tests and training serving more than 75% Fortune 500 companies, gives some striking statistics, which show that on average, CEOs have the lowest EI in workplaces. It is also true that the best CEOs are those with the highest EI (Bradberry, 2017). This paper sought to understand school head teachers' self-awareness of EI as a construct to their decision-making on social justice education. Through a self-assessment process of head teachers, this paper investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making on social justice education among head teachers in Dagoretti South sub-county.

2. Literature Review

Understanding the effect of Emotional Intelligence on social justice decisions in schools has significant value on the school head teachers' leadership and management ability. Head teachers, who have a high EI hold a significant responsibility in making the right decisions for learners encountering social injustices. This is because research has shown that EI promotes positive social functioning by helping others to know their emotional states (Brackett et al., 2011; Pekrun et al., 2017). As such, emotions and intelligence have some link that is helpful in decision-making.

Globally, EI and decision-making is a current subject of discussion. Researchers in the US have shown that emotionally intelligent people make good decisions. For instance, Cornell University researchers established that people with higher EI picked up better on critical bodily signals and used that information to avoid making risky decisions (Goleman, 2019). Several studies done especially in the US, show that there is a strong relationship between EI and performance (Bar-On, 2005; Bar-On et al., 2006; O'Boyle et al., (2011); Shipley et al., 2010).

Sumathy et al. (2015) in their study of the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership and the decision-making skills of the leaders, found that there is a relationship between the level of emotional intelligence and deliberation. Emotions need to be integrated in life since they are seen to affect the way people make decisions, which in turn, affect their success. EI is seen as a construct of human relationships in different spheres of life. It tends to improve the quality of decisions made in organizations. EI, therefore, becomes a key component of decision-making. Seemingly, it affects the leaders' choice of actions, which eventually affect their performance in the organization. Ayiro (2009) examined the impact of EI of school head teachers and their performance among 100 head teachers in Kenya. The study found a positive correlation between total EI scores and performance ratings, and experiential EI was found to be the strongest predictor of performance.

2.2. Transformational leadership and EI

Sergiovanni (2001) defines the responsibilities of head teachers as having a duty to establish functional organizational structures and provide avenues to resolve technical problems, thus enabling the school to operate efficiently. Moreover, head teachers can affect the presence of cultures of education and enhance performance for the good of all (Day, 2007). It is the essential task of all school leaders to be skilled at diagnosing issues. They are the think tanks who can "identify patterns within complexity and ambiguities, who have a high level of what we may term as emotional intelligence, because classrooms and staff rooms are emotional arenas of effective teaching and learning" (Day, 2007, p. 15). Head teachers distribute responsibilities through a decision-making process of intelligent trust of others. This intelligence is based on logic and reason, but also on how people feel about things and matters around them. How they employ their emotions in DM is important because positive emotions are likely to fuel resilience. This is a "key quality in head teachers and teachers who are able to sustain their commitment to managing the inevitable fluctuations in the policy, social and personal contexts which they face over a career" (p. 38).

Transformational leadership (TL) is dependent on the way leaders treat their personal and



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their followers' values and motivations. These leaders have some constructs of EI to implore people to devote themselves as faithful followers, who show commitment to an earnest cause. Studies have shown that "EI is a common denominator that enhances the varied ways in which people live, do their jobs and develop social skills for interaction, handle conflicts, control emotions and get along with others" (Bardzill & Slaski, 2003, p. x). Indeed, EI is believed to influence transformational leadership among head teachers.

Proponents of EI like Welch (2003) advocate for EI as a construct to job performance. In his research, people with the same EI were compared to individuals with lower levels. Results found that those with high levels of EI performed better than those with low levels, with a margin of two to one. Turner (2004) did similar studies and determined that, EI is the softer component of the total intelligence and that it contributes to both professional and personal lives. Concerning organizations, "EI contributes to a better understanding of the effective implications of a change of policy in an organization" (Vakola et al., 2004, p. 88). In this case, workers who exhibit a lack of ability to manage emotions tend to be negative in embracing changes and are not well equipped in processing stress. EI and TL investigations can help avail synergy in organizational commitment, effectiveness, and satisfaction.

2.3. Emotional Intelligence and Decision-Making

People have moved away from making decisions through uncertainty and guidance from the stars. With time, the questions of who makes decisions, and how, have shaped the world's systems of government, justice, and social order. Life is the sum of all your choices. People are constantly making decisions. History equals the accumulated choices of all mankind (Buchanan & O'Connell, 2006). Decision-making, therefore, becomes crucial to any organization and its management. Like all organizations, schools too must think of who, how, when and why they make decisions for their constituents.

The ability of organizations to contemplate, evaluate and implement quality decisions is dependent upon a multitude of intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Hess & Bacigalupo, 2011). To control extrinsic variables in DM can be hard but identifying and managing "human variables such as emotion and logic are pivotal in the effort to increase the quality of decisions and the decision-making processes" (p. 710). Inevitably, we cannot divorce emotions from logical and rational decision-making.

Decision-makers know that the decisions they make affect others. They understand that emotions of others are affected positively or negatively if those emotions are not managed ahead of the decision (Huy, 1990). Apparently, those making decisions have learned to perceive and understand their own emotions. They seem to be effective in controlling those emotions in the decision-making process. The four emotional elements described by Goleman (2000) and Boyatzis et al. (2000) provide emotional intelligence skills in decision-making categorized as "self-awareness and self-management, social awareness and relationship management" (Boss, 2015). Good decisions positively influence others, while the opposite is also true. Those good decisions can be replicable with ability that fosters opportunity. They include others because they are executable, systematic and accountable. Such decisions are pragmatic and involve self-awareness.

2.4. Emotional Intelligence and Social Justice Education

People all over the world should be treated with decorum. They have a right to live in a just and democratic society of equal opportunity (Ratts et al., 2007). Schools must advocate equality for all so that every student, family and community feel embraced and cared for. Those who serve as student counselors are managers of change in social justice. They carry the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and skills to identify and take responsibility for eradicating systemic barriers by first recognizing the educational inequalities that exist for students from different color, social structure, cultural



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background and economic differences (Ratts et al., 2007).

Dantley and Tillman (2010) stated that a "social justice leader interrogates the policies and procedures that shape schools and at the same time, they do not perpetuate social inequalities and marginalization due to race, class, gender and other markers of otherness" (p. 19). School leaders have the daunting task of changing schools into places of equitability that promote social justice (Brown, 2004; Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Theoharis, 2007). Head teachers should therefore view social justice education as education that cares for all, without favoritism. Social justice education becomes a call for school leadership to care for and embrace all differences within their scope of management. They are key holders of justice within the school fraternity.

Head teachers are change agents in the face of much resistance (Theoharis, 2007). They speak for the voiceless of the school. These social justice leaders in schools promote avenues for inclusivity and open equal access to the curriculum (Goodman, 2011; Shah, 2018). Teachers find support in developing the school curriculum and instruction, which provides students, together with their families, platforms for good experiences (Kose, 2007). In addition, they challenge, deconstruct and change staff's negative beliefs and misperceptions about diverse students, families and communities, and in doing so, change values (Theoharis, 2007). These authors believe that in this way, head teachers uphold the moral and cultural values that add to the justice system of the school.

2.5. Emotional intelligence and psychology

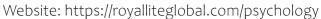
Educationists and psychologists view "emotional intelligence as an integrative concept that explains competence in social and emotional skills, addresses the issue of social and emotional learning in the schools and even offers justifications for teaching emotional skills explicitly" (Fiore & Vesely-Maillefer, 2019 & Goleman, 1995). In short, the numbers on the connection between an institution's success and the emotional intelligence of its leaders are persuasive. It is also important to note that research is also demonstrating that people can act well, if they take the right approach to develop their emotional intelligence.

2.6. Social justice and human resource management

School heads are human resource managers of their schools. They are responsible for the recruitment of staff in schools, encouraging teamwork among staff, empowering staff and encouraging them in developing their career. Their role is to provide school management, manage external communication, community relations and instructional supervision (Chemutai, 2015). For these head teachers, social justice in management would mean, "identifying and undoing oppressive and unjust practices and replacing them with more equitable and culturally appropriate ones" (Vogel, 2012, p. 194). Dantley and Tillman (2010) show that this is the kind of active leadership that is needed for social justice because it addresses and resolves societal inequities.

School head teachers emerge as key controllers of social justice. In defining what this kind of leadership is, Furman (2012) terms it as leadership that connects theory and practice with the leader's own principles and ethics through reflection on action. This means leading ethically with a just viewpoint of combining theory and practice together with intentional reflection (Duignan, 2012). As leaders of the school management, head teachers should guide teachers, staff and school administration to advocate for social justice and openly confront any manifestations of educational oppression. Head teachers with a good EI are transformational leaders who bring significant changes in their environments.

Osieko et al. (2017) in their study, "Does emotional intelligence power strategic decision-making?" A case of private school enterprises in Nairobi County, Kenya found that emotional intelligence significantly influences strategic decision-making (beta = .312, p = .001). When schools fail to confront the racial or ethnic, class and gender inequities woven into our social fabric, then they are seen as perpetrators of these acts. School head teachers have a responsibility to emotionally





stand in the position of victims of social injustice and make decisions that meet the needs and expectations of all.

2.7. Educational stakeholders and decision-making

Smylie (1992) and Mualuko et al. (2009) provide grounds for teachers' participation in decision-making. Increasing teacher involvement in school decision-making ranks among the most promising educational reform strategies. School head teachers should blend decisions by soliciting teachers, parents, students and others inputs. Nyongesa et al. (2018) recommended that there was "need to involve teachers and parents in matters of students' performance in schools" (p. 766). The quality and ownership of decision choices is dependent on educational stakeholders' involvement. It boosts their morale in their performance of duty.

2.8. Literature gap

In summary, the literature on social justice education does not sufficiently address the emotional tensions involved in a leader's struggle for equity and justice in a school as explained by Jensen (2009). Jensen states that there are minimal studies that specifically address the emotions of leaders who enact justice. This then provides a need to explore how emotions relate to leadership that is socially just. This subject is helpful in improving leaders' emotional intelligence and knowing the struggles they undergo to promote social justice education. This understanding may prove valuable for preparing and empowering school leaders to deal with the emotional tensions of a social justice education agenda (Capper et al., 2006; Doscher & Normore, 2008; Shoho, 2006). We observe that these previous studies do not address how emotional intelligence effects imprint on the process of decision-making on social justice education matters (Doscher & Normore, 2008). A lot of literature available on emotional intelligence (EI), decision-making and social justice education exists independent of each other. Some literature about emotional intelligence is wrapped with decision-making (Sumathy et al., 2015; Hess & Bacigalupo, 2011; Hess & Bacigalupo, 2013) although not much is available that ties it to decisions on social justice education. In addition, there is need to study school head teachers' self-awareness of EI and its effect on decision-making. This study intended to fill this gap in the literature.

2.9. Theoretical framework

The Emotional Intelligence Theory of Performance by Goleman (1998) focuses on emotional intelligence at workplaces. This is emotional competence, which emphasizes on learning and mastering of EI skills and translating them into intelligence to improve job performance (Goleman, 2000). In this theory, leaders learn to recognize and regulate emotions in themselves and in others following four dimensions. These are self-awareness, self-regulation, social-awareness and relationship management (skills management). The theory is considered important for not only comprehending and regulating emotions, but also understanding and integrating them into cognition and transformative leadership. Decision theory by Pascal Wager (Hackings, 1972) provides an understanding of the principles and algorithms used for making decisions. This study sought to explain head teachers' self-awareness of their EI and its effect on decision-making in matters of social justice education. The way school head teachers make decisions is key in the way they implement social justice education.

These two theories led to a consideration for Social Theory, a theory that views people as subjects, not objects, who are constantly reflecting and acting on the transformation of their world, so it can become a more equitable place for all to live (Brown, 2004; Harrington, 2004; Joas, & Knöbl, 2009). School head teachers constantly need to view social justice education matters through the eyes of learners, the parents, the teachers, and the community. This theory would call for engagement and understanding the necessity of according excellent education to all learners. It appeals to



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community participation and power sharing. Consideration is given to personal self-examination and reflection, which "involves the examination of personal and professional belief systems, as well as the deliberate consideration of the ethical implications and effect of practices" (Brown, 2004, p. 89) on the part of school head teachers.

3. Methodology

The study employed a quantitative method using a descriptive research design to explain the natural educational occurrences that were intended to benefit policy makers and educationists. Through this method, the study collected quantifiable data from the population sample for statistical analysis without controlling the variables. Data from this descriptive study was used to examine correlations of the variable's emotional intelligence and decision-making. The choice to use this design was to describe the situation of school head teachers' self-assessment of their emotional intelligence (EI) in relation to how it affects decisions on social justice education in their schools. Therefore, the research design helped gather quantifiable information that was used statistically to analyze head teachers' levels of emotional intelligence and decision-making. The paper focused quantitatively on the measures of the relationship between emotional intelligence (X) and decision-making (Y) axis hence, Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation was considered an appropriate measure (Kothari, 2014; Haldun, 2018; Schober et al., 2018). Further, the inferential analysis was done to test the hypotheses. This was followed by a multiple regression analysis that revealed the strength of the relationship between EI and decision-making in social justice education. Data collection employed a survey method with the use of self-assessment closed-ended questionnaires. The quantitative data was analysed and presented using descriptive statistics.

3.1. Sample

Dagoretti South sub-county was purposively selected because of identifiable connections that allowed for easier accessibility. This selection can serve as a representative of Nairobi County as well as other parts of the country that have similar characteristics. The ministry provided a list of 323 private and 19 public schools. Among the 323 private schools were 210 schools that are referred to as Alternative Provision of Basic Education and Training (APBET), Kindergartens and Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) centers. This study considered only government registered public and private primary schools (132 schools in total) that had classes one to eight. Schools that did not have the threshold of standard I-VIII and registered with the government were excluded from the sample. The 132 schools then formed the census sample. A total of 132 head teachers were considered for the study because it was possible to measure almost every entity of the population. The Dagoretti South sub-county ministry of education officer provided the respondents' contact data. Due to COVID 19 restriction on face-to-face interactions, the authors resorted to the use of self-assessment close-ended questionnaires. Phone calls were made to the head teachers to confirm their consents. Then a Survey Monkey link was sent to the respondents for self-assessment. The survey completion rate was 85.6%.

3.2. Instrument

Close-ended questionnaires were used for data collection whose content entailed standardized tests of EI Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) provided by Schutte et al. (2009). In addition, a Proactive Decision-Making (PDM) tool by Siebert and Kunz (2016) was adopted to test decision-making abilities in school head teachers. A reliability test was conducted to test results of the tools yielding a Cronbach's Alpha of .941 for (SEIS). The test for (PDM) was .631, which was within the suggested bracket of .63 to .80 as indicated by tool developers (Siebert & Kunz, 2016).



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3.3. Data analysis

A correlation analysis was computed to define how EI associates with decision-making among head teachers on issues of social justice (Kothari, 2014). The correlation coefficient was tested between the construct of EI and DM of school head teachers at a P value of 0.05. The strength of the relationship varies in degree based on the value of the correlation coefficient (Bobko, 2001).

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Descriptive analysis

4.1.1. Emotional intelligence performance

Table 1: Highest EI Performance

Gender	Age	Edu	Exp	SA	SR	SocA	SSK	Total	0/0
1	25-29	Dip	-1	37	39	28	40	144	87.27%
1	40-44	BA	6-10	34	38	29	41	142	86.06%
1	25-29	Cert	-1	41	36	22	43	142	86.06%
1	35-39	BA	1-5	39	36	24	41	140	84.85%
1	40-44	Dip	6-10	38	36	25	39	138	83.64%
1	45-49	BA	6-10	37	36	25	39	137	83.03%
1	40-44	Cert	1-5	40	34	24	39	137	83.03%
2	50-54	Dip	6-10	35	38	29	39	141	85.45%
2	40-44	Cert	1-5	38	33	27	39	137	83.03%
2	35-39	Cert	1-5	37	35	26	39	137	83.03%
2	55-59	Dip	11-15	36	35	26	40	137	83.03%
2	35-39	Dip	1-5	38	35	23	40	136	82.42%
2	45-49	Dip	11-15	35	36	27	38	136	82.42%
2	45-49	Dip	6-10	42	30	27	37	136	82.42%

*Note:*1- Male, 2- Female, Edu- Educational level, Exp- Experience, SA- Self-awareness, SR- Self-regulation, SocA- Social Awareness, SSK- Social skills.

From the study findings in Table 1 above, the highest seven male and seven female emotional intelligence (EI) performers are illustrated. Men head teachers performed slightly higher than female head teachers did. The highest male had 87.27% while his female counterpart had 85.45%. Among the highest EI performers, age did not discriminate EI performance since data shows that all ages were represented apart from those in bracket 30-34. These did not appear among the fourteen highest respondents. With regard to the level of education, data shows that respondents with certificates, diplomas and bachelor's degree performed slightly higher than those with the master's degree. Respondents who had work experiences between 1-15 years performed slightly higher on their EI than those who had worked 16-25 years.

Table 2: Lowest EI Performance

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Gender	Age	Edu	Exp	SA	SR	S0cA	SSK	Total	0/0
1	45-49	Cert	1-5	29	32	20	36	117	70.91%
1	30-34	Dip	1-5	39	32	20	25	116	70.30%
1	45-49	Cert	1-5	34	38	18	24	114	69.09%
1	55-59	MA	11-15	28	26	15	28	97	58.79%
1	40-44	Cert	1-5	18	10	6	10	44	26.67%
1	25-29	Dip	-1	9	8	6	10	33	20.00%



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1	35-39	Dip	1-5	9	8	6	10	33	20.00%
2	40-44	BA	1-5	29	29	22	38	118	71.52%
2	30-34	Cert	1-5	33	38	20	19	110	66.67%
2	45-49	Dip	6-10	39	30	16	25	110	66.67%
2	40-44	Cert	6-10	30	28	23	29	110	66.67%
2	40-44	Dip	11-15	35	33	18	23	109	66.06%
2	40-44	Cert	6-10	21	20	15	24	80	48.48%
2	45-49	Cert	11-15	20	16	16	27	79	47.88%

Note: Edu- Educational level, Exp- Experience, SA- Self-awareness, SR- Self-regulation, SocA- Social Awareness, SSK- Social skills.

Table 2 provides ratings for the lowest seven male and female EI performers. Results show male head teachers had the lowest EI performance at 20% while the lowest female was at 47.8%. Age did not discriminate EI performance since data shows that those with lowest EI ratings were evident between all age brackets apart from those of ages 50-54. The level of education also did not discriminate low EI performance since all levels had respondents represented on the scale of lowest EI performance. Respondents with work experience between 16-26 years were not among the lowest EI performers.

4.1.2. Highest and lowest ei and dm performance

Table 3: Highest EI and DM Performance

Gender	EI/165	Mean	DM/125	Mean
Male	140	84.85%	106.28	85%
Female	137.14	83.11%	105.71	85%

Table 3 shows comparisons of the highest EI and decision-making (DM) performance. The highest male respondents attained slightly higher results than the female respondents did. The EI mean score for highest male was 84.85% while their counterparts had 83.11%. The mean for DM among the highest male score was 85%, which was similar to their female counterparts.

Table 4: Lowest EI and DM Performance

Gender	EI/165	Mean	DM/125	Mean
Male	79.14	47.97%	85.71	68%
Female	102.28	61.99%	88	70%

Table 4 shows comparisons of the lowest seven emotional intelligence (EI) and decision-making (DM) performance. The lowest male respondents attained slightly lower results than the female respondents did. The lowest EI mean score for male respondents was 49.97% while their counterparts had 61.99%. The lowest mean for DM among the male respondents was 68% and 70% for their counterparts.



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4.1.3. Gender ei and dm performance mean

Table 5: Gender Emotional Intelligence Mean

Gender	SA	SR	SocA	SSk	EI Mean	Mean %
Male	36	34	23	35	128	78%
Female	34	31	23	34	122	74%

Note: SA- Self-awareness, SR- Self-regulation, SocA- Social Awareness, SSK- Social skills.

Table 5 indicates that gender regarding EI performance differed slightly (78% for men and 74% for women). Men differed by 4% difference from the women. There is no significant difference between male and female on EI constructs of self-awareness (Male mean at 36 and female at 34), self-regulation (male mean at 34 and female at 31), social awareness (mean at 23 for both genders and social skills (male mean at 35 and female at 34).

Table 6: Gender Decision-Making Mean

Gender	INT	IMP	OBJ	INF	ALT	DR	DM	% Mean
Male	6	18	17	17	19	22	100	80%
Female	6	18	16	17	17	22	98	79%

Note: INT-Initiative, IMP-improvement, OBJ-Objectives, INF-Information, ALT-Alternative and DR-Decision Radar.

Table 6 shows that decision-making mean between genders was closely similar. The men had 80% and the women had 79%. Respondents did not show a significant difference in their performance in decision-making. Both genders performed similarly in the six constructs of decision-making. Respondents scored equally on decision-making constructs of initiative with each gender at a mean of 6, improvement at a mean of 18 and decision radar at 22. There was a very slight difference on the construct of objective with men at a mean of 17 and women at 16, alternative at a mean of 19 for men and 17 for women.

4.2. Inferential analysis

4.2.1. Self-awareness (sa) and dm in social justice education

H₀1: there is no significant relationship between school head teacher's self-awareness and decision-making on social justice education. Following the first study hypothesis, the regression analysis results are as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: SA and DM in Social Justice Education

Coefficients ^a					
	Unstand Coefficier		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)					
1.809					
0.063					
28.63					
.001					

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	Self-Awareness	0.635	0.018	0.964	36.1	0.

Variable: Decision-making in social justice education

The findings in Table 7 indicate that there was a positive and significant effect between self-awareness of the individual school head teacher and their decision-making on social justice education issues. This was revealed by a regression coefficient of .964 and a p < .001 that was less than the conventional p value of less than .05. This implied that the null hypothesis (H_0 1) was rejected, thus concluding that there was a positive and significant relationship between the self-awareness and decision-making in social justice education. This inferred that self-awareness had an effect on the decision-making on social justice education.

4.3. Self-regulation (sr) and dm in social justice education

 H_0 2: There is no significant relationship between school head teacher's self-regulation and decision-making on social justice education.

Table 8: SR and DM in Social Justice Education

Coeffici	ents ^a					
		Unstanda: cients	rdized; Coefficier	nts; Coeffi-	Standar	dized
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	0.917	0.102		8.999	0.000
	Self-Regulation	0.785	0.025	0.952	30.86	0.000

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Decision-making in social justice education.

The findings in Table 8 indicated that there was a positive and significant effect between self-regulation of the school head teacher and their decision-making in social justice education. This was revealed by a regression coefficient of .952 and a p < .001, which is less than the conventional p < .05. This implied that the null hypothesis (H₀2) was rejected, thus concluding that there is a positive and significant relationship between the self-regulation and decision-making on social justice education matters. This inferred that the self-regulation had an effect on the decision-making on social justice education.

4.3.1. Social awareness (soca) and dm in social justice education

H_o3: There is no significant relationship between school head teacher's social awareness and decision-making relationships on social justice education.

Table 9: SocA and DM Relationships in Social Justice Education

Coefficient a	1					,	
Unstandard	ized		'	Sta	ndardize	ed	
		Coefficier	nt				
Model		В	Std Error		Beta	t	S
1	(Constant)	1.198	0.059			20.356	.000
	Social Awareness	0.721	0.15		0.98	48.815	.000

^a Dependent variable: Decision-making in social justice education





The findings in Table 9 indicated that there was a positive and significant effect between social awareness and decision-making on social justice education issues. This was revealed by the regression coefficient of .980 and a p value of .000 which is less than the conventional p value of < .05. This implied that the null hypothesis (H₀3) was rejected, thus concluding that there is a positive and significant relationship between social awareness and decision-making on social justice education issues. The inference was that social awareness had an effect on decision-making on social justice education matters.

4.4. SOCIAL SKILLS (SSK) AND DM IN SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between school head teacher's social skills and decision-making relationships on social justice education

Table 10: SSK and DM Relationships in Social Justice Education

Coeff	icients ^a					
Model		Unstandard	ized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
В		Std. Error	Beta		T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.266	.074		17.222	.000
	Relationship management	.719	.019	.968	38.163	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Decision-making in social justice education

Note: SSK- Social Skills, DM- Decision-making

The findings in Table 10 revealed there was a positive and significant effect between social skills of the school head teachers and their decision-making on social justice education issues. This was shown by a regression coefficient of .968 and a p < .001, which was less than the conventional p value of < 0.05. This implied that the null hypothesis (H₀4) was rejected, thus concluding that there was a positive and significant relationship between social skills and decision-making in social justice education. It inferred that social skills have an effect on the decision-making in social justice education.

4.4.1. Coefficient of determination

Table 11: Coefficient of determination

Model Summary

Model	R	R Squa	re Adjusted R	Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.981a	.963	.961		.13688	
D 11 :			1 0 16	2 1 1	2 1 1 21 111	

Predictors: (Constant), Self-regulation, Self-awareness, Social awareness, Social Skills.

The findings in Table 11 showed an R Squared of .963, which is 96.3%. Thus, the EI variables of self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness and social skills for this study amounted to 96.3% of the factors that affect decision-making in social justice education. The other 3.7% that was not used in this study equally affects decision-making on social justice education.



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4.5. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 12: Multiple Regression

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients				
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.243	.083		14.935	.001
	Self-awareness	123	.062	186	1.985	.050
	Self-regulation	.087	.063	.106	1.385	.169
	Social awareness	486	.112	.660	4.329	.000
	Social Skills	.027	.090	.037	.306	.760

 $Y = 1.234 + 0.123X_1 + 0.087X_2 + 0.486X_3 + 0.027X_4$

Where:

Y = Decision-making in Social Justice Education.

 X_1 = Self-awareness.

 X_2 = Self-regulation.

 X_3 = Social awareness.

 X_4 = Social skills.

Regression of coefficient results in Table 12 revealed that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between self-awareness and school head teachers' decision-making in social justice education as indicated by (β = 0.123, p < .05). This indicated that an improvement in self-awareness by 1 unit would lead to an improvement in the school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education by 0.123 units which is 12.3%.

Further, the findings revealed that there was a positive and no statistically significant relationship between self-regulation and school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education as indicated by (β = 0.087, p = .169). This indicated that an improvement in self-regulation by 1 unit would lead to an improvement in the school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education by 0.087 units which is 8.7%.

The findings also reveal that there is a positive and significant relationship between social awareness and school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education as indicated by (β = .486, p = 0.001). This indicates that an improvement in social awareness by 1 unit would lead to an improvement in the school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education by 0.486 units which is 48.6%.

The findings further showed that there is a positive and no statistically significant relationship between social skills and school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education as indicated by (β = 0.027, p = 0.760). This indicates that an improvement in social skills by 1 unit would lead to an improvement in the school head teacher's decision-making in social justice education by 0.027 units, which is 2.7%.

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5. Discussion of findings

5.1. Self-awareness

Self-awareness was the first construct used to explain emotional intelligence and based on the study findings, the regression analysis showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between self-awareness and school head teachers' decision-making on issues of social justice education. Being self-aware on one's internal feelings contributes positively or negatively to how they make decisions. When the internal emotional states are strong regardless of the external events, such individuals tend to make positive impactful decisions as opposed to their counterparts. School head teachers can improve their self-awareness and grow in their emotional intelligence and decision-making. The internal factors drive individuals' ability to make decisions. They are enabled to understand why they make certain decisions, how they make those decisions and what drives them to make those decisions. This is self-awareness.

This finding concurs with Hastie and Dawes (2009) who found that decision-making capacities are not wired in people following some evolutionary design but rather, the ability to choose wisely is a learned skill which like any other can be improved (Hastie & Dawes, 2009). Decisions do not occur from a practice of a systematic natural way. Decisions are dynamic and internal responses, so those making decisions must resonate with the fact that a higher emotional intelligence contributes to better decisions. Notably, self-awareness is not an innate quality, but rather a learned one. Others too, like Segal et al. (2019) report that self-awareness helps one to build stronger inner relationships, define feelings and direct actions. Self-awareness as a component of EI is the first step to soul searching on how leaders filter emotions. When self-awareness is good, there are higher chances of good decisions.

5.2. Self-regulation

On self-regulation, the regression analysis results showed that there was a positive but no significant relationship between self-regulation and school head teachers' decision-making on social justice education issues. Self-regulation helps leaders keep emotions in check by avoiding impulsive behaviour, but instead cheer themselves up in low moments. They are able to respond appropriately and effectively to stressful and adverse circumstances. Self-regulation in decision-making may be best assessed under emotion evoking or risk-taking circumstances. It is during such moments that leaders are known to express their abilities to self-regulate. Head teachers sometimes face tough situations that call for radical decisions. Some of these situations can be very emotive in nature. A response to a confrontational or provocative situation reveals the inner capabilities to self-regulate emotions. Research has shown that self-regulation helps reduce negative emotions (Housman, 2017) hence fundamental for decision-making.

5.3. Social awareness

Regarding the aspect of social awareness, the study findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between social awareness and school head teachers' decision-making on issues of social justice education. The more people are aware of other people's needs, the more responsible decisions they are likely to make (WHO, 2017). Bruce (2010) underscored an understanding concerning social awareness. He asserted that an essential element of social awareness is the capacity to understand other people's emotions under various circumstances and thus, showing sympathy and empathy towards them. The way head teachers handle social justice education issues in their schools can demonstrate their abilities of social awareness. Their decisions would be apt in their awareness of the needs of the learner, the challenges of the parents and the role of community towards education.

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5.4. Social skills

The development of social skills among leaders showed a positive and no significant relationship with school head teachers' decision-making on social justice education. This means that the statistical evidence was insufficient to conclude the significant linear relationship between the variables. However, since the variables showed some correlation, it may be determined that this difference had no major impact on the findings. Social skills enable leaders to handle and influence people's emotions effectively. They are able to listen, persuade and respond appropriately to the needs of others. Social skills affect how leaders communicate, manage conflicts, initiate change, inspire cooperation and collaboration. Leaders with good social skills are endowed with interpersonal qualities such as being a good listener, easy to talk to and persuasive. This way, school leaders provide social interactions that create positive rather than negative relationships. Goleman (1998) sums this up by viewing leaders' "social skills as being able to understand the emotional climate and the organization's culture." School head teachers become moderators who give direction to decisions that are emotive and understand that their choice of decisions will affect their organizations positively or negatively.

5.5. Intervening variable results

The findings in this study showed that school head teachers' gender, age, work experience and educational level did not indicate a significant influence on emotional intelligence and decision-making. It can be assumed that EI is a learned quality that is not presumably defined by gender, age, education or work experience. Some research indicates that EI can be learned and nurtured by all (Goleman, 2015; Chamorro-Premuzic, 2014; Schutte et al., 2013) despite the intervening variables of gender, age, educational level or work experience. The issue of whether gender, age, education and work experience influence emotional intelligence is a disputable debate. Different researchers have found varying results with Naseer et al. (2018), Pooja and Kumar, (2016) and Shipley et al. (2010) establishing that these moderating variables actually influence levels of EI. Other researchers have contended that one or two of these intervening variables are influential in attaining varied levels of EI. For instance, Ghoniem et al. (2011) found emotional intelligence and gender interact to influence the job satisfaction.

5.5.1. Gender

With 51 male and 50 female head teachers, there was no significant difference noted among genders in their EI performance. Even though results show that male respondents performed higher on their EI, they also had the lowest performance. The performance level of emotional intelligence and decision-making was slightly similar for both male and female. Research concurs that indeed, on average, looking at the overall ratings for men and women, the strengths and weaknesses average out, so that in terms of total emotional intelligence, there are no sex differences (Fischer et al., 2018). Some literature shows contradictory evidence on EI differences in gender such as Katyal and Awasthi (2005) and those of Fida et al. (2018) show that women scored higher on EI than men. The results of this study which show no significant difference are in agreement with other studies such as those done by (Brown & Schutte, 2006, Wapaño, 2021) that gender is not a significant variable in emotional intelligence.

5.5.2. Level of education

The level of education as an intervening variable also did not show a significant effect to EI. Emotional intelligence may not come about with the amount of education one acquires unless it





is intentional emotional intelligence education. Studies have shown that people with high EI can do better in their academic performance but not vice versa. A high IQ does not automate a high EI. MacCann et al. (2020) studies on whether EI predicts academic performance found that EI has a "small to moderate association with academic performance, such that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to gain higher grades and achievement test scores" (p. 1).

5.5.2. Age levels

A higher number of school head teachers served at the age of 40-60 years. This group of leaders had seasoned leadership skills and experience. However, this research did not account for specific benefit of age or experience in relation to levels of emotional intelligence. Goleman, however, suggests that studies that have tracked peoples' levels of emotional intelligence over time show that they become better and better in these capabilities because they learn to grow more aware of their own emotions while perfecting their relationships with others (Goleman, 1998).

5.5.3. Work experience

The results in this study showed a slight variation among respondents with work experience between 16-26 years who were not among the low EI performers. This shows that the number of years one serves can contribute to their EI strength. Lynn et al. (2011), Mishra and Mohapatra (2010) and Shipley et al. (2010) among others support this finding. However, some studies have shown the contrary. Hur et al. (2014), Jinalee and Singh (2017) and Uniyal and Uniyal (2020) studies showed that the duration of service played no significant role on emotional dimensions except social awareness dimensions.

5.6. Head teachers' EI and DM

School head teachers expressed substantial amounts of emotional intelligence that influences their decision-making. Their engagement in matters of social justice education has far-reaching consequences. This crop of CEOs determine what is best for the constituents when they have strong EI performance or vice versa. Anurag (2021) and Schrita and Hammoud (2017) explain that employees with high emotional intelligence are able to manage their own emotions, effectively communicate with others, adapt to changes, quickly and adequately solve problems, use humor to improve mutual trust and understanding in stressful situations. They are also open and understanding, optimistic even in adverse circumstances, good teachers and dealers and efficient in customer complaints. However, since this study was based on the head teachers' self-assessment, there is need to collaborate these findings from the other stakeholders including students and parents.

6. Conclusion

This paper set to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making on social justice education with regard to EI constructs of self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness and social skills among school head teachers. From the study findings, the authors conclude that school head teachers with high emotional intelligence components of self-awareness, self-regulation, social-awareness and social skills exhibit the ability to make better decisions on issues of social justice education. The results depicted a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and decision-making. As emotional beings, school head teachers are constantly making decisions for their constituents. The quality of these decisions remains a critical point of study. There is a balancing act for these leaders to exercise emotional intelligence in decision-making in issues of social justice education that cripple the education sector. The study showed a continuous tension



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between EI and DM but head teachers can learn to eliminate unwanted emotions by engaging EI decision-making lenses. Leaders who are aware of their emotional intelligence statuses work towards improving this intelligence and become better decision-makers. This study established that intervening variables of gender, age, education and work experience did not significantly affect emotional intelligence. The power of these decisions could have been limited in eradicating the SJE issues since there was no validation of these decisions from those affected by SJE. Therefore, there is a critical need to study further, how emotional intelligence affects decision-making in school head teachers from the other educational stakeholders' perspective.

6.1. Recommendation

The necessity for school head teachers to combine emotional intelligence to decision-making on social justice education issues calls for intentionality. Leaders must come alive to the fact that decision-making is not devoid of emotions. The way they handle their emotions has an undeniable impact to the decisions they make. Emotional intelligence competence suffices for leadership maturity in decision-making; an apparent acknowledgement on the importance of these two variables upholds a standard for quality administrative leadership in schools. Further research should be committed to cross-examine school head teachers' self-report on their EI and DM through the eyes of others, rather than themselves since human emotion can be seen from facial expression, voice intonation, facial mimics and body language.

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