Exploration of Decision-making styles exercised by Heads of Secondary Schools in Punjab and the Effects of Gender on Decision-making

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Abstract

The intent of the study was to explore the various decision-making styles practiced by the heads of secondary schools in Punjab and to examine the effects of gender on decision-making styles prevailing amongst the secondary school head teachers in the districts of Sahiwal division, viz. Sahiwal, Okara and Pakpattan. A survey based on the opinions of the teachers working under different decision-making styles was conducted through a rating scale devised for the purpose and was utilized over a sample of 960 teachers. ANOVA and Chi-Square were applied to measure mean score, standard deviation and p-value less or equal to .05 was considered as significant. It was found that all the decision-making styles like rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant and spontaneous were being practiced by the heads regardless any gender discrimination with minor difference. Not a single decision-making style was specific to gender. There was no significant difference in the head teachers' use of decision-making style. Moreover, it was also found that rational decision-making style was the most opted style by both the genders. The only difference which subsists was that the ratio of rational decision-making style was slightly better among females. Therefore, the study recommends that the head teachers should contribute their preference to the rational decision-making style.

Keywords: Decision-making styles, rational decision-making style

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Introduction

Management is considered as an art. The manager has to perform this act deliberately with the sense of an artist. Decision-making is important in all the institutions as well as in the schools. Griffith (2004) & Shahzad, Ali, Hukamdad, Ghazi, and Khan (2010) claims that decision-making is a basic quantity of all administrative abilities. These abilities are; making all the decisions at institutional level, interpersonal and the instructive. The ability of decision making refers to selection of a suitable alternate in the light of data acquired from others. The interpersonal ability of a head refers to build relations with all stakeholders of the institution. The instructive ability refers to exchange data to understand what is going on inside and outside the institutions (Cohen, Fink, Gadon, Willits, and Josefowitz, 1992). The institutional achievements rely upon the nature of the decisions made by leaders (Robbins, Bergman, Stagg, & Coulter, 2009).

Decision-making is a process based on a few phases just as; "what to do and why" to address some specific objective (Nutt, 2008). A system of developing a last judgment from among the available choices is decision-making (Altunok, zpeynirct, Kazancoglu & Yilmaz, 2010; Donmez, Ugurlu and Comert, 2011). In the presence of any problem, the leader should resolve the issue by utilizing proper means. On the basis of findings of Oguz (2009), just resolving the issues is the sole technique to make a decision by school administration. In educational institutions the leaders every time require to take various actions to resolve the institutional problems. Dealing with decision making is the basic institutional requirement for a head. The process in which the best option is selected to achieve the institutional goals is decision making (Tat, et al. 2011). A best selection out of the two or more choices according to the criteria is a decision (Shahzad et al. 2010). Making the right decision is associated with the institutional head. A well reputed and an established organization generally takes after procedures of the decision-making. This process of decision-making comprises of identification, unfolding the problem and compiling data about the issue, discovering reasonable alternatives, picking the correct arrangement, assessing the entire procedure as far as checking whether the concerned arrangement is acceptable or not. The process of decision-making can be simulated watching the abilities of school heads these abilities comprising expertise on the premise of right-decision.

The significance of decision making reveals the decision-making styles by making a few questions like: -to what extent the significance of decision-making can be affected by the styles chosen by the decision-maker? In which way the substitutes are chosen (Bursalioglu, 1998)? Relatively different elements that can affect the decisionmaking are the capability, experience, level of staff and participation of specific experts of the institution. Similarly, the nature of decision-making styles can be perceived watching the conduct of school heads with their colleagues. This conduct may incorporate individual participation of the workers for dialogue on any issue, to have a comprehensive consultation with them, staying reluctant towards decision-making or taking sharp decisions without any discussion. Genuinely, Styles of making a decision depend on the approaches of decisionmaking, coordinated by Deniz (2002), these approaches are: the person, who has to execute decision-making style and make their choices sensibly. Leaders who abstain from settling on choices are probably going to hand over the decision-making power to others. Another group of individuals is still there who attempt to delay the decision-making frequently without any strong reason. Though there are few people who make decisions sharply even during the critical circumstances and under a series of limitation.

Regarding the arguments about decision-making styles, the question is still there, "Is there only a single style of decision-making"? Certainly, the leader of any institution is a person who is responsible for the process of decision-making which may hold various approaches of decision-making. With reference to Oguz (2009), decision-making is one of the best practices that an administrator needs to choose or utilize. To achieve the administrative objectives, the decision-making process plays a dynamic role, in which characteristics of the head and staff individually affect the procedure of decision-making. Various styles of decision-making are found in accordance with Scott & Bruce (1995) these approaches of decision-making areas; intuitive, dependent, rational, spontaneous, and avoidant.

A rational decision-making style is an approach in which the head settles on every decision intellectually and logically. The decision-making style, through which the head depends upon the thoughts of others, is dependent decision-making style. However, the leader settles on exact decisions rapidly by applying the feelings without any sound approach in intuitive decision-making style. Intuitive style is unconscious process of framework of data, which provides a quick and comprehensive judgment in the light of relations of complex examples of sequential and practical (Salas et al., 2010). Whereas, in avoidant decision-making style the decision-maker avoids from decision-making often as much as possible. In spontaneous decision-making style the decision-maker desires to make fast decision. The decision-maker wants to complete the procedure of decisionmaking as early as possible.

Relationship between decision-making styles and some other variables has been investigated by various researches. Dilmac & Bozgeyikli (2009) measured the connection between decision-making styles of newly appointed teachers and personal comfort. The relationship of anxiety with decision-making style was investigated by Bacanli & Surucu (2006). While the relationship of types of decisions with moral situation was also explored by Pennino (2002). A concise study with respect to the literature on basic leadership styles (Podrug, 2011; Haniffa & Ahmad, 2008) exposes that decision-making styles of a man are decided in making substitutes. The styles of decision-maker disclose the worth of the decision in a particular situation like; "what type of decision will probably be and how it will be executed".

Regarding school administration, decision-making styles of school heads are the origin of magisterial management of the institution. Schools can be made more efficient when the employees are well organized and competent regarding communication. Effective decision-making lies on school heads constantly regarding the school staff. In line with Pordrug (2011), different social institutions require different governing manners. With a view to achieve the institutional goals, institution should enhance their capacity of reasoning regarding various obligations. Students having different back grounds are affected by the decision-making styles of school heads. The personal traits of school heads and the teachers are attached to the decision-making styles. These attributes can range from person to person. Subsequently, everyone working inside the school is by a few means influenced by the school heads' decision-making. So the researcher was intended to Explore Decision-making styles of secondary school heads in the Punjab and effectiveness of gender on their decision-making.

The major purpose of this research was to explore decision-making styles that were being undertaken by the head teachers working at the secondary schools of Punjab and particularly to check the gender effect on decision-making styles. This area of study needs to be explored in depth for suggesting the most suitable decision making style for the heads of educational institutions. Therefore, this study is important to be conducted, that is why, the researcher thought it better to undertake this study. Since the school heads make a beeline to settle the decisions at their level towards the execution of the policies devised by the higher professionals. Therefore, decision-making and its styles have substantial effect on the quality of management. So, it becomes important for the researcher to know that how the school heads should make their decisions and to what extent the gender of head teachers affects decision-making.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, each person needs to make decisions in their everyday life. In the same way, the school heads also need to make decisions at their level to execute the policies directed by the higher authorities for the smooth running of the institutions. In this way, it turns out to be essential for the researcher to realize that how the school heads settle on their decisions and to what extent the gender of the heads affect the decision-making. Therefore, the researcher outlined this research to Explore Decision-Making styles of secondary school heads in Punjab and effect of gender on decision-making.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of this research were to discover the decision-making styles exercised by the head teachers and effect of gender on decision-making at secondary level.

The objectives of this research were as:

- 1. To identify decision-making styles practiced by the head teachers at secondary schools.
- 2. To find out the effects of head teachers' gender on their decision-making.

Research Questions

The following research questions have been framed to be tested:

- 1. Do the decision-making styles of head teachers differ at the secondary school level?
- 2. Does the effect of gender make a difference in the decision-making styles of head teachers?

Significance of the Study

The exploration of decision-making styles will guide the training and re-training of the school heads to make better decisions. It will also be useful in the skill development of the heads of schools for better management in secondary schools. Similarly, it may provide benchmark to enhance the quality of decision-making in the department of education and to overcome the educational deficiencies. In the same way, it will be helpful for policy makers, planners and authorities to make decisions appropriately. This research will be beneficial for skill development institutions and secondary school heads. It will guide the school heads to make better decisions at their level. Consequently, it may guide the school heads to achieve better performance in terms of school results. This research will help the decision-makers to adopt better decision-making style.

Research Design

This research is descriptive in nature based on a survey of the opinions of the teachers to explore the decision-making styles of their head teachers and the effect of gender on decision-making. To collect the relevant information from the teachers a Likert type rating scale was devised and utilized over the sample.

Population. This research was associated to the secondary and higher secondary schools both male and female in the province of the Punjab. The focus of this study was to include every one of the teachers teaching Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English, Urdu and Pak. studies at secondary level schools in the province of Punjab in the Public sector. There were 6,941 secondary and higher secondary schools in Punjab while 1,42,842 teachers were teaching in these schools. Teachers teaching to secondary classes of these schools of the province of Punjab constituted the population of this study.

Delimitation of the Study. Due to limited time and the budget the researcher delimited the study to the secondary and higher secondary schools of Sahiwal division in public sector of the province of Punjab and the teachers teaching English, Urdu, Pak. Studies, Physics, Chemistry and Biology to secondary classes who had to provide their perceptions about the decision-making styles of their heads.

Sampling. The number of the teachers as a sample was taken in accordance with Gay (2000) that to select a sample for the study from a broad population for descriptive research, wherever the population is greater than 100,000, the size of the sample more than 400 seems as appropriate. The comparison between subject's teachers cannot be made for the number of subject teachers was too meager in numbers. With the end goal of

the study at the first stage 32 government secondary and higher secondary schools representing each district of Sahiwal were randomly selected; 16 schools of males and 16 schools of females and further 8 schools from urban and 8 from rural area. From each school 10 teachers were randomly selected who were teaching different subjects like; English, Urdu, Pak. Studies, Physics, Chemistry and Biology to secondary classes (three from Natural sciences and three from social sciences) out of the pool of the teachers to acquire the perceptions about the decision-making style of their heads. To the tune of 320 teachers of government secondary schools from each district constituted the sample of the study. Subsequently, from 96 schools of Sahiwal Division, 960 teachers were chosen as the sample of the study.

Development of the Rating Scale. Containing 25 items a rating scale was devised making a selection out of the pool of items, arranged out of the exploratory work to recognize the decision-making styles of the secondary school heads. The items of the rating scale were finalized by the researcher in consultation with the experts of the area. The sequence and the wordings of items were additionally got authenticated by the specialists before the finalization of the rating scale.

Pilot testing of the Rating Scale and its Reliability. Pilot testing was conducted by applying the rating scale to a segment of the population containing a sample of 100 respondent teachers 50 from boy's secondary school and 50 from girl's secondary school excluded in the sample of the study. The reliability of the rating scale was got determined through SPSS by calculating Cronbach alpha which was .79.

Administration of the Rating Scale. For the administration of the rating scale and collection of data the researcher provided the rating scale by hand and also through the friends to the respondent teachers at their work settings to get the perception about the decision-making style of their head teachers, where feasible and where it was not possible, the researcher posted the rating scale with self-addressed envelope to the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretations. A total of 960 teachers were chosen as a sample for this study from the three district of Sahiwal Division who were teaching to the secondary classes to respond to the rating scale while 708 teachers did fill them. Among them 222(31.4%) were chosen from Sahiwal, 220(31.1%) from Okara and 266(37.6%) from Pakpattan. Out of 708 respondents, 410 (57.9%) were male and 278 (39.3%) were female respondents while 20 (2.8%) respondents did not disclose their gender. Out of 708 teachers, 285(40.3%) were teaching in urban schools, and 378(53.4%) were teaching in rural areas while 45(6.4%) did not mention the locality of their school.

The congregated information was entered and analyzed by utilizing Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22) to recognize decision-making styles practiced by secondary school heads and the effects of the gender of head teacher on decision-making. ANOVA was applied to measure the perception of the teachers regarding decision-making styles of their head teachers and Chi-square to check the gender effect on decision-making. The findings and conclusions were drawn from the analysis of the collected data. Suggestions and recommendations were made consequently. The following table shows the perception of the teachers about the decision-making style of the head teacher.

Table 1

Comparison of head teachers' decision-making styles according to the perception of the teachers

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Sig.
	Between Groups	2.098	2	1.049	4.326	.014
Rational	Within Groups	163.714	675	.243		
	Total	165.813	677			
	Between Groups	.695	2	.348	1.421	.242
Intuitive	Within Groups	164.935	674	.245		
	Total	165.631	676			
	Between Groups	.678	2	.339	1.387	.250
Dependent	Within Groups	166.369	681	.244		
	Total	167.047	683			
	Between Groups	.406	2	.203	1.258	.285
Avoidant	Within Groups	109.711	680	.161		
	Total	110.117	682			
	Between Groups	.152	2	.076	.702	.496
Spontaneous	Within Groups	73.487	678	.108		
-	Total	73.639	680			

Table 1 shows the perception of teachers regarding decision making styles of head teachers using One-way ANOVA between group analysis of variance. The table reveals that on the basis of style distribution over decisions, it seems that rational decision-making style of head teachers differ in exercising decision-making style as F (2, 675) 4.326, P= .014 < .05. Regarding intuitive decision-making style, it is divulged that intuitive decision-making style does not differ from all the other styles as F (2, 674) 1.421, P= .242> .05. In response to the dependent decision-making the difference does not exist as F (2, 681) 1.387, P= .250 > .05. With reference to the avoidant decision-making style, the head teachers' style of making a decision does not differ from other styles as F (2, 680) 1.258, P= .285> .05 and regarding spontaneous decision-making style the same is the case with this style, the difference also does not exist in the decision-making style as F (2, 678).702, P= .496 > .05.

For the measurement of nominal and ordinal scale, Non-parametric techniques are usually applied and for interval and ratio scale parametric techniques are applied. When data represent a nominal scale then Chi-square is suitable for analysis. It means that Chi-square is applied when data signifies nominal scale and that is the same case of this research. The analysis of the opinions of the both male and female respondent teachers regarding decision-making styles is given below; while in this analysis N stands for total number of respondent teachers, SD stands for Standard Deviation, df stands for Degree of Freedom, α for Significant Value, x^2 stands for Chi-square value.

Table 2

Gender wise comparison on the rational decision-making styles of head teachers on the basis of the perception of teachers

Gender	Rational	Rational		
	No	Yes		
Male	174	214	388	
	44.8%	55.2%	100.0%	
Female	106	165	271	
	39.1%	60.9%	100.0%	
Total	280	379	659	
	42.5%	57.5%	100.0%	

Table 2 shows that 214(55.2%) male respondents out of the total of 388, responded in the favor of rationale decision style and 174(44.8%) male respondents opposed to the rational decision making style. In the same way, 165(60.9%) were female respondents out of the total of 271 female respondents, were in the favor of rational decision making style whereas 106(39.1%) female respondents remained against the rational decision making style.

Table 3

Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Rational Decision- making style

1	1				0 2
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.	Exact Sig.	Exact Sig.
			(2-sided)	(2-sided)	(1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.145 ^a	1	.143		
Continuity Correction ^b	1.916	1	.166		
Likelihood Ratio	2.151	1	.143		
Fisher's Exact Test				.150	.083
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.141	1	.143		
N of Valid Cases	659				

Table 3 shows Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Rational Decision-making style

Total $\chi^2 = 2.145$, (df) = 1, p = .150, $\alpha = .05$

Conclusion: χ^2 (1, N=659) = 2.145, p = .150 > .05

According to these findings here P = .150 and is greater than P = .05, therefore it could be concluded that there was not a significant association of gender towards the rational decision-making style.

Table 4

Gender wise comparison on the intuitive decision-making styles of head teachers on the basis of the perception of teachers

	Intuitive		Total	
Gender	No	Yes		
Male	229	162	391	
	58.6%	41.4%	100.0%	

Female	144	124	268	
	53.7%	46.3%	100.0%	
Total	373	286	659	
	56.6%	43.4%	100.0%	

Table 4 shows that 391 male respondents responded regarding the intuitive decisionmaking style, in which 162 (41.4%) male respondents responded positively about the intuitive decision-making style whereas 229(58.6%) male respondents provided negative response as against the rational decision making style. Similarly, 268 female respondents responded regarding intuitive decision-making style, about half of the total respondents that is 124(46.3%) female respondents were in the favor of intuitive decision making style. However, 144(53.7%) female respondents were against the intuitive decision making style.

	Value	alue df	Asymp.	Exact Sig.	Exact Sig.
			Sig. (2-sided)	(2-sided)	(1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.514 ^a	1	.219		
Continuity Correction ^b	1.324	1	.250		
Likelihood Ratio	1.512	1	.219		
Fisher's Exact Test				.231	.125
Linear-by-Linear	1.512	1	.219		
Association					
N of Valid Cases	659				

Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Intuitive Decision- making style

Table 5 shows Chi-Square Distribution regarding Teachers' Responses about Intuitive Decision- making style

Total $\chi^2 = 1.514$, (df) = 1, p = .231, $\alpha = .05$

Conclusion: χ^2 (1, N=659) = 1.514, p = .231 > .05

According to these findings here P = .231 and is greater than P = .05, therefore it could be concluded that there was not a significant association of gender towards the Intuitive decision-making style.

Table 6

Table 5

Gender wise comparison on the dependent decision-making styles of head teachers on the basis of the perception of teachers

	Dependent		Total
Gender	No	Yes	
Male	170	223	393
	43.3%	56.7%	100.0%
Female	114	157	271
	42.1%	57.9%	100.0%
Total	284	380	664

42.8%	57.2%	100.0%

The table 6 shows that there were 393 male respondents who responded, out of 393 male respondents, 223(56.7%) male respondents provided their response in favor of the dependent decision making style as well as 170(43.3%) male respondents provided their point of view against the dependent decision making style. likewise, out of 271 female respondents, 157(57.9%) female respondents were in the favor of dependent decision making style whereas 114(42.1%) female respondents were against the dependent decision making style.

Table 7

Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Dependent Decision- making style

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.	Exact Sig.	Exact Sig.
			(2-sided)	(2-sided)	(1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.093ª	1	.761		
Continuity Correction ^b	.051	1	.822		
Likelihood Ratio	.093	1	.760		
Fisher's Exact Test				.811	.411
Linear-by-Linear Association	.093	1	.761		
N of Valid Cases	664				

Table 7 shows Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Dependent Decision- making style

Total χ^2 = .093, (df) = 1, p = .811, α = .05

Conclusion: χ^2 (1, N=664) = .093, p = .811 > .05

According to these findings here P = .811 and is greater than P = .05, therefore it could be concluded that there was not a significant association of gender towards the Dependent decision-making style.

Table 8

Showing Gender wise comparison on the Avoidant decision- making styles of head teachers according to the perception of teachers

	Avoidant		Total	
Gender	No	Yes		
Male	319	78	397	
	80.4%	19.6%	100.0%	
Female	210	57	267	
	78.7%	21.3%	100.0%	
Total	529	135	664	

Qamar & Rashid	159

20.3%

79.7%

Table 8 shows that there are 397 male respondents, the very short number of the respondents out of the total 397 male respondents, only 78(19.6%) male respondents responded positively regarding avoidant decision making style and the majority of the total respondents as 319 (80.4%) male respondents responded negatively regarding to the avoidant decision making style. By taking into consideration the female respondents, total of 267 female respondents who responded, a little amount of the female respondents as only 57 (21.3%) female respondents are found in the favor of avoidant decision making style whereas a huge amount of female respondents like; 210 (78.7%) are hereby observed against the avoidant decision making style.

	Value	ValuedfAsymp. Sig.Exact Sig.	Value df	Exact Sig.	Exact Sig.
			(2-sided)	(2-sided)	(1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.285ª	1	.593		
Continuity Correction ^b	.190	1	.663		
Likelihood Ratio	.284	1	.594		
Fisher's Exact Test				.623	.330
Linear-by-Linear	.285	1	.594		
Association					
N of Valid Cases	664				

Chi-Sayare Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Avoidant Decision- making style

Table 9 shows Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Avoidant Decision- making style

Total χ^2 = .285, (df) = 1, p = .623, α = .05

Conclusion: χ^2 (1, N=664) = .285, p = .623 > .05

According to these findings here P = .623 and is greater than P = .05, therefore it could be concluded that there the head teachers do not differ on the basis of gender towards the Dependent decision-making style than other decision-making styles.

Table 10

Table 9

Showing Gender wise comparison on the spontaneous decision making styles of head teachers according to the perception of teachers

	Spontaneous		Total
Gender	No	Yes	
Male	352	39	391
	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Female	225	45	270
	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	577	84	661
	87.3%	12.7%	100.0%

100.0%

The table 10 shows as 391 males were taken as respondents in order to check that how many males were in the favor of Spontaneous Decision Making Style and how many were against. The obtained results were just as, only 39 (10.0%) male respondents responded positively regarding to the spontaneous decision making style and 352(90.0%) male respondents responded negatively. The same was observed regarding the female respondents, there were 270 female respondents who responded, out of 270 respondents were 45 (16.7%) female respondents who observed in favor of spontaneous decision making style whereas 225(83.3%) female respondents provided their response in negation against the spontaneous decision making style.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig.	Exact Sig.	Exact Sig.
			(2-sided)	(2-sided)	(1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.448 ^a	1	.011		
Continuity Correction ^b	5.859	1	.015		
Likelihood Ratio	6.337	1	.012		
Fisher's Exact Test				.013	.008
Linear-by-Linear	6.438	1	.011		
Association					
N of Valid Cases	661				

Г	ab	le	1	1

Table 11 shows Chi-Square Distribution about Teachers' Responses about Spontaneous Decision-making style

Total $\chi^2 = 6.448$, (df) = 1, p = .013, $\alpha = .05$

Conclusion: χ^2 (1, N=661) = 6.448, p = .013 < .05

According to these findings here P = .013 and is less than P = .05, therefore it could be concluded that there the head teachers differ on the basis of gender towards the Spontaneous decision-making style than other decision-making styles.

Conclusions

According to the perception of the teachers and as per findings of the research with the help of a rating scale, it was intent of the researcher to explore the decision-making styles of the head teachers of the Sahiwal division. As per the results, the five decision-making styles of the head teachers have been subjected to ANOVA comparison. The Rational decision-making style is found to be more inclined style of the head teachers of the Sahiwal Division as the p-value for the Rational decision-making style was .014 respectively which is less than .05. Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant and Spontaneous decision-making styles are not significant as per perceptions of the teachers as respective

value of P-values are .243, .250, .285 and .496 which are more than .05. On the basis of p-value it can be concluded that the head teachers of Sahiwal Division differ regarding rational decision-making style than the other decision-making styles because p-value .014 was less than the significant p-value .05.

In the end, addressing the research question No.2, "Does the effect of gender make a difference in the decision making style of head teachers"? It was concluded keeping in view the comparison of decision-making styles as perceived by the gender of teachers that the p-value is significant for spontaneous decision-making style. Other four styles of decision-making are found to be non-significant as the perceived and practiced decision-making styles does not differ because of the P-values .15 respectively for Rational, .231 for Intuitive, .811 for Dependent and .623 for Avoidant decision-making styles do not differ significantly.

Recommendations

The following recommendations could be put forward out of the findings; Decision making should be taken as a skill rather than egoistical approach, while making a decision all procedural steps be operationalized for effective and uniform decision making. Rational decision-making style should be used as opposed to intuitive, dependent and spontaneous decision-making style in priority basis as well as the decision-makers should abstain from utilizing avoidant decision-making style.

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