Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal – Vol.1, No.5
Publication Date: September 25, 2014
DOI: 10.14738/assrj.15.418
Emmanuel, O. O., Ngozi, U. P., & Anayochi, N. N. (2014). Effects of Cognitive Restructuring Technique and Self-Efficacy Training on Farming Anxiety of Farmers in Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community Edo State Nigeria. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 1*(5),222-231

Effects of Cognitive Restructuring Technique and Self-Efficacy Training on Farming Anxiety of Farmers in Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community Edo State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of cognitive restructuring and self-efficacy training on farming anxiety of farmers in Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community Edo State Nigeria. The study adopted pre-test-post-test, control group experimental design with a 3x2x2 factorial matrix. Purposive sampling technique was used to select sixty farmers and the three villages that constitute Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community. The participants were randomly assigned to groups. Participants in the two treatmental groups were exposed to eight weeks of cognitive restructuring technique and self-efficacy training. One instrument was used: Farmers anxiety scale (FAS) (α= 0.82). Four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance. There was a significant main effect of treatment on farming anxiety scores of farmers $F_{(2,58)}=7.262$, $P<0.05$. Also, there was significant main effect of age on farming anxiety scores of farmers exposed to treatments $F_{(1,59)}=12.075$, $P<0.05$. However, there was no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety scores of farmers exposed to treatment $F_{(1,59)}=4.403$, $P>0.05$. Furthermore, there was no significant interaction effect of treatment, age and gender on farming anxiety scores of farmers $F_{(3,57)}=0.409$, $P>0.05$). Cognitive restructuring technique and self-efficacy training were effective in reducing farming anxiety among farmers. The government should re-orientate farmers on how to interpret weather as to adopt good timing strategy for planting. Also, psychological intervention programmes should be put in place to help farmers overcome their state of maladjustment due to negative farming experience.

Key words: Anxiety, Cognitive Restructuring Technique, Self-Efficacy Training, Famer, Community and Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigerian farming communities sometimes experience unpredictable and disastrous climatic weather condition(s) that make them apprehensive, agitated and uncomfortable. This development more often than not impacts negatively on their well-being as they are prone to

be anxious and afraid of the unknown. The Ibhiadan Emu farming community of Edo State Nigeria are known for their prowess in yam, cassava, rubber, palm-oil, maize, plantain and pawpaw farming. Though, this community is in the South-South geo-political zone and in the rain forest, expected to be privileged to experience favourable weather condition. However, of late as experienced in other parts of the world due to global climate change, the Ibhiadan Emu farming community has consistently experienced unfavourable hot and dry weather condition for the past ten years. This consistency has made farmers to always express high level of farming anxiety at the beginning of each farming season.

This is consistent with Anselm and Taofeeq (2010) assertion of the fact that climate change is one of the most serious environmental threats facing mankind worldwide. It affects agriculture in several ways, including its direct impact on food production and available evidence shows that this phenomenon most adversely effects countries in Africa, due to their low level of coping capabilities; for which Nigeria is one (Nwafor 2007; Jagtap 2007). Therefore, due to unpredictability of the climatic weather condition, which results in poor and unpredictable yields, farmers (who constitute the bulk of the poor in Africa), face prospects of tragic crop harvest, reduced agricultural productivity, increased hunger, malnutrition and diseases (Zoellick 2009). These occurrence causes high level of distress and anxiety among farmers.

Farming anxiety causes helplessness in the wake of uncertainty, fear and apprehension. In support of this assertion is Okoiye and Falaye (2011) report of the fact that the feeling of anxiety can be potentially serious on the well-being of individuals when it leads to high levels of distress in otherwise capable and enterprising people. They further posit that anxiety serves as stress, tension and strain that interfere with the proper functioning of an individual's body and mind considering the fact that it is accompanied by feeling of helplessness because the anxious person feels blocked and unable to find a solution to his problem. This implies that some farmers in Ibhiadan Emu farming community due to farming anxiety could experience strain and stress that might impair their cognitive and farming intelligence when it comes to seeking solution to their farming task. This basically characterizes the challenges faced in the past ten years by farmers in Ibhiadan Emu farming community. In view of this context, this study investigated cognitive restructuring and self-efficacy training on farming anxiety of farmers in Ibhiadan Emu farming community Edo State Nigeria; while considering the moderating influence of age and gender.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feeling anxious or nervous is a common emotion for people of all ages and a normal reaction to uncertainty. Anxiety is a common illness among older adults, affecting as many as 10-20 percent of the older population, though it is often undiagnosed. Among adults, anxiety is the most common mental health problem for women and the second most common for men, after substance abuse. The few longitudinal studies that have been carried out in older adults with anxiety suggest that they tend to be persistent in this age group (Schuurmans, Comijs & Beekman, 2005). Anxious older adults in epidemiological and treatment-seeking samples retrospectively report an average duration of 20 years or more, at least in the case of generalised anxiety disorder (Lenze, Mulsant & Mohlman, 2005). According to Arem (2009) anxiety is an emotional, mental and physical act related to thinking and problem-solving process and result from uncomfortable past experiences. However, behaviourist skilled in treatment could help farmers expressing farming anxiety to correctly identify their feelings of anxiety and learn how to manage them through thought control, relaxation exercises and sometimes through relearning how not to respond to uncertainty with fear that has been acquired in the presence of a threat.

Interestingly, Brown, Ramsey, Kahler, Palm, Monti, Abrams, Dubreuil, Gordon and Miller (2011) reported significant benefit in the use of cognitive restructuring technique on anxiety across two trials. They observed that cognitive restructuring was more effective; relative to a relaxation control. Furthermore, cognitive restructuring technique has been demonstrated to be an effective treatment for anxiety (Rapee, Abbott, Baillie & Gaston, 2007). Some of the effective cognitive restructuring techique interventions are based on Rapee and Heimberg's (1997) cognitive model for the maintenance of anxiety disorder. The model proposes that individuals with anxiety disorder experience distortions and biases in the processing of evaluative information which lead to increased anxiety and help to maintain mental and physiological maladjustment. The model emphasises the importance of cognitive restructuring and objective feedback of task performance as well as instruction and feedback regarding avoidance behaviours when exposure is undertaken.

As cited in Okoiye, Ikpeazu and Ohizu (2013); Bandura (1997) posited that the basic premise of self-efficacy theory is that people's belief in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions is the most important determinants of the behaviour people choose to engage in and how much they persevere in their efforts in the face of obstacles and challenges. Self-efficacy theory also maintains that these efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in psychological adjustment, psychological problems, physical health, as well as professionally guided and self-guided behavioural change strategies. Thus, this implies that self-efficacy could be attain from gradual acquisition of complex cognitive, social, linguistic and/or physical skills through experience as with the daily farming activity of famers. Farming engagement in Nigeria rural setting is activity tight and accompany with compounding mental and physical experience that is vicarious in nature (Bandura, 1997).

Therefore, the daily farming engagement of rural farmers through manual labour, affect their task effort, persistence, expressed interest, and their level of goal difficulty selected for performance. Individuals appear to evaluate information about their abilities and then regulate their choices and efforts accordingly. The strength of their conviction in their own effectiveness is likely to determine their desire to cope with a given situation (Torkzadeh, Chang & Demirhan, 2006). However, farmers with high efficacy expectations have a greater chance of success in a given task. Self-efficacy is a dynamic construct that changes as new information and experiences are acquired. It is generally described as having three components: magnitude—the levels of task difficulty that people believe they can attain; strength—their conviction about its magnitude; and generality—the degree to which the expectation is generalized across situations (Torkzadeh et al., 2006).

Statement of the Problem

The experience of global climatic change is a worrisome and frustrating phenomenon in the consciousness of farmers globally and Nigerian farmers are no exception. Climatic change as experienced in most part of Nigeria; with the countries poor coping capabilities pose serious threat to the environment and farming communities. In several ways it affects agriculture with it compounding direct impact on food production. This is evident with most Nigerian agrarian society which has witness unpredictable climatic weather condition, which results in poor and unpredictable yields. Thus, farmers face prospects of tragic crop harvest and reduced agricultural productivity, increased hunger, malnutrition, diseases and state of undefined helplessness. These occurrence causes high level of distress and anxiety among farmers. Therefore, this study through a quasi-experimental design determined the effects of cognitive restructuring technique and self-efficacy training on farming anxiety of farmers in Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community Edo State Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study is anchored on the theory of reasoned action (TRA) proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980). This theory provides a model that has potential benefits for predicting the intention to perform a behaviour based on an individual's attitudinal and normative beliefs. The components of TRA are three general constructs: behavioural intention (BI), attitude (A), and subjective norm (SN). TRA suggests that a person's behavioural intention depends on the person's attitude about the behaviour and subjective norms ($BI = A + SN$). If a person intends to do behaviour then it is likely that the person will do it. Behavioural intention measures a person's relative strength of intention to perform behaviour. Attitude consists of beliefs about the consequences of performing the behaviour multiplied by his or her evaluation of these consequences (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Subjective norm is seen as a combination of perceived expectations from relevant individuals or groups along with intentions to comply with these expectations (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Furthermore, Fishbein and Ajzen suggest, however, that attitudes and norms are not weighted equally in predicting behaviour. "Indeed, depending on the individual and the situation, these factors might be very different effects on behavioural intention; thus a weight is associated with each of these factors in the predictive formula of the theory.

The Purpose of the Study

This study is designed to apply cognitive restructuring and self-efficacy training on farming anxiety of farmers in Ibhiadan Emu Farming Community Edo State Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

In this study the following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant main effect of treatment on farming anxiety of farmers
- There is no significant main effect of age on farming anxiety of farmers
- There is no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety of farmers
- There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, gender and age on farming anxiety of farmers

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a pre-test, post-test control group quasi experimental design with 3x2x2 factorial matrix. The design is made of three rows representing the two treatment techniques, cognitive restructuring technique and self-efficacy training and the Control Group (non-treatment group). There is also a column denoting gender (male and female) participants and age (younger farmer and older farmer) as shown in table 1 on next page.

Population

The population for this study consists of all farmers in Ibihadan Emu Community in Edo State Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for the study comprised of sixty purposively selected rural farmers (male and female) that has consistently experienced poor harvest due to poor climatic weather condition for the past three years.

Instrument

Farming Anxiety was measured with the Farmers anxiety scale (FAS) by Morey (1991). The total scale consists of 24 items rated on a 4-point scale ("false, not at all true" to "very true"). Higher scores indicate higher anxiety levels. Raw scores for subscales and the total scale are transformed to T-scores (with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10).The FAS Anxiety

scale has been found to have adequate internal consistency reliability (.80-.90), test-retest reliability (.85-.88), and construct validity among general, farm worker, African and Mexican-American samples. The revalidation through test-re-test produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 for the present study.

TABLE 1: A 3x2x2 Factorial Matrix Quasi-Experimental Design on Farming Anxiety of Farmers

Treatment	Gender			
	Male	Female		
	Older Farmer	Younger Farmer	Older Farmer	Younger Farmer
A1 Cognitive Restructuring Technique	A1 B1n=7	A1 C1n=5	A1 B2n=5	A1C2n=3
A2 Self-Efficacy Training	A2 B1n=8	A2 C1n=3	A2 B2n=6	A2 C2n=3
A3 Control Group	A3 B1n=7	A3 C1n=2	A3 B2n=7	A3 C2n=4

Procedure

The researchers got permission to carry out this research from the village community head. The village head and farmers were informed of the purpose for the study and their consent attained. Two villages were used as the treatment groups while one village served as the control group. The treatment groups were trained while the control group members were engaged with their normal farm work. The training was conducted in the evenings 4-5pm Tuesdays and Thursdays for eight weeks. Thus, the researcher conducted training sessions with the two experimental groups for a period of 8 weeks at an hour each.

Control of Extraneous Variables

In controlling extraneous variables that possibly could affect the results of the study, the study involved several stages of randomization of treatment to the experimental group. Also, the Rosenthal effect was controlled by keeping the control group busy with their usual daily farm routine during the experimental sessions. Via this measure it is hoped that the contaminations which are beyond the reach of the design and other procedures of the research was taken care of by using ANCOVA statistical tool for analysis.

Method of Data analysis

ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) was used as the statistical tool for the study. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to compare the differential effectiveness of the treatments.

Summary of Treatment Package

Experimental Group One: Cognitive Restructuring Technique

Session One: General orientation and administration of instrument to obtain pre-test scores.

Session Two: Identification of psychological and emotional distraction

Session Three: How to overcome unrealistic beliefs

Session Four: How to plan for successful farming season

Session Five: How to overcome farming anxiety

Session Six: Behaviour modification

Session Seven: Self-Confidence

Session Eight: Revision of all activities in the previous session and administration of instrument for

post treatment measures.

Experimental Group Two: Self-Efficacy Training

Session One: Orientation and Administration of Pre-test

Session Two: Need for good farming focus

Session Three: How to plan for successful farming season

Session Four: How to overcome farming anxiety

Session Five: Goal setting

Session Six: How to overcome unrealistic beliefs

Session Seven: Behaviour modification

Session Eight: Revision of all activities in the previous session and administration of instrument for post treatment measures.

RESULTS

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis One states that there is no significant main effect of treatment on farming anxiety of farmers. To test this hypothesis, ANCOVA was adopted to analyze the post-test farming anxiety scores of farmers using the pre-test scores as covariates to ascertain if the post-experimental differences are statistically significant. The summaries of the analysis are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of Pre-post Test Interactive Effects of farming anxiety scores of farmers in the Treatment Groups, Age and Gender
Dependent Variable: Farming Anxiety

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	2600.647[a]	11	236.422	4.334	.000	.498
Intercept	62425.209	1	62425.209	1144.4	.000	.839
TRTGROUP	792.260	2	396.130	7.262	.003*	.152
AGE	658.685	1	658.685	12.075	.001**	.126
GENDER	240.180	1	240.180	4.403	.241	.046
TRTGROUP+ AGE	2208.430	2	1104.215	20.243	.000**	.432
TRTGROUP+GENDER	6.200	2	3.100	.056	.860	.001
AGE+GENDER	308.522	1	305.522	5.601	.376	.060
TRTGROUP+AGE+GENDER	44.612	2	22.306	.409	.801	.009
Error	2618.287	48	54.548			
Total	74363.032	60				
Corrected Total	5218.934	59				

The results presented in Table 2 shows that there was significant main effect of treatments on the farming anxiety scores of farmers $F_{(2,58)} = 7.262$, $P<0.05$. Premised on this, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is therefore concluded that there was significant main effect of treatment on the farming anxiety of farmers. This implies that following the treatment, expressed farming anxiety among farmers was reduced.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant main effect of age on farming anxiety of farmers. The result of the analysis as presented in Table 2, indicates that there was significant main effect of age on farming anxiety of farmers exposed to treatments $F_{(1,59)}$ =12.075, P<0.05. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that age had moderating impact on the treatment programme. Hence it could mean that the age of farmers influenced their attitude and response to the treatment programme.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety of farmers. The result of the analysis as presented in Table 2 indicates that there was no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety of farmers exposed to treatment $F_{(1,59)}$ =4.403, P>0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore concluded that the issue of gender did not influence the result of the study.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, age and gender on farming anxiety of farmers. Table 2 reveals that there was no significant interaction effect of treatment, age and gender on farming anxiety of farmers exposed to treatment $F_{(3,57)}$ =0.409, P>0.05). The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that the result of the study was not influenced by the interactive interplay of treatment, age and gender.

DISCUSSION OF RESULT

Hypothesis One

There is no significant main effect of treatment on farming anxiety of farmers. The result of the findings revealed that there was significant main effect of treatment in the post-test farming anxiety scores of farmers expressing farming anxiety in the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the treatment programme was effective in reducing the incessant occurrence of farming anxiety among farmers that participated in the treatment programme. However, the continual expression of farming anxiety by participants in the control group could imply the fact that they were not exposed to any treatment package.

The result of this study indicates that if farmer expressing farming anxiety due to their recurring negative experience of poor harvest based on harsh climatic weather condition are exposed to intervention as this, they could develop basic psychological and emotional intelligent skills that will help them overcome their anxiety over uncertainties and farming task challenges. Therefore, the effectiveness of the treatment could be explained in terms of the effectiveness of each of the training programme in the reduction of expressed farming anxiety among farmers. Supporting this finding is the report of Brown, Ramsey, Kahler, Palm, Monti, Abrams, Dubreuil, Gordon and Miller (2011) stating significant benefit in the use of cognitive restructuring technique on anxiety across two trials. They observed that cognitive restructuring was more effective; relative to a relaxation control. Furthermore, cognitive restructuring technique has been demonstrated to be an effective treatment for anxiety (Rapee, Abbott, Baillie & Gaston, 2007). Also, as cited in Okoiye, Ikpeazu and Ohizu (2013); Bandura (1997) posited that the basic premise of self-efficacy theory is that people's belief in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions is the most important determinants of the behaviour people choose to engage in and how much they persevere in their efforts in the face of obstacles and challenges. Self-efficacy theory also maintains that these efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in psychological adjustment, psychological problems, physical health, as well as professionally guided and self-guided behavioural change strategies. Thus, this implies that self-efficacy could be attain from gradual acquisition of complex

cognitive, social, linguistic and/or physical skills through experience as with the daily farming activity of famers.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant main effect of age on farming anxiety of farmers. The result of the study revealed that there was significant main effect of age on farming anxiety of farmers that participated in the intervention. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the age of farmers moderately influenced the study. This could be further explained on the context of the farmers desire to modify their behaviour for good and based on the fact that they desire to overcome their anxiety challenge(s) and strife for a better harvest. This finding is consistent with the expressive fact that anxiety is a common illness among older adults, affecting as many as 10-20 percent of the older population, though it is often undiagnosed. Among adults, anxiety is the most common mental health problem for women and the second most common for men, after substance abuse. Longitudinal studies that have been carried out in older adults with anxiety suggest that they tend to be persistent in this age group (Schuurmans J., Comijs & Beekman, 2005). Anxious older adults in epidemiological and treatment-seeking samples retrospectively report an average duration of 20 years or more, at least in the case of generalised anxiety disorder (Lenze, Mulsant & Mohlman, 2005). Furthermore, considering the magnitude of responsibility on the shoulder of older farmers, they tend to be more anxious than younger farmers who more or less care only for themselves and with less responsibilities. However, in realising the negative consequence of anxiety on their well-being through the intervention programme, older farmers adjusted faster to the reality of their situation(s) and were able to reduce their level of anxiety.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety of farmers. The result reveals that there is no significant main effect of gender on farming anxiety of farmers exposed to treatment. Thus, null hypothesis is accepted. The reason for this development could be that farmers expressing farming anxiety either they are male or female experience similar weather climatic challenges and also expresses similar behavioural disaffection. This implies that in responding to the impact of harsh climatic condition on their farm proceeds; the influence of gender identity appears to be insignificant. Therefore, when farmers experience poor harvest, they become frustrated and behave in similar manner. Thus, it is of note that either the farmer is a man or woman, farming anxiety causes helplessness in the wake of uncertainty, fear and apprehension. In support of this assertion is Okoiye and Falaye (2011) report of the fact that the feeling of anxiety can be potentially serious on the well-being of individuals when it leads to high levels of distress in otherwise capable and enterprising people. They further posit that anxiety serves as stress, tension and strain that interfere with the proper functioning of an individual's body and mind considering the fact that it is accompanied by feeling of helplessness because the anxious person feels blocked and unable to find a solution to his problem. This implies that some farmers in Ibhiadan Emu farming community due to farming anxiety could experience strain and stress that might impair their cognitive and farming intelligence when it comes to seeking solution to their farming task. This basically characterizes the challenges faced in the past ten years by farmers in Ibhiadan Emu farming community.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, age and gender on farming anxiety of farmers. The result of the study reveals that there was no significant interaction effect of treatment, age and gender on farming anxiety of farmers. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. The reason for this development could be aligned to the fact that possibly, the

content of the treatment programme made farmers realized the need to change from the state of maladjustment to adjustment after appreciating the fact that climatic change is a global phenomenon and not peculiar to their community alone. This is consistent with Anselm and Taofeeq (2010) assertion of the fact that climate change is one of the most serious environmental threats facing mankind worldwide. It affects agriculture in several ways, including its direct impact on food production and available evidence shows that this phenomenon most adversely effects countries in Africa, due to their low level of coping capabilities; for which Nigeria is one (Nwafor 2007; Jagtap 2007). Therefore, due to unpredictability of the climatic weather condition, which results in poor and unpredictable yields, farmers (who constitute the bulk of the poor in Africa), face prospects of tragic crop failures reduced agricultural productivity, increased hunger, malnutrition and diseases (Zoellick 2009). These occurrence causes high level of distress and anxiety among farmers.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has several implications which include among others the fact that the study has proved that cognitive restructuring technique and self-efficacy training is effective intervention techniques in reduction of farming anxiety among farmers. Therefore, since the two therapeutic techniques applied were effective, the skills learnt would enable farmers expressing farming anxiety develop the required confidence that would enable them succeed in finding solution to their challenging farming task. Furthermore, the study revealed the fact that farming anxiety among rural farmers can be reduced through psychological intervention programmes.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The government should endeavour to give rural farmers adequate support in the likes of subsidising the price of fertilizer and the availability of tractor for mechanise farming.

The government should re-orientate farmers on how to interpret weather as to adopt good timing strategy for planting. Psychological intervention programmes should be put in place to help farmers overcome their state of maladjustment due to negative farming experience.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that learnt behaviour such as anxiety can be unlearnt through behaviour modification. This implies that farming anxiety is a behavioural challenge that can be managed and overcome by farmers experiencing farming distress.

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