**Original Research Article**

**INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO THE DECISION- MAKING OF SCHOOL HEADS AS MEDIATED BY TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP**

**ABSTRACT**

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| --- |
| School leadership is becoming complex as 21st century demands educational stakeholders to respond to the needs especially at the digitalization of learning. Hence, this quantitative study delved into the mediating effects of technology leadership on the emotional intelligence and decision-making of school heads. Utilizing a stratified random sampling and collected data from three hundred (300) secondary public-school teachers currently employed in the Schools Division of Panabo City. Data collected were analyzed using weighted mean, Pearson r, simple and multiple regression analysis, and Sobel test. The findings revealed that school heads have very high level of emotional intelligence, decision making, and technology leadership. Also, it was revealed that strong positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and decision making, and technology leadership and decision making. Using Sobel test it was found that partial mediation exists. Apparently, a partial mediation exists as emotional intelligence directly influences technology leadership. At the same time, it has an indirect relationship through technology leadership and has a reduce effects on decision making of school heads. The findings imply that by enhancing emotional intelligence and technology leadership school can ultimately enhance their decision-making abilities.  |

*Keywords: Emotional intelligence, decision making, technology leadership, Mediation, school heads, SDG #4 Quality Education**#4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill*

**INTRODUCTION**

In recent years, the role of school heads in the Philippines has faced increasing scrutiny due to a series of incidents that have raised concerns about decision-making, financial management, and leadership within educational institutions. For instance, news reports highlighted cases of school heads making controversial decisions such as permitting students to use cellphones in class (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2023), failing to remit significant school funds (Rappler, 2023), and hiring unqualified teachers (ABS-CBN News, 2023). These incidents underscore the critical importance of effective decision-making, financial stewardship, and leadership qualities among school heads, as their decisions have far-reaching implications for students, teachers, and the entire educational system.

Decision making skills plays a quintessential role in educational leadership. It equips school heads with tools for navigating impactful decisions amidst constant global challenges in the dynamic educational system (Santos, 2021). The administrative role of school heads reflects the weight of their influence over aspects of the school environment, from students' academic performance to the well-being of staff and the school's relationship with the broader community (Jamil et al., 2024). Hence, strong and well-informed decisions are sought as they lead to a more efficient, productive, and supportive learning environment for students and educators (Abubakar & Abubakar, 2021; Stronge & Xu, 2021). A strong correlation has been identified between school heads' decision-making abilities and overall school performance. This highlights the critical role that effective leadership plays in driving school success (Gamala & Marpa, 2022).

Further, studies have emphasized the significance of emotional intelligence (EI) in educational leadership, suggesting that emotionally intelligent school heads are more likely to create a positive organizational climate (Palero & Masaudling, 2022). Pradhan and Pradhan (2019) found that emotional intelligence significantly predicts job satisfaction, performance, and leadership effectiveness among school heads in India, highlighting that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to be more effective leaders who make sound decisions. This implies that fostering emotional intelligence among leaders can lead to better decision-making processes within organizations and institutions.  Also, the relationship between emotional intelligence and technology leadership is critical to effective leadership in the modern era. One of these studies suggests that emotional intelligence becomes increasingly important as technology professionals transition from traditional support roles to more strategic and collaborative positions (Alzoubi & Aziz, 2021). This is supported by another study that revealed that emotional intelligence significantly predicts technology leadership among leaders (Wang et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the connection between technology leadership and decision-making emphasizes the role of technology in supporting informed decision-making processes. Linton (2017) underscores that technology facilitates group decision-making by providing access to essential data through networked systems. Aziz et al. (2020) conducted research indicating that technology leadership plays a pivotal role in enabling data-driven decision-making, which, in turn, can lead to improved performance and outcomes in organizations. This linkage implies that organizations prioritizing technology leadership and investing in advanced technological tools are better positioned to make data-informed decisions, leading to greater efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. Recognizing the importance of technology leadership can empower organizations to harness the full potential of technology for more effective and informed decision-making, ultimately driving success and growth.

While existing studies highlight the significance of these individual factors, there remains a gap in understanding how they collectively influence school heads' performance, particularly in the Philippine context. Most research focuses on these elements in isolation, failing to examine their interconnected impact on school heads' effectiveness. Studies by Pradhan and Pradhan (2019) emphasize the role of emotional intelligence in leadership effectiveness, while research by Aziz et al. (2020) highlights the importance of technology leadership in data-driven decision-making. However, limited studies explore the integration of emotional intelligence with technology-driven decision-making, which is increasingly relevant in modern educational leadership (Alzoubi & Aziz, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). Furthermore, although studies on technology leadership exist, none have examined it as a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making skills (Quidasol, 2023). Research on the association between these three factors remains scarce, both historically and in present studies. Addressing this gap can provide insights into how school heads leverage emotional and technological competencies to enhance decision-making.

The significance of this study lies in addressing the intricate challenges faced by school heads in the Philippines, who navigate a complex landscape of responsibilities. By exploring the interplay between emotional intelligence, decision-making, and technology leadership, the research seeks to offer valuable insights into enhancing educational leadership practices. This investigation is particularly crucial as it fills a notable gap in existing research, as no prior studies have employed technology leadership as a mediator in the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making.

This study sought to determine the influence of emotional intelligence on the decision-making of school heads as mediated by technology leadership. Specifically, it aimed to determine the level of emotional intelligence of school heads in terms of appraisal of others' emotions, appraisal of own emotions, regulation, social skills, utilization of emotions, and optimism. It also examined school heads' decision-making levels concerning uncertainty, time and money pressure, information and goals, consequences of decisions, motivation, self-regulation, cognition, emotion, social pressure, and work pressure. Additionally, the study assessed school heads' technology leadership level in terms of leadership and vision, learning and teaching, productivity and professional practice, support, management and operations, assessment and evaluation, and social, legal, and ethical issues. Furthermore, it sought to identify the significant relationships between emotional intelligence and decision-making, emotional intelligence and technology leadership, and technology leadership and decision-making skills. Finally, the study aimed to determine whether technology leadership significantly mediated emotional intelligence's influence on school heads' decision-making.

The hypotheses of the study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Firstly, it was determined if there was no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the decision-making of school heads. Secondly, it was identified if there was no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the technology leadership of school heads. Thirdly, it was established if there was no significant relationship between technology leadership and the decision-making of school heads. Lastly, the study evaluated if there was no mediating effect of technology leadership on the relationship between emotional intelligence and the decision-making of school heads.

This study is grounded in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), highlighting the influence of observation, imitation, and social experiences on learning and behavior. In the context of this study, Social Cognitive Theory provides insights into how technology leadership mediates the influence of emotional intelligence on decision-making among school heads. Technology leadership equips school heads with the tools and resources needed for effective decision-making, enabling them to access data, communicate with stakeholders, and implement innovative initiatives. This framework contributes to understanding the interplay of emotional intelligence, technology leadership, and decision-making in educational leadership.

This study also draws support from the dual process theory of decision-making (Evans & Stanovich, 2013). According to this theory, decision-making involves two distinct cognitive processes: System 1, which is automatic, intuitive, and emotional, and System 2, which is deliberate, analytical, and rational. By integrating this theory into the research framework, the study explores how emotional intelligence, as influenced by Social Cognitive Theory, operates within these dual processes and interacts with technology leadership in shaping decision-making among school heads. Recognizing the coexistence of automatic and deliberate processes in decision-making provides a nuanced understanding of the cognitive mechanisms involved in the interplay of emotional intelligence and technology leadership.

Moreover, the study incorporates the Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006) to enrich the exploration of leadership dynamics further. Through the development of a creative and positive organizational culture, transformational leadership strongly emphasizes inspiring and encouraging followers to accomplish extraordinary results. This theory complements social cognitive theory by providing an additional lens to analyze the influence of emotional intelligence and technology leadership on decision-making in educational settings. By examining how transformational leadership qualities are manifested in the context of emotional intelligence and technology leadership, the study aims to unravel the potentially transformative impact these leadership factors can have on decision-making processes, ultimately contributing to the advancement of educational leadership practices.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study. The conceptual framework of this study was designed to explore the intricate relationships among emotional intelligence, decision-making, and technology leadership among school heads. The framework illustrates how these variables influence leadership effectiveness in educational settings.

Emotional

Intelligence of

School Heads

Decision

-

making

of School Heads

Technology

Leadership

**Independent Variable**

**Mediating Variable**

**De**

**pendent Variable**

**path (c)**

**path (a)**

**path (b)**

Figure 1 Shows the interplay of the variables in the study

The conceptual framework consists of three key paths: Path A, Path B, and Path C. *Path A* represents the direct influence of emotional intelligence on technology leadership. This suggests that school heads with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit strong technology leadership skills, as they can effectively manage change, foster innovation, and integrate digital tools into their leadership practices. *Path B* illustrates the relationship between technology leadership and decision-making. Effective technology leadership enables school heads to make well-informed, data-driven decisions by leveraging digital resources, enhancing communication, and optimizing school operations. *Path C* captures the direct influence of emotional intelligence on decision-making. School heads with higher emotional intelligence are expected to navigate complex challenges, regulate emotions, and make sound judgments, contributing to more effective decision-making.

The findings of this study have global relevance, particularly in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #4: Quality Education. Specifically, it aligns with target #4.4.1, which focuses on increasing the proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills. By highlighting the role of technology leadership in decision-making, this study underscores the importance of integrating ICT competencies into educational leadership for more effective school management. For the Department of Education (DepEd), the study provides valuable insights into how emotional intelligence and technology leadership influence decision-making among school heads. Understanding these interactions can help the department develop targeted leadership training programs, integrate emotional intelligence development into professional growth initiatives, and promote the use of technology in administrative decision-making to improve overall educational outcomes.

Lastly, school heads benefit from this study by anchoring on this study to enhance their leadership, improve school management, and create a more adaptive educational environment. Teachers also benefit as school heads foster informed, strategic, and empathetic decision-making. Teachers and school constituents benefit from good leadership. Ultimately, this study is a foundation for future researchers to explore the interplay of emotional intelligence, technology leadership, and decision-making, encouraging further studies on leadership and technology integration in education.

**METHOD**

**Research Respondents**

In this study, the research respondents were teachers from the Schools Division of Panabo City, which is situated in Panabo. A total of 300 teachers participated in the study. Furthermore, respondents' participation was voluntary; they were not compelled to answer the questionnaires. This study gathered insights from public school teachers regarding their perceptions of their school leaders' emotional intelligence, decision-making skills, and technology leadership. To ensure a comprehensive assessment of these variables, only teachers—who directly experience how these leadership qualities are manifested—were included as respondents, while school heads were excluded. Utilizing a stratified random sampling technique, the population of this research study was divided into subgroups based on specific criteria, such as level, location, or years of experience. This sampling technique, which was a probability-based method, ensured that each subgroup within the population was represented in the sample (Taherdoost, 2016). An inclusion criterion was carefully defined to ensure that the selected respondents met specific qualifications: they had to be permanent teachers in a secondary public school in Panabo City, possess the necessary qualifications for this role, and have at least three (3) years of cumulative teaching experience in their assigned school. An exclusion criterion was also established to maintain the integrity of the study, excluding individuals aged 60 years and older, who had reached retirement age, as well as individuals with medical or psychological conditions that could hinder their full participation. Withdrawal criteria were also established for respondents who chose to discontinue their participation due to factors such as inability to continue, economic reasons, or transfer of location. Any ethical concerns that arose were addressed through appropriate procedures. The study's locale centered on public schools within the city of Panabo, providing **a** contextually relevant and focused group of respondents for the research.

**Material and Instrument**

This study used three adapted instruments to measure each of the three variables. To measure the school heads’ emotional intelligence, this study used the Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Lane et al. (2009. To measure the school heads’ decision-making, the instrument used was the Decision-Making Questionnaire by Soria-Oliver and Closas (2009), which comprised 38 items and assessed decision-making across three key factors. To measure the school heads’ technology leadership, this study utilized the Principals Technology Leadership Assessment by CASTLE.

**Design and Procedure**

 In this study, a quantitative non-experimental research design was employed. Specifically, the research adopted a descriptive-correlational approach, which aimed to explore associations among variables with different levels of measurement. The descriptive component of the design allowed for a comprehensive depiction of the current state of emotional intelligence, decision-making, and technology leadership among school heads in the Philippines. This snapshot provided a foundational understanding of the variables under investigation (Stangor, 2011). Second, the correlational aspect of the design aligned with the study's objective of exploring the relationships between emotional intelligence, technology leadership, and decision-making skills. By utilizing correlation analysis, the research identified and quantified the extent of associations between these variables, contributing to a nuanced understanding of their interplay (Stangor, 2011).

This study employed a systematic data collection process to ensure the accuracy and reliability of findings. Upon securing ethical approval from the UM Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) and obtaining necessary endorsements from the professional schools and the Schools Division of Panabo City, the researcher sought permission from school heads to conduct the survey. Respondents who met the inclusion criteria were recruited and provided with informed consent forms outlining their rights and participation details. Once consent was obtained, participants completed three questionnaires measuring emotional intelligence, decision-making, and technology leadership. The collected data were then tallied and analyzed using statistical tools such as the Weighted Mean, Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient, Simple and Multiple Regression Analysis, and the Sobel Test to assess relationships and mediation effects. Ethical considerations, including data privacy and participant confidentiality, were strictly observed throughout the data collection process.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Emotional Intelligence of School Heads**

Shown in Table 1 are the descriptive statistics results on assessing the level of emotional intelligence of school heads, which has an overall mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.54, described as very high, meaning that the item it is consistently manifested at all times.

Shown in the table are the descriptive statistic results on assessing the level of emotional intelligence among school heads, which has an overall mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.54, described as very high, meaning consistently manifested among the respondents. Among the six indicators, Utilization of Emotions, had the highest mean score of 4.37 and a standard deviation of 0.60, also described as very high. Optimism got the lowest mean score of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.66, still described as very high, but slightly lower compared to the other indicators, suggesting that while optimism remains a strength, it is the area with the least emphasis among the respondents.

# Table 1

# *Level of Emotional Intelligence of School Heads*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators**  | **Standard Deviation** | **Mean** | **Descriptive** **Level**  |
| Appraisal of Other Emotions  | 0.61 | 4.26 | Very High  |
| Appraisal of Own Emotions  | 0.62 | 4.30 | Very High  |
| Regulation  | 0.59 | 4.32 | Very High  |
| Social Skills  | 0.66 | 4.26 | Very High  |
| Utilization of Emotions  | 0.60 | 4.37 | Very High  |
| Optimism  | 0.66 | 4.20 | Very High  |
| **Overall**  | **0.54** | **4.29** | **Very High**  |

Further, the overall emotional intelligence of school heads is very high. This means that school leaders in Panabo City are emotionally intelligent, and such that they are able to regulate their emotions, able to use it to guide their actions, and optimize it to establish a good relationship with the stakeholders. The finding is consistent with numerous studies of investigations on the purpose and significance of emotional intelligence in educational governance. Effective leadership requires emotional intelligence, which influence how to resolve disputes, principles of leadership, and the work of educator’s values.

The findings also align with the study by Imperial et al. (2021). school heads are characterized as most likely to possess emotional intelligence traits including self-management and interpersonal communication under pressure, which suggests a high ability to recognize and control emotions. Indicators of school effectiveness, such as graduation and cohort survival rates, are strongly correlated with the abilities of school leaders, especially their capacity for vision and problem-solving. This also affirmed by Nacionales (2024) who explained that improving school results is a function of emotional intelligence, which forms the basis of these competences of school heads. Moreover, the indicator with the lowest mean also highlighted that school heads do not easily choose to give up when faced with a challenge they believe they will fail. It aligns with Wang (2021) who suggested that having positive emotions, such as optimism over situation allows them to become more confident in what they do. This is also supported by Kulophas & Hallinger (2020) that leaders’ extend to their benefactors and stakeholders and with that academic optimism may extend. Lastly, the findings also align with multiple studies from various countries, from secondary schools in most public schools (Noori et al., 2024; Suleman et al., 2020; Tai & Kareem, 2019), this is also true for elementary school leaders and teachers (Wirawan et al., 2019).

**Technology Leadership of School Heads**

 Presented in table 2 is the descriptive statistics for the level of technology leadership among school heads, with an overall mean of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.61, described as very high. This indicates that school heads consistently demonstrate strong technology leadership across all measured indicators.

# Table 2

# *Level of Technology Leadership of School Heads*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators**  | **SD**  | **Mean**  | **Descriptive** **Level**  |
| Leadership and Vision  | 0.64  | 4.50  | Very High  |
| Learning and Teaching  | 0.66  | 4.39  | Very High  |
| Productivity and Professional Practice  | 0.64  | 4.40  | Very High  |
| Support Management and Operations  | 0.67  | 4.37  | Very High  |
| Assessment and Evaluation  | 0.68  | 4.34  | Very High  |
| Social Legal and Ethical Issues  | 0.67  | 4.41  | Very High  |
| **Overall**  | **0.61**  | **4.40**  | **Very High**  |

Meanwhile, Assessment and Evaluation, with a mean score of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.68, also described as very high, is the lowest-rated indicator. While this score reflects strong competency in leveraging technology for evaluation purposes, it suggests that this area may benefit from additional focus to enhance overall performance.The findings indicate that school heads' technology leadership in support management and operations places greater emphasis on incorporating hardware and software replacements or upgrades into the school’s technology plans. Similarly, in terms of leadership and vision, school heads prioritize effective communication with stakeholders over actively engaging in activities to identify and implement best practices. In this study, it seems that school leaders from Panabo City are well-equipped at guiding the learning and teaching processes of teachers. This domain also further supports the technology leadership, managerial and individual skills of leaders along with their scope of influence.

This aligns with Sterett and Richardson (2020), communication serves as a keystone for technology leaders. Excellent manifestation of this domain indicates that these school leaders from Panabo City are embodying the technology leadership as the advocate, engage and promote technology planning while aligning it to school improvement plans. The findings support Sterrett and Richardson (2020) and Karakose et al. (2021). Technology do not only help the teachers and students, but also the school leaders themselves. With effective use of digital information and technology, ancillary tasks can be completed and complex tasks can be given time. In this study, the school heads from Panabo City seems to understand this advantage, hence the very high manifestation of productivity and professional practice. Technology allows them to reach the last end of their stakeholders and create positive management systems.

Further, these manifested qualities align with Sterrett and Richardson (2020) who indicated that acquiring more equipment are prioritized but maintaining and improve what is already present is highly prioritized by technology leadership school heads. The findings is supported by the study of Chawanapaisarn, & Suksodkitw, (2021) and Sterrett & Richardson (2020) which they stipulated the guidelines of technology leadership in many countries. Moreover, Chawanapaisarn and Suksodkitw (2020) further elaborated that technology leadership of school leaders indicate that these leaders understand ethical protocols upon integration of technology in learning, and so they extend this information to the people as well Hence, it can be understood that school leaders are involving themselves in high-stake accountability as they lead their schools. Consequently, DeMatthews and Serafini (2021) explained that unless a school leader understands this level of accountability, technology leadership thrives in the learning culture of schools.

# Decision-Making of School Heads

Presented in table 3 is the descriptive statistics for various indicators related to decision-making skills among school heads, with an overall mean of 4.36 and a standard deviation of 0.56, described as very high. This indicates that the decision-making skills of school heads are consistently manifested at all times across all indicators. Among the ten indicators*,* work pressure has the highest mean score of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.62, described as very high, reflecting that school heads excel in managing decision-making under work-related stress. Meanwhile, consequences of decisions, with a mean of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.63, and uncertainty, with a mean of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.62, have the lowest scores among the indicators but are still described as very high. These results suggest that while decision-making under uncertainty and evaluating consequences are strengths, they are relatively less emphasized compared to other areas.

Overall, the findings highlight that school heads consistently demonstrate very high decision-making skills across diverse indicators, effectively managing pressures, emotions, and cognitive demands. This indicates that decision-making under uncertain conditions and evaluating outcomes are slightly less emphasized compared to other areas.

# Table 3

# *Level of Decision Making of School Heads*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators**  | **Standard Deviation** | **Mean** | **Descriptive** **Level** |
| Uncertainty  | 0.62 | 4.26 | Very High |
| Time and Money Pressure  | 0.62 | 4.34 | Very High |
| Information and Goals  | 0.65 | 4.37 | Very High |
| Consequences of Decisions  | 0.63 | 4.32 | Very High |
| Motivation  | 0.65 | 4.40 | Very High |
| Self-Regulation  | 0.63 | 4.39 | Very High |
| Cognition  | 0.66 | 4.37 | Very High |
| Emotion  | 0.62 | 4.36 | Very High |
| Social Pressure  | 0.65 | 4.34 | Very High |
| Work Pressure  | 0.62 | 4.42 | Very High |
| **Overall**  | **0.56** | **4.36** | **Very High** |

The findings align with the findings of Sum (2022) who indicated that school heads have excellent decision-making. In the VUCA world, Sum (2022) indicated the relevance of school leaders’ decision-making. This study supports the results by Ahmad et al. (2022) school leaders have exhibited high level of decision-making and execution in times of the pandemic have greatly contributed to the education during those times and so it seems that with those situations. The same is also true for findings of Netolicky (2020) and Kay and King (2020), such that decision making abilities of school heads have extended even after the pandemic.

Moreover, findings is supported by the study of Mandinach and Schildkamp (2021), which it indicated that by setting up school improvement goals allow leaders become more oriented with tasks. In terms of information, variety and wide-range of credible sources are more suggested as it offers a sound basis for decisions. And in this study, school heads are indeed capable of taking these into account and become knowledgeable and goal-oriented leaders.

Moreover, the findings are incongruent with the findings of Turkoglu and Cansoy (2020) who indicated that among school leaders are unable to healthily cope with dealing with work rules and personal interests. Such that ancillary tasks oftentimes create conflict with their work and life, leading to stress. In this current study, it seems that school leaders are able to align their personal interests and their work rules, even following work rules as means for decision-making process. They allow work protocols not as a pressure that hinders decision-making but a basis so they may excellently comply with the demands of their work. This may even suggest that these leaders live by what they preach, that work and their personal interests are aligned hence better decision-making.

# Significant Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Decision- Making, and Technology Leadership of School Heads

Displayed in Tables 4. to 6 is the relationship between the independent variable to the dependent, and the third variable to the dependent variable. The results are derived from the use of Pearson’s r, which reflects the strength and direction of association between the variables of the study.

Shown in table 4 is the relationship between emotional intelligence and decision-making of school heads. It shows that the overall emotional intelligence is highly correlated with the decision-making of school heads with an r – value of .854, p less than .001, which indicates strong positive relationship. Consequently, this study rejects the first null hypothesis. Indeed, there is a positive strong correlation between emotional intelligence and decision making among school heads in Panabo City.

**Table 4**

*Significance of the Relationship between* *Emotional Intelligence and Decision-making of School Heads*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Emotional Intelligence** | **Decision-making** |
| UNC | TMP | IAG | COD | MOT | SER | COG | EMO | SOP | WOP | **Overall**  |
| AOE | .667\*\*.000 | .687\*\*.000 | .662\*\*.000 | .629\*\*.000 | .568\*\*.000 | .612\*\*.000 | .576\*\*.000 | .654\*\*.000 | .652\*\*.000 | .598\*\*.000 | **.708\*\*****.000** |
| APE | .612\*\*.000 | .648\*\*.000 | .617\*\*.000 | .607\*\*.000 | .583\*\*.000 | .634\*\*.000 | .602\*\*.000 | .686\*\*.000 | .628\*\*.000 | .578\*\*.000 | **.697\*\*****.000** |
| REG | .699\*\*.000 | .712\*\*.000 | .726\*\*.000 | .724\*\*.000 | .700\*\*.000 | .727\*\*.000 | .700\*\*.000 | .788\*\*.000 | .730\*\*.000 | .721\*\*.000 | **.813\*\*****.000** |
| SOS | .660\*\*.000 | .650\*\*.000 | .672\*\*.000 | .652\*\*.000 | .606\*\*.000 | .628\*\*.000 | .582\*\*.000 | .706\*\*.000 | .657\*\*.000 | .661\*\*.000 | **.727\*\*****.000** |
| UOE | .653\*\*.000 | .690\*\*.000 | .716\*\*.000 | .678\*\*.000 | .682\*\*.000 | .745\*\*.000 | .665\*\*.000 | .761\*\*.000 | .711\*\*.000 | .740\*\*.000 | **.792\*\*****.000** |
| OPT | .636\*\*.000 | .643\*\*.000 | .619\*\*.000 | .572\*\*.000 | .603\*\*.000 | .592\*\*.000 | .517\*\*.000 | .645\*\*.000 | .643\*\*.000 | .607\*\*.000 | **.683\*\*****.000** |
| **Overall**  | **.759\*****.000** | **.779\*****.000** | **.775\*****.000** | **.746\*****.000** | **.723\*****.000** | **.760\*****.000** | **.703\*****.000** | **.819\*****.000** | **.777\*****.000** | **.755\*****.000** | **.854\*\*****.000** |

***Legend:*** *AOE-**appraisal of others' emotions, APE- appraisal of own emotions, REG-regulation, SOS- social skills, UOE- utilization of emotions, OPT- optimism; UNC- uncertainty, TMP-time and money pressure, IAG-information and goals, COD- consequences of decisions, MOT-motivation, SER-self-regulation, COG-cognition, EMO-emotion, SOP-social pressure, WOP-work pressure*

The findings indicate that school heads are able to effectively manage both their own emotions and those of others enhance their decision-making capabilities. The findings also imply that the higher the level of emotional intelligence of school heads effective decision-making also increases, and vice versa. With improved ability to determine consequence of decisions along with ability to control impulsiveness.

The findings align with Aziz et al. (2020), who indicated that emotional intelligence contributes to better innovative working behavior. Leaders leverage their emotional intelligence to craft and implement effective strategies, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and progress. Similarly, the findings of the study is supported by Pradhan and Pradhan (2019) who provided that statistical evidence that indeed, there is a positive association between emotional intelligence and decision making. Hence, it could be understood that as school heads have higher emotional intelligence the more like they will make sound decisions that align with educational outcomes.

**Table 5** *Significance of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Technology Leadership of School Heads*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Emotional Intelligence** | **Technology Leadership** |
| LAV | LAT | PPP | SMO | AAE | SLE | **Overall** |
| AOE | .573\*\*.000 | .629\*\*.000 | .572\*\*.000 | .597\*\*.000 | .603\*\*.000 | .582\*\*.000 | **.639\*\*****.000** |
| APE | .533\*\*.000 | .598\*\*.000 | .539\*\*.000 | .550\*\*.000 | .557\*\*.000 | .551\*\*.000 | **.598\*\*****.000** |
| REG | .695\*\*.000 | .697\*\*.000 | .658\*\*.000 | .656\*\*.000 | .649\*\*.000 | .665\*\*.000 | **.722\*\*****.000** |
| SOS | .660\*\*.000 | .672\*\*.000 | .614\*\*.000 | .590\*\*.000 | .613\*\*.000 | .613\*\*.000 | **.675\*\*****.000** |
| UOE | .706\*\*.000 | .667\*\*.000 | .658\*\*.000 | .594\*\*.000 | .626\*\*.000 | .648\*\*.000 | **.700\*\*****.000** |
| OPT | .578\*\*.000 | .636\*\*.000 | .580\*\*.000 | .555\*\*.000 | .594\*\*.000 | .557\*\*.000 | **.629\*\*****.000** |
| **Overall** | **.724\*\*****.000** | **.755\*\*****.000** | **.700\*\*****.000** | **.685\*\*****.000** | **.704\*\*****.000** | **.699\*\*****.000** | **.766\*\*****.000** |

***Legend:*** *AOE-**appraisal of others' emotions, APE- appraisal of own emotions, REG-regulation, SOS- social skills, UOE- utilization of emotions, OPT- optimism; LAV- leadership and vision, LAT-learning and teaching, PPP- productivity and professional practice, SMO-support, management, and operations, AAE- assessment and evaluation, SLE- social, legal, and ethical issues.*

Shown in Table 5 is the relationship between emotional intelligence and technology leadership of school heads. It shows that the overall emotional intelligence is highly correlated with the technology leadership of school heads with an r – value of .766, p less than .001, which indicates strong positive relationship. Consequently, this study rejects the second null hypothesis. There is indeed positive strong correlation between emotional intelligence and technology leadership making among school heads in Panabo City.

These findings suggest that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping the technology leadership capabilities of school heads. It implies that school leaders in Panabo City can effectively navigate technological challenges and innovations by leveraging their emotional intelligence. Furthermore, the results indicate a reciprocal relationship between emotional intelligence and technology leadership: an increase in one lead to an increase in the other, while a decrease in one result in a corresponding decrease in the other.

The findings align with Alzoubi and Aziz (2021) who indicated that a person’s emotional intelligence is most critical for leaders to create strategic decisions. The sensitivity and awareness of the feelings of their staff or those around them are on a different level for these emotionally intelligent individuals. They carefully consider the pros and cons before making decisions, ensuring a more thoughtful and balanced approach. The findings is also supported by Aziz et al., (2020) who expounded that leaders' emotional intelligence is closely associated with the acceptance of technology within organizations. This connection fosters innovative working behaviors that are integral to effective technology leadership.

Shown in Table 6 is the relationship between technology leadership and decision making of school heads. It shows that the overall technology leadership is highly correlated with the emotional intelligence of school heads with an r – value of .884, p less than .001, which indicates strong positive relationship. Consequently, this study rejects the third null hypothesis. There is indeed positive strong correlation between technology leadership and decision making among school heads in Panabo City.

**Table 6** *Significance of the Relationship between Technology Leadership and Decision Making of School Heads*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Technology Leadership** | **Decision-making** |
| UNC | TMP | IAG | COD | MOT | SER | COG | EMO | SOP | WOP | **Overall**  |
| LAV | .678\*\*.000 | .695\*\*.000 | .737\*\*.000 | .677\*\*.000 | .723\*\*.000 | .738\*\*.000 | .731\*\*.000 | .739\*\*.000 | .733\*\*.000 | .790\*\*.000 | **.814\*\*****.000** |
| LAT | .692\*\*.000 | .714\*\*.000 | .759\*\*.000 | .725\*\*.000 | .714\*\*.000 | .754\*\*.000 | .747\*\*.000 | .708\*\*.000 | .778\*\*.000 | .804\*\*.000 | **.832\*\*****.000** |
| PPP | .637\*\*.000 | .703\*\*.000 | .723\*\*.000 | .689\*\*.000 | .729\*\*.000 | .719\*\*.000 | .734\*\*.000 | .735\*\*.000 | .744\*\*.000 | .773\*\*.000 | **.808\*\*****.000** |
| SMO | .671\*\*.000 | .695\*\*.000 | .760\*\*.000 | .743\*\*.000 | .719\*\*.000 | .717\*\*.000 | .749\*\*.000 | .692\*\*.000 | .724\*\*.000 | .729\*\*.000 | **.810\*\*****.000** |
| AAE | .694\*\*.000 | .699\*\*.000 | .761\*\*.000 | .748\*\*.000 | .687\*\*.000 | .730\*\*.000 | .744\*\*.000 | .688\*\*.000 | .752\*\*.000 | .761\*\*.000 | **.817\*\*****.000** |
| SLE | .707\*\*.000 | .690\*\*.000 | .767\*\*.000 | .721\*\*.000 | .755\*\*.000 | .774\*\*.000 | .755\*\*.000 | .715\*\*.000 | .776\*\*.000 | .784\*\*.000 | **.838\*\*****.000** |
| **Overall**  | **.733\*\*****.000** | **.754\*\*****.000** | **.810\*\*****.000** | **.774\*\*****.000** | **.777\*\*****.000** | **.796\*\*****.000** | **.801\*\*****.000** | **.768\*\*****.000** | **.810\*\*****.000** | **.833\*\*****.000** | **.884\*\*****.000** |

***Legend****: LAV- leadership and vision, LAT-learning and teaching, PPP- productivity and professional practice, SMO-support, management, and operations, AAE- assessment and evaluation, SLE- social, legal, and ethical issues; UNC- uncertainty, TMP-time and money pressure, IAG-information and goals, COD- consequences of decisions, MOT-motivation, SER-self-regulation, COG-cognition, EMO-emotion, SOP-social pressure, WOP-work pressure*

The findings imply that leaders who embrace and integrate technology into their leadership practices exhibit more guided and innovative working behaviors. Among school heads in Panabo City, this relationship is evident, as an increase in technology leadership corresponds to an improvement in effective decision-making. To adapt to the modern organizational setup—characterized by digitalized education and interactions with teachers and students—leaders are expected to be more open and proactive in driving technological integration within their schools. Conversely, low levels of technology leadership are likely to result in less effective decision-making.

The findings align with Aziz et al. (2020) who indicated that leaders who accept technology leads to more innovative and effective working behavior. The findings also support the study by Navaridas-Nalda et al. (2020). The more school heads integrate technology-assisted ways to complete their tasks, they not only able to relate with students and innovative teachers—they lead them. These technology-knowledgeable leaders are better able to adapte to the pace required by the dynamic environment.

# Mediating Effects of the Three Variables

Upon determining the degree and direction of relationship between the three variables, the study proceed with identifying the level of influence between the variables. Presented in Table 7 are the steps categorized as Steps 1 to 4. Each step shows the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and the last step indicates the impact of the former on the latter with the mediating effects of the third variable.

As shown, Step 1 presents the significant direct relationship of emotional intelligence to the decision-making. In Step 2, emotional intelligence significantly influences technology leadership, the mediator (M). Meanwhile, Step 3 presents the results of the analysis, which suggest that technology leadership significantly predicts decision-making.

**Table 7.** *Regression analysis showing the influence of emotional intelligence on decision-making as mediated by technology leadership*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Step**  | **Path**  | **B**  | **S.E.**  | **β**  |
| 1  | c  | .899  | .032  | .854\*\*\*  |
| 2  | a  | .450  | .036  | .428\*\*\*  |
| 3  | b  | .514  | .032  | .556\*\*\*  |
| 4  | c’  | .874  | .042  | .766\*\*\*  |

\* *p*<0.05 \*\* *p*<0.01 \*\*\* *p*=0.000

Further, mediation analysis using medgraph is necessary to determine the significance of the mediation of effect because paths a, b, and c correlate. Furthermore, as observed in Step 4 (denoted as c’), the influence of emotional intelligence on decision-making skills seems to reduce significantly after mediation by technology leadership at p less than 0.000. With this, partial mediation. Ultimately, the findings indicate that emotional intelligence has a direct influence on decision-making and an indirect influence through technology leadership.

**Table 8.** *Results of statistical analysis on presence (or absence) of mediating effect*

In relation, Table 8 shows the Sobel z test. It yielded a z-value of 12.76, p less than 0.05. A positive Sobel test’ z-value, means that mediating effect is partial, such that the original effect emotional intelligence to decision-making was reduced upon the addition of technology leadership.

Additionally, the computed effect size for the mediation test seen between three variables is shown in the figure. The effect size determines the extent of the effect of emotional intelligence on decision-making, which can be associated with the indirect path. The total effect value of .899 is attributed to the beta of emotional intelligence towards decision-making. The direct effect value of .874 is the beta of emotional intelligence toward decision-making with technology leadership. The indirect effect value of .899 is the value obtained from the original beta between emotional intelligence and decision-making (a\* b, where “a” denotes the path EI → DM and “b” pertains to the path between TL→ DM). The indirect effect is divided by the overall impact obtained by the ratio index; in this case, .450 by 899 equals .500.

Emotional Intelligence



Technology Leadership



Decision Making

0.899\*\*\* [c]

0.874\*\*\* [c’]

0.

450\*\*\* [a]

0.514\*\*\* [b]

## Figure 2. Medgraph showing the variables of the study

Apparently, a partial mediation exists as emotional intelligence directly influences technology leadership. At the same time, it has an indirect relationship through technology leadership and has a reduce effects on decision making of school heads. This is further understood using Figure 2. The findings align with Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986). Such that school heads’ ability to observe, imitate and learning from their social experiences allow effective decision-making process. This is evidence on the partial mediation of emotional intelligence, with the decision making and the technology leadership. This is also true with the Dual Process Theory of Decision Making (Evans & Stanovich, 2013).

 The mediation effects of technology leadership promote the nuance that school heads may seek to anchor automatic and deliberate processes to guide their decision. The school heads’ emotional intelligence level determines how they base their decisions. In summary, school heads in Panabo City are better able to solve problems when they are in a positive mood. School heads who are emotionally intelligent utilize their emotions to their advantage, in this study, the respondents utilize positive and uplifting mood to present and makes them good impression on others. Those with high emotional intelligence leverage their emotions to their advantage. School heads’ positive and uplifting moods can be leveraged to create favorable impressions on others, which in turn enhanced their decision-making skills, making them more effective leaders.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This section presents the conclusions drawn after accounting for the findings. The school heads from Panabo City have very high level of emotional intelligence, technology leadership and decision making. The results also revealed that results that the variables, emotional intelligence, decision-making and technology leadership are strongly and positively associated with one another.

It was revealed that a partial mediation existed between the variables. As such, emotional intelligence has a direct effect on the decision making of school heads and an indirect effect by the mediation of the technology leadership. It implies any actions or potential interventions that seek to improve decision making of school heads in Panabo City. Hence, a pivotal finding to guiding school heads towards having the tools to guide their actions and become effective leaders who emphasize informed decision making.

Further, the findings aligns with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) to an extent, as they confirm that technology leadership plays a mediating role between emotional intelligence and decision-making. This aligns with the theory's emphasis on how external influences, such as social and technological environments, shape behavior and learning. However, since the mediation is only partial, emotional intelligence still has a direct impact on decision-making, indicating that while technology leadership enhances decision-making, it is not the sole determining factor. Similarly, the results align with the Dual Process Theory of Decision Making (Evans & Stanovich, 2013), as they suggest that emotional intelligence influences both intuitive (System 1) and analytical (System 2) decision-making processes, with technology leadership acting as an external resource that supports rational and data-driven decisions. Since the mediation was not full, the findings suggest that while technology leadership facilitates decision-making, emotional intelligence remains a key factor, partially independent of technological influences.

 Furthermore, technology leadership also has a positive significant relationship on decision-making of the respondents. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends that specialized trainings intended to enhance educational technologies and digital tools be provided to school heads. Programs like introduction to advanced educational technologies should enhance technology leadership ensuring more efficient and adaptive leadership. Also, emotion-focused equipping programs should also be introduced. This includes offering training and support to help school heads maintain optimism and effectively appraise their emotions, enabling them to guide their actions with greater clarity. This collaboration should be based on shared experiences and ideas, ensuring that decisions are well-informed and aligned with the needs of the entire school community.

Lastly, future researchers are encouraged to conduct further investigations on enhancing school heads’ digital competencies and developing targeted programs that improve decision-making and overall school performance. Comparative studies across different educational settings may also provide insights into best practices for fostering adaptive and technology-driven decision-making among school leaders.

**CONSENT**

The author has requested and received approval from the respondents. Informed consent has been completed, signed and documented.

**ETHICAL APPROVAL**

This research underwent thorough evaluation by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC), ensuring adherence to ethical standards throughout the study. The researcher ensured voluntary participation without consequences, informed respondents about the study's purpose, and their right to withdraw. Written survey questionnaires treated personal information with privacy and were designed for easy understanding. Further, recruitment was ethical and transparent, avoiding high-risk situations. The study prioritized ethical standards such as voluntary participation, privacy protection, informed consent, and risk management throughout the data collection and writing phases. Additionally, it addressed ethical concerns like technological issues, plagiarism, fabrication, conflicts of interest, and authorship integrity. The aim is to uphold ethical standards, transparency, and accountability throughout the entire research process, ensuring the well-being of respondents while maintaining the academic integrity and credibility of the findings.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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