Efficacy of Emotional Intelligence Therapy in Managing Retirement Anxiety among Teachers in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State

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Abstract

The study examined emotional intelligence therapy in managing retirement anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State. True experimental research design which involved non-equivalent pre-test-post-test control group design was adopted for the study which consisted of two experimental groups and one control group. To address the problem of the study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study consisted of 220 public school teachers in Asaba metropolis who had two (2) years or less to their retirement period either by age or length of service. Out of which, 88 were selected using multi-stage random sampling, and this make up the sample of the study. Data were collected using self-structured scale titled; Anxiety Scale (AS). Three experts examined the instrument, each for face and content validity. The instrument was administered on thirty teachers outside the sample of the study and Cronbach Statistics was used to analyze the data collected, and the reliability coefficient scores obtained was 0.89. The Anxiety Scale (AS) was used to identify and measure retirement anxiety and emotional intelligence of public school teachers approaching retirement period. The treatment intervention lasted for a period of six weeks of two sessions weekly lasting for forty-five (45) minutes per session. Data collected were analyzed using paired sample t-test, one and two way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the Least Significant Difference (LSD) Posthoc multiple comparisons at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that Emotional intelligence was efficacious in managing retirement anxiety amongst teachers in Asaba metropolis, Delta State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, counselling psychologists should apply Emotional intelligence therapy in managing retirement anxiety among teachers.

Keywords: Anxiety, Retirement, Emotional Intelligence, Teachers, and Efficacy

Introduction

Individuals go through many changes during their lifetime, but the change from work to retirement can be very challenging. People view retirement differently and is fraught with different experiences for different people. While some individuals view it positively and ready to accept it, others view it negatively with great anxiety and never wish it comes around them. Retirement is an inevitable stage in the working life cycle of every teacher, and it can be a time of pleasure or difficulty, depending on how well one prepares for it. Most times, the uncertainties of life can make people apprehensive of the future. A public school

teacher who is entering into retirement after active service is entering a new chapter of life that has its peculiar challenges. Individuals in the teaching profession are expected to be prepared for it, but many teachers are most times engrossed with their daily teaching routine, writing lesson notes, and preparing students for both internal and external examinations amongst others. Without preparing for retirement. They may suddenly realize that retirement is approaching and resort to finding ways to remain in service.

According to MacBean (2017), retirement ought to be an era of rest from the strain and toil from work, when one devotes a great time to family, old schoolmates, and pleasurable activities. A public school teacher who has put in a reasonable period at work will surely get tired of working. The only way out for the teacher is to go on retirement. There is no way one can choose to retire irrespective of one's age or length of service if the means of livelihood for the retirement period is not satisfactorily and adequately provided for.

Anxiety is an unpleasant state of uneasiness, uncomfortable, and unpleasant feelings that an individual experiences when facing demanding or fearful situations. Asamoah (2012) asserted that retirement is an unavoidable phase of life event, bringing with it many challenges in terms of adjustments and changes in lifestyle, self-worth, and relationships. Retirement anxiety affects millions of Nigerian teachers every year, especially those on the verge of retirement. Questions like; what will I do with my time after retirement? Do I have enough money or financial security to continue to live on when I retire? Have I saved enough? Will my spending have to be drastically curtailed? Can I depend on my national health insurance providers for medical attention? Can I rely on my pension administrator or government for prompt payment of my gratuity and pension? Teachers who are approaching retirement need assurance and answers to these questions.

Most teachers who are about to retire may have anxiety about the changes that will emanate from a tedious work role to a less or no work role. Insufficient financial funds, and the psychological fulfillment of going to work and coming back home. This would no longer be there. The politics behind retiring teachers, often without notice, late disbursement of gratuity, irregular payment of pension, and other psychological agony which would be faced have made many teachers according to Fajana, (2016) perceive retirement as a death sentence. In essence, many would-be retirees may be anxious about what will become of them after retirement. For instance, someone who has been living in affluence or can manage his/her earnings from salary collected with some other fringe benefits may have cause to be anxious. Knowing that these benefits would no longer be enjoyed after retirement. The unimplemented retirement policy of government and other retirement service administrators

on the one hand, and the situation confronted by workers on the other hand, are evidently anxiety provoking, particularly to teachers who are yet to retire or be retired. Consequently, there's a need to manage retirement anxiety among teachers, and emotional intelligence therapy was used in this study to manage it.

Emotional Intelligence Therapy refers to the ability to understand one's emotions and that of others which may include self-awareness, self-control, self-assessment, self-evaluation, achievement, adaptability, orientation, cognitive competence, conceptual thinking, strategy tools, problem-solving, decision-making, and stress management (Goleman, 2002). Aremu (2007) opined that emotional intelligence is the management of one's emotions in such a way that those emotions do not affect the individual and others in daily living. In essence, it is the ability to understand oneself and others, as well as the surrounding events. Emotional Intelligence was propounded by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It includes abilities and skills to recognize one's feelings and those of others, and being able to motivate oneself and persist in challenging situations, to control impulses and delay gratification, and to regulate one's mood (Goleman), 1995). It is characterized as an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures such as retirement. Concerning this study, Emotional Intelligence Therapy is a collection of such skills as self-control, determination, self-motivation, and sensitivity to the emotions of others. Understanding one's emotions and those of others improves effective working relationships, reduces anxiety, navigating career paths even after retirement, getting ahead despite retirement challenges, mentoring and coaching, life balance, dealing with challenges, and relating with different people (Aldwin & Levenson, 2011). Prospective teachers' retirees who possess these are likely to be healthier, less anxious, less depressed, and more productive at work and have better relationships before and after retirement. The study therefore examined the efficacy of Emotional Intelligence therapy in managing Retirement Anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis.

Statement of problem

Retirement anxiety affects millions of Nigerian teachers every year, especially those on the verge of retirement. The way government retires teachers without following the policy of sixty years of age or thirty-five years of service, most often without notice. Late disbursement of gratuity, irregular payment of pension, and other psychological agony that would be faced could cause many public school teachers to perceive retirement as a death sentence.

The disbursement of pensions and gratuities to pensioners, especially in Delta State has been very irregular. Thus, pension liabilities have accumulated so much that the government has

not been able to pay retirees regularly. No doubt, it is to alleviate the sufferings and pains that are associated with retirement benefits and disbursement that informed the then-presidential decision and initiative in 2004 to reform the Pension Act. This is to fashion out a veritable and less cumbersome manner of dispensing pension benefits without pains. Despite, the 2004 pension reform, the pension fund is still characterized by outright corruption and embezzlement, mismanagement, and diversion of funds (Garba & Mamman, 2014). All these can bring untold hardship and even death to many retirees, thereby making retirement something that is dreaded by prospective retirees. Because of this, many teachers are ready to do anything to avoid leaving the service, even after attaining the retirement age. These challenging situations may account for age alteration and other fraudulent practices among teachers to remain longer in the service.

The researcher has observed that the challenges faced by retirees in Nigeria may cause anxiety to many teachers who are approaching retirement. It is therefore imperative to examine the Efficacy of Emotional Intelligence therapy in managing Retirement Anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis.

Emotional Intelligence and Retirement Anxiety

Adigun and Okoiye (2021) discovered that emotional intelligence therapeutic intervention training was effective in enhancing the job performance of Non-Academic Staff of Lagos State University Nigeria. This implies that the use of the Emotional Intelligence therapeutic intervention program proved to be effective in improving the non-Academic Staff of Lagos State University's job competence and capability to adjust to the challenges. This includes applying required developmental and technological changes. This helps solve the trials of their work environs. These trials seem difficult to them before the teaching.

Some researchers like Goldman, Kraemer, and Salovey (2019) also have found that, when people regain and maintain positive emotional states, they are likely not to get sick or to use medical services when faced with a stressful life experience. Louie, Coverdale, and Roberts (2014) affirmed that many aspects of emotional intelligence therapy, such as awareness of one's own and others' emotions, and the regulation of both one's own and others' emotions, are essential to therapeutic work. This was in consonance with the study carried out by Thingujam and Ram (2021) on the effectiveness of emotional intelligence in reducing anxiety disorders among employees approaching retirement. The results revealed that emotional intelligence has been efficacious in reducing anxiety.

Ciarrochi, Chan, Caputi, and Roberts (2021) confirmed that emotional intelligence therapy has an impact on psychological health, they said emotional intelligence may help people in stressful events to be able to adapt adequately to situations. The research conducted by Cooper (2007) reviewed that emotions that are properly managed can have successful outcomes. Cooper (2007) affirmed that carefully managed emotions can lead to trust, loyalty, less anxiety, and commitment and increase productivity, innovation, and accomplishment in the individual. Quy (2009) affirmed that Emotional Intelligence therapy can facilitate an individual's adaptation and change. Akinboye (2003) asserted that for human beings to have less anxiety and to be prosperous in life and the workplace, they require the skills of emotional intelligence. This is noticeable in qualities such as honesty, energy, trust, integrity, intuition, imagination, resilience, purpose, commitment, influence, motivation, thoughtfulness, humor, audacity, conscience, and humility.

Schutte, Maloff, Simunek, McKenley, and Hollander (2020) conducted a study to find out the impact of emotional intelligence on anxiety among government workers. The sample comprises 60 prospective retirees, 39 males and 21 females. Age range from 50 and 60 years using the Hepper anxiety rating scale. The researcher used quasi-experimental with pre-test post-tests. Findings showed that worker's anxiety level towards retirement reduced, which proved that EIT to be an effective therapeutic technique for reducing retirement anxiety.

Aim and Objectives

1. To determine the differences in the pre-test and post-test retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment

2. To find out if there is a difference in the pre-test and post-test retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment and those in the Control group

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment

2. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment and those in the Control Group.

Methodology

The study examined emotional intelligence therapy in managing retirement anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State. True experimental research design which involved non-equivalent pre-test-post-test control group design was adopted for the study, which consisted of two experimental groups and one control group. To address the problem of the study, two hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The

population of the study consisted of 220 public school teachers in Asaba metropolis who had two (2) years or less to their retirement period either by age or length of service. Out of these 88 were selected using multi-stage random sampling, and this made up the sample of the study. Data were collected using a self-structured scale titled; Anxiety Scale (AS). Three experts examined the instrument, each for face and content validity. The instrument was administered to thirty teachers outside the sample of the study and Cronbach Statistics was used to analyze the data collected, and the reliability coefficient score obtained was 0.89. The Anxiety Scale (AS) was used to identify and measure retirement anxiety and emotional intelligence of public school teachers approaching retirement period. The treatment intervention lasted for a period of six weeks of two sessions weekly lasting for forty-five (45) minutes per session. Data collected were analyzed using paired sample t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the Least Significant Difference (LSD) Posthoc multiple comparisons at 0.05 level of significance.

Treatment Procedure

The study was conducted as follows:

Stage 1: Pre-test Assessment

Stage 2: Treatment

Stage 3: Post-test Assessment

The first step was the pre-testing of participants in the experimental and control groups. Stage two was the treatment of the experimental groups using Emotional intelligence therapy (EIT), while the control group will be the non-attention group. Stage three was the post-test assessment of the participants in the experimental and the control groups.

Stage 1: Pre-test Assessment

The researcher administered the instrument as the pre-test assessment of all the participants in the experimental and control groups. This pretest formed the first part of the pre-treatment assessments. The purpose of this was to screen the participants to identify those eligible for the study, and at the same time to obtain the pre-test scores. The data that was collected created the baseline proforma with which the post-test scores were compared, after which the post-test assessment was done.

Stage 2: Treatment Assessment

This is the experimental stage, which commenced a week after the pre-test assessment, where the treatment packages were given to the participants. The treatment package was emotional intelligence therapy and a non-attention control group. No treatment was given to the participants in the control group. The experimental group was treated using EIT. The

treatment group met for six weeks. Each week runs for two sessions for 45 minutes per session.

Stage 3: Post-test Assessment

At the end of the treatment session, which lasted for six weeks, the two groups, the experimental and the control groups, were post-tested by administering the same instrument used for the pre-test, after which their results were compared at the end of the treatment procedure.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment

Table 1: **Paired Sample t-test of Pre-test and Post-test of Mean Scores on management of Retirement anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis Exposed to EIT Treatment.**

Test	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig. (2-tailed
Pre-test	44	125.40	20.22		
				6.421	.000
Post-test	44	84.87	14.71		

$\propto = 0.05$

Table 1 shows a paired sample t-test of 6.421, testing at an alpha level of 0.05, with a *p-value* of .000. Since the *p-value* is less than an alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis, which states that "There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment," is rejected. Consequently, Emotional Intelligence Therapy is significantly efficacious in managing retirement anxiety among teachers in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of retirement anxiety scores of teachers exposed to EIT treatment and those in the control group.

Table 2: **Paired sample t-test of Retirement Anxiety scores of participants exposed to EIT and those in the Control group at Pretest**

Treatment	n	Mean	Std.Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Experimental	44	125.40	21.252			
				-7.077	.000	
Control	44	325.925	18.399			

$\alpha = .05$

Table 2 shows a calculated t-value of -7.077 and a p-value.000 testing at an alpha level of.05. The p-value is less than the alpha level, so there is a significant difference in retirement anxiety mean scores of participants exposed to EIT and those in the control group at the pre-test. This explains the need to use pre-test scores as a covariate.

Table 3: **Mean and Standard Deviation in Retirement Anxiety mean Scores of participants Exposed to EIT and those in the Control group at Post-test**

Treatment Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	44	101.65	14.085
Control	44	125.432	12.504

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation in retirement anxiety mean scores of participants exposed to EIT and those in the control group at post-test as 101.65 and 14.085 for the experimental group and 125.432 and 12.504 for the control group respectively.

Table 4: **ANCOVA of Retirement anxiety scores of participants exposed to EIT and those in the Control group at Post-test**

Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	42812.179[a]	2	21406.089	564.875	.000
Intercept	1038.438	1	1038.438	27.403	.000
Pretest	15454.498	1	15454.498	407.821	.000
Group	11647.478	1	11647.47	205.240	.000
Error	8829.597	233	37.895		
Total	292219.000	236			
Corrected Total	51641.775	235			

     a. R Squared =.829 (adjusted R Squared =.828) α = .05

Table 4 shows a calculated F value of 205.240 and a *p*-value of .000 testing at an alpha level of .05, the *p*-value is less than the alpha level, so the null hypothesis, which states that "There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of the retirement anxiety mean score of teachers exposed to Emotional Intelligence Therapy and those in the control group" is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference in post-test mean scores of participants exposed to EIT and those in the control group. Hence the need for a post-hoc analysis.

Table 5: LSD Post-hoc Pairwise Comparison in Retirement Anxiety Mean Scores of participants Exposed to EIT and those in the control Group at Post-test

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[a]
Experimental	Control	-43.706*	.662	.000
Control	Experimental	43.706*	.662	.000

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no   adjustments).

Table 5 shows a mean difference of -43.706 and a p-value of.000. Since the mean difference is negative, it shows that EIT is more effective in managing retirement anxiety compared to the control group hence the results obtained from tables 2, 3 and 4 above. The hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the post-test of retirement anxiety mean score of teachers exposed to Emotional Intelligence Therapy and those in the Control group is rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

The first hypotheses which state that there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test of Retirement anxiety mean score of teachers exposed to Emotional Intelligence Therapy was rejected. Meaning that EIT was efficacious in managing retirement anxiety among teachers exposed to EIT treatment. This finding is in collaboration with the study of Goldman, Kraemer and Salovey (2019), which investigated the efficacy of EIT on the reduction of pre-retirement anxiety among retirees. The finding indicated that those in the treatment groups experienced a significant reduction in retirement anxiety over the course of six weeks treatment. This finding is also supported by the studies of Thingujam and Ram (2021) and Adigun and Okoiye (2021) that EIT led to significantly reduced symptoms of retirement anxiety among teachers, thus, EIT is efficacious in managing retirement anxiety among teachers.

The second hypothesis which predicted that there would be no significant difference between the experimental and control group was rejected based on the results. The difference between the treated groups and the control group is as a result of counselling that took place. This finding finds congruence with Schutte, Maloff, Simunek, McKenley, and Hollander (2020) who found out that EIT could manage negative behaviour such as Retirement anxiety. This

result agrees also with the study that was carried out by Ciarrochi, Chan, Caputi, and Roberts (2021). They confirmed that emotional intelligence therapy has an impact on psychological health. They said emotional intelligence may help people in stressful events to be able to adapt adequately to situations. The reason for this reduction of their retirement anxiety by the therapy against the control group may be as a result of the six weeks of treatment with EIT while the control was not treated.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is, therefore concluded that emotional intelligence therapy was efficacious in managing retirement anxiety among teachers. This was significant from their pre-test and post-test mean scores.

Recommendation

1. Prospective retirees should take advantage of the skills of emotional intelligence therapy as this will help them to manage the transition to retirement thereby overcoming the obstacles and challenges that come with retirement. This will also help them plan for a better way of coping with the challenges they may face in retirement by finding alternative means to live a healthier and longer life.

2. The government should introduce pre-retirement seminars and workshops on emotional intelligence therapy to equip would-be retirees to be better prepared for retirement.

3. Researchers should take advantage of the data used in this study to serve as a reference for further research work to promote educational gains as well as minimize retirement anxiety among prospective public school teachers.

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