

IMPACTS OF RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY IN MANAGING PRE-RETIREMENT ANXIETY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

Pre-retirement anxiety is a common psychological concern among teachers approaching retirement age. This study examined the impacts of rational emotive behaviour therapy (REBT) in managing pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State. This study was anchored on the propositions of disengagement theory.

A pre-test-post-test control group quasi-experimental design with a factorial matrix was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all secondary school teachers in Oyo State. Participants were randomly assigned into one experimental groups and one control group: (REBT and Control). The instruments were used to collect data: A stimulus response instruments (REBT Training Packages) and response instruments (Pre-Retirement Anxiety Scale ($\alpha = 0.86$)). Two hypotheses were tested at a significance level of 0.05. Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

Findings revealed significant main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers ($F_{(2,70)} = 7.416, P < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.186$). Participants exposed to REBT ($\bar{x} = 58.638$) had the highest pre-retirement anxiety mean score and control group ($\bar{x} = 45.126$). Gender had a significant main effect on retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers ($F_{(1,70)} = 4.914, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.070$), male participants displayed higher mean ($\bar{x} = 55.25$) in pre-retirement anxiety than their female counterparts ($\bar{x} = 47.37$). findings revealed that REBT reduced pre-retirement anxiety. Therefore, it is recommended for counsellors to adopt REBT in assisting teachers to overcome retirement anxiety.

Keywords: Pre-retirement, Anxiety, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Gender.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has experienced diverse socioeconomic changes over the past decade, consisting of issues associated with getting old and retiring. The government's incapability to cater adequately for the needs of retirees is obvious, as many cannot sustain themselves and their families. Retirees frequently bitch about the loss of dedication from the government to pay their retirement entitlements on time, leading to demonstrations to generate sympathy and cognisance about their plights. Some retirees slump while waiting in long queues to receive their benefits. The cost of healthcare in Retirement is also high, as people tend to get sick more frequently as they age (Orhungur, 2018). As we advance, the desire for a break from our daily work routine becomes increasingly apparent. Our physical and mental capabilities can become exhausted, resulting in diminished motivation and efficacy. At such junctures, many people find Retirement to be an appealing alternative. Retirement is the stage in a person's life when they permanently cease their professional life (Chris, 2018). According to Edet, Okon, and Arah (2019), retirement refers to the conclusion of one's career and it is the shift from being actively engaged in work to actively embracing leisure activities.

Anxiety is a state of being characterised by feelings of concern, fear, and uneasiness. It is often a generic and unfocused response that is exaggerated in reaction to a situation that is subjectively perceived as threatening or dangerous (Temitope, 2018). Temitope (2018) stated that while anxiety can be appropriate in certain situations, excessive and prolonged anxiety can lead to the manifestation of anxiety-related behaviours in an individual. Anxiety and fear are distinct



emotions. As a result, anxiety frequently arises in response to an unknown or novel threat, which may be caused by internal conflicts, feelings of insecurity, or suppressed impulses.

Pre-retirement anxiety is a significant psychological issue faced by many professionals, including teachers. As they approach retirement, concerns about financial stability, loss of professional identity, and changes in daily routines can lead to increased levels of anxiety. Retirement is the official cessation of an employee's involvement in their work. Ode (2019) identified the following factors as significant contributors to retirement anxiety: Challenges include managing time effectively, relying solely on current wage, difficulty in finding suitable housing, uncertainty about how to handle pension funds or gratuities, and the influence of friends and family.

The issue of retirement anxiety has become a prominent concern in Nigeria, with scholars, professionals, and researchers focusing their attention on it. The topic has garnered significant interest due to the numerous difficulties that teachers encounter when moving from work to retirement. These challenges lead to feelings of anxiety and stress as they approach this stage. The emotions experienced by these employees have an impact on their job performance and productivity (Alpaslan, 2019). Many teachers often feel anxious and concerned about retirement due to a critical assessment of the difficult conditions faced by retired adults in Nigeria. Their anxieties and concerns can have a detrimental effect on their ability to complete tasks, resulting in reduced productivity and efficacy. Each hired teacher harbours specific anxieties on the obstacles associated with retiring (Johnson, 2019). This study examines the use of rational emotive behaviour therapy in addressing pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State.

Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) is an effective therapeutic approach for managing pre-retirement anxiety. The fundamental principle behind REBT is that our cognitive processes and belief systems significantly impact our emotions and actions in response to various situations. Regarding pre-retirement anxiety, we can utilise Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) to recognise and confront illogical ideas that are contributing to our feelings of concern. As an illustration, we may possess unreasonable convictions that we would experience unhappiness or lack of fulfilment following our retirement (Shafi'abadi & Naseri, 2019).

Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) is a cognitive behavioural therapy that operates under the assumption that individuals generate irrational fundamental beliefs as a result of their interpretations of various events. REBT places a major emphasis on addressing illogical core beliefs and understanding the connections between cognition, emotion, and behaviour in order to improve patient outcomes and provide effective therapy (Jena, 2018). REBT has been utilised to enhance and address diverse diseases, whether through group interventions or individual approaches (Jena, 2018).

According to Stoun (2019), cognitive and emotive processes are connected because irrational thoughts lead to emotional perplexity. REBT theory posits that emotive disorders are caused by four irrational beliefs: demandingness, catastrophising, frustration intolerance, and universal condemnation of human worth (Thompson & Brown, 2019). Typically, this treatment strategy involves three sorts of activities: (1) identifying irrational views, (2) distinguishing logical beliefs from irrational ones, and (3) questioning irrational beliefs (Shafi'abadi & Naseri, 2019).

According to Spencer (2019), REBT is a highly successful intervention technique for decreasing intense motivations and actions. The primary objective of (REBT) is to replace illogical ideals with a fresh set of rational ideas. The primary objectives of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) are to help individuals reduce emotional disturbances, diminish self-defeating behaviours, and enhance self-actualization in order to achieve better happiness in their life (Stoun, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Retirement is a threat for many teachers who may not know what to do with their lives after leaving active service. This can cause problems for those about to retire and those who still have many years left in their career owing to a lack of preparedness for Retirement. These make people work



under anxiety about what is to become their fate in the future, which could hurt their well-being. Retirement often comes with reduced income and when one's monthly expenditure is far greater than what they received as wages while working. Thousands of teachers in Oyo State have retired with delayed gratuities, causing anxiety among those still in active service and even leading to social dysfunction in their families. This has also resulted in negative attitudes towards work, such as; embezzlement of government funds, lateness to work, and falsification of documents, all in an attempt to find something to fall back on after Retirement. Hence, this study examined the impacts of rational emotive behaviour therapy in managing pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the Impacts of rational emotive behaviour therapy in managing pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state. Specifically, the study:

1. examine the main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State,
2. determine the main effect of gender on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State,

Research Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study at a 0.05 level of significance:

- H₀1. There is no significant main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State
- H₀2. There is no significant main effect of gender on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Disengagement Theory

Cumming and Henry proposed the disengagement theory in 1961, which is a sociological theory that asserts that as people age, they naturally withdraw and disengage from societal tasks and relationships. The disengagement theory is a social theory of getting old that indicates that as people method the later ranges of lifestyles, they clearly withdraw from societal roles and duties, mainly to reduce interactions and involvement with the outdoor international. This principle proposes that disengagement is a mutual technique, with individuals and society contributing to the disengagement. As teachers approach retirement age, they may anticipate transitioning from their active teaching roles to a period of reduced work engagement. This anticipation could trigger anxiety and uncertainty about the changes that retirement may bring, both personally and professionally. The disengagement theory suggests that individuals naturally withdraw from social interactions and responsibilities. In the context of teachers, this withdrawal could manifest as a gradual reduction in participation in school-related activities, interactions with colleagues, and students' engagement.

Empirical Review

Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and Pre-retirement Anxiety

In their study, Raj and Dean (2019) investigated the efficacy of rational emotive and behavioural therapy in addressing anxiety and depression among Catholic priests in Southern India. The study's findings demonstrated that rational emotive and behavioural therapy had a noteworthy impact on both the anxiety and depression levels of the participants. Lyons and Woods (2022) provided the results of a meta-analysis of 70 studies on the effects of Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT). The study included 236 comparisons of REBT to baseline, control groups,



Cognitive Behaviour Modification, Behaviour Therapy, and other psychotherapies. The findings demonstrated that individuals who got Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) showed significant improvement compared to their baseline assessments and the groups who did not get training.

Research has shown that REBT can effectively reduce anxiety by promoting rational thinking and coping strategies. A study by Byrne et al. (2021) found that REBT significantly reduced anxiety and depression among retirees by helping them reframe their thoughts about retirement. Similarly, empirical evidence suggests that REBT's focus on cognitive restructuring can lead to long-term improvements in emotional well-being (David et al., 2022). A study by Wrosch and Freund (2021) examined the effects of cognitive-behavioral interventions, including REBT, on pre-retirement anxiety, finding significant reductions in anxiety and improvements in overall well-being. Conversely, REBT has been shown to effectively reduce specific anxieties related to retirement planning and the transition process (David et al., 2022).

Gender and Pre-retirement Anxiety

Taylor (2020) discovered that gender influences pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers. This finding consistent with the findings of Pajare and Schunk (2021), who discovered that gender has a significant impact on pre-retirement anxiety among teachers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Previous research suggested that pre-retirement anxiety is significantly influenced by gender differences, which can be attributed to a lack of desire. The idea is that older teachers possess knowledge about pre-retirement worry, whereas younger teachers are less susceptible to experiencing pre-retirement anxiety (Palmer & Gyllensten, 2018). Studies on gender disparities have shown that male instructors exhibit higher levels of pre-retirement anxiety in comparison to their female counterparts. In a separate study examining the reasons behind the observed gender disparity in pre-retirement anxiety, Baba, Garba and Zakariyah (2019) proposed that a potential explanation for the notable increase in the difference between genders in average instruction when evaluating social relationships is a divergence in attitudes between genders. Other research investigating the causes of gender disparities in pre-retirement anxiety yielded varied outcomes, suggesting a potential greater level of aversion among females.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adapted experimental design with pre- and post-tests and a control group with a factorial matrix to address pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state. The instruments were utilised to gather data for the investigation.

Population of the Study

The target audience of this study covered all senior secondary school teachers in Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The participants for the study were selected using a multi-stage selection technique. The study recruited 82 secondary school instructors. The participants were male and female public secondary school teachers with high pre-retirement anxiety who were identified using a pre-retirement anxiety questionnaire.

Research Instruments

Pre-retirement Anxiety Scale

The Pre-retirement Anxiety Scale was adapted. The scale consisted of 23 items and a four-point Likert scale for responses. Oluseyi and Olufemi invented the scale in 2015. Oluseyi and Olufemi

(2015) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. PAS includes both direct and reverse-scored items based on whether they are phrased positively or negatively.

Procedure for Data Collection

The research lasted eight weeks, with eight sessions in which the researcher and participants interacted. This occurred in five stages: recruiting, pre-testing, treatment, post-testing, and evaluation. The researcher distributed consent forms to participants chosen for the study. This was done to ensure their cooperation during the treatment period.

Method of Data Analysis

The primary statistical approach utilised in this study was analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). At a significance threshold of 0.05, the ANCOVA was employed to evaluate the hypotheses about the main impact and interaction effects of treatment and moderating variables.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical committee of the Tai Solarin University of Education in Ijebu, Ogun state, approved this work. The researcher requested permission from the principals of the selected schools. Researchers ensure informed consent from secondary school teachers before enrolling in studies, providing clear information about objectives, procedures, potential dangers, benefits, and voluntary participation. Confidentiality measures protect privacy, and investigations involve vulnerable groups. The researcher also sought the support of two counsellors in the selected secondary schools who served as the research assistants while administering the treatment to the experimental group.

RESULTS

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state.

Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANCOVA) demonstrating the primary effect of treatment groups on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	9262.495	11	842.045	12.214	.000	.674 ^a
Intercept	3744.453	1	3744.453	50.441	.000	.437
Pre-test	132.918	1	132.918	1.928	.170	.029
Treatment	1022.532	2	511.266	7.416	.001	.186
Gender	338.776	1	338.776	4.914	.030	.070

Table 1 reveals that there is a significant main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety of participants; $F_{(2,70)} = 7.416$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.186$. Hence null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, rational emotive behavioural therapy had significant effect on pre-retirement anxiety. Size of effect reveals that treatment accounted for 18.6% ($\eta^2 = 0.186$) variance in participants' pre-retirement anxiety. To provide additional justification for the margin of difference between the treatment and control groups, a pair-wise comparison using Bonferonni was performed, and the results are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Bonferonni Pair-wise Comparison demonstrating substantial differences among several treatment groups and the control group.

(I) Treatment	(J) Treatment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^d
REBT group (mean= 58.638)	Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy group	5.660 ^{a,b}	4.732	.708
	Control group	13.512 ^{a,*}	3.050	.000
Control group (mean= 45.126)	REBT group	-13.512 ^{b,*}	3.050	.000

Table 2 shows that after adjusting for the influence of pre-test on pre-retirement anxiety, experimental group (Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy) with mean= 58.638, displayed the highest pre-retirement anxiety and control group with mean= 45.126. By implication, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy appears to be more potent in reducing participants pre-retirement anxiety. The coefficient of determination (R-squared =.674) suggests that group differences account for 67.4% of the total variation in participants' pre-retirement anxiety levels.

Hypothesis Two: There will be no significant main effects of gender on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state.

Table 3: Bonferonni Pairwise shows a comparison of pre-retirement anxiety levels among secondary school teachers based on their gender.

(I) Gender	(J) Gender	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^d
Female (mean= 47.37)	Male	-7.882 ^{*,b}	2.433	.002
Male (mean= 55.25)	Female	7.882 ^{*,c}	2.433	.002

Table 1 demonstrates a significant main effect of gender on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo state ($F(1,70)= 4.914, p<0.05, \eta^2= 0.070$). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests that there is a considerable difference in pre-retirement anxiety between male and female participants. The table also shows that participants' gender accounted for a 7% shift in reducing their level of pre-retirement worry, indicating that gender had a moderate effect on the variance of their pre-retirement anxiety score. To better understand the difference, a pair-wise comparison using Bonferonni was performed, and the results are displayed in table 3 above.

Table 3 shows that after adjusting the influence of pretest on pre-retirement anxiety, male participants had more pre-retirement anxiety (mean=55.25) than female participants (mean=47.37). By implication, male teachers had a higher tendency to exhibit pre-retirement worry than female counterparts.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In hypothesis one, it was revealed that there was significant main effect of treatment on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State. This implies that



there was a significant difference in the pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State. This is in line with the findings of Jena (2018), who found that REBT strongly focused on irrational core beliefs, the relationships among cognition, emotion and behaviour has been used for the improvement and treatment of pre-retirement anxiety, whether in the form of group treatments or as individual methodologies. Raj and Dean (2019) examined the effectiveness of rational emotive and behaviour therapy on burnout and anxiety among Catholic priests in Southern India. The results of the study showed that rational emotive and behaviour therapy had significant effect on both the burnout and anxiety of the participants.

Moreover, the hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant main effect of gender on pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State. This implies that there is a significant difference in the pre-retirement anxiety among male and female secondary school teachers in Oyo State. The Scheffe post-hoc analysis further showed that male secondary school teachers had the highest pre-retirement anxiety posttest score, followed by female secondary school teachers. The importance of examining pre-retirement anxiety in relation to gender is based primarily on the socio-cultural differences between male and female teachers. Gender differences in pre-retirement anxiety have been examined for some time resulting in a substantial body of literature. This result negates the findings of Arogundade (2021), who pointed out that there is no significant gender difference in pre-retirement anxiety and retention in various subjects while others found significant difference with either the male or the female in pre-retirement anxiety. In the same vein, the finding is consistent with the findings of Pajare and Schunk (2021), who discovered that gender has a significant impact on pre-retirement anxiety among teachers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Conclusion from the Findings

Based on the findings of this study, it is important to manage the persistent pre-retirement anxiety experienced by secondary school teachers during their pre-retirement process. The study explored the effectiveness of one psychotherapies, rational emotive behaviour therapy in managing pre-retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers in Oyo State. The study also examined the moderating effects of gender of the participants on the treatment after they were exposed to some intervention packages in a controlled environment. Data were collected and subjected to analysis. The results showed that rational emotive behaviour therapy was effective in managing pre-retirement anxiety among teachers..

Recommendations

1. Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) should be included in the school system for secondary school programme. It help to reduce the likelihood of retirement anxiety among secondary school teachers.
2. Secondary school teachers should be counselled to see retirement as a new chapter in their lives rather than the end of their working life.
3. The employers should organise seminars and workshops for the teachers to provide information about pension plans, health insurance and other benefits that may change after retirement.

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