

# Effect Of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy On The Academic Peerformance Of Probating Students

Dr. Amos Williams

Directorare of Learner Support Services, National Open University of Nigeria,  
University Village, Nnamdi Azikiwe Way Jabi, Abuja

**Abstract:** *This study examined the effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of probating students. Two null hypotheses were tested. They are: 'Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of probating students' and 'There is no significant gender difference in academic performance of probating students as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy'. The design of the study was the post-test only control group design. The study involved two groups (experimental and control) whose membership was randomly assigned. The sample was drawn through stratified random sampling technique. The sample was made up of 40 (20 males and 20 females) probating NCE II students of the College of Education Yola in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Participants' cumulative grade point average for the session preceding the treatment and their cumulative point average after the treatment provided data for the study. The treatment consisted of discussion on themes drawn from Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy for the experimental group while for the control group the themes were drawn from sexuality education. The treatment for each group lasted for ten weeks of one hour each. The result revealed that Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy was effective in raising the academic performance of the probating students. It also revealed that there is no significant gender difference in academic performance as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy. This study recommends that periodic diagnoses be made to fish out students that are not measuring up to their academic expectations and be referred to the counsellor.*

**Keywords:** *Effect, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Academic performance, Probating.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Academic performance as indicated by achievement scores can be attributed to myriads of factors. These factors include the individual, family, school and community (Felner, Jackson, Kasak, Mulhall, Brand & Flowers, 1997). Several factors have been reported to affect academic performance among students. These include students' background, motivation, interest, instruction, school climate and numerous other factors (Alexander, 2000). Sansgiriy, Bhosle & Sail (2006) also reported that factors such as academic competence, test competence, time management, strategic studying, and test anxiety also affect academic performance.

According to Mulhall, Flowers and Mertens (2002) there are five academic related indicators that could have either positive or negative effect on the individual. These indicators

include educational expectations, number of books read, academic efficacy, self-reported grades and parent's involvement. These academic-related indicators as stated above are more of personal opinions and evaluation that the individual holds about self. Where these opinions and evaluations are positive, they enhance academic performance and where they are negative; the individual's academic performance is negatively influenced. When these opinions and self-evaluations are negative, the individual may encounter persistent academic difficulties, hence, the need for intervention.

Academic performance refers to a candidate's performance in cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains of education. These performances are measured by continuous assessment and examination scores and are reported as grade point average (G.P.A.) which cumulates to form the

candidate's final grade known as Cumulative Grade Point Average (C.G.P.A.). In this study, the cumulative grade point average will be used as the index of academic performance. According to the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) (2003) for a student to proceed to the next level of study his or her cumulative grade point average (C.G.P.A.) must be one and above. When a student's C.G.P.A. falls below one the student probates (i.e. repeats the year of study).

Another important issue that is of concern to this study is the issue of gender difference. The word gender itself implies stratification – male and female. Men and women are different in attitude, skill and behaviour. Lorber (1994) argues that 'gender is an entity in and of itself that establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, order social process of everyday life and is built into all other major social organizations of society, that gender is primarily a means to justify sexual stratification (p.33)'.

For the individual, gender construction starts with the assignment to a sex category on the basis of what the genitalia looks like at birth. Once a child's gender is evident, others treat those in one gender differently from those in the other and the children respond to the different treatment by feeling differently and behaving differently (Lorber, 2003). Thus as children grow and mature, they are positively reinforced for behaving according to their gender and negatively reinforced when they behave otherwise hence, the difference in gender role and expectations. In effect, gender difference is manifested in every facet of human life. Expectedly, these differences should be manifested in academic performance. This is supported by (Thomas, 1996; Klein, 2004 & Van Houtte, 2004). To further support the issue of gender difference, Nideau (1997) asserted that the human brain like the human body is sexed and the sex-specific human brain conditions a wide range of behaviours that are typically associated with maleness and femaleness.

This study was based on the Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) propounded by Albert Ellis (1973). The theory was based on the fact that thought and emotion are not different processes. These processes overlap to produce certain types of behavioural problems and these disorderly behaviours can be changed if the thinking of the client is changed. According to REBT, emotion is referred to as mostly biased, prejudiced or strongly evaluative type of thinking while thinking is relatively calm and detached evaluation of a given condition. Emotion and thinking are not distinctly different. Therefore, disorderly emotions can be changed through changing the thinking of the individual. REBT is often called the "ABC" of psychotherapy. In this paradigm, 'A' refers to an external event to which a person is subjected. 'B' refers to the individual's irrational belief system – system of thought or self-talks in response to 'A'. 'C' refers to the feelings and behaviour that result from 'B'. 'A' is not the cause of 'C' rather 'B' is the cause. According to Ellis (1973), every human being who gets disturbed is really telling himself a chain of false sentences, which are internalized. There are a number of typical thinking error people engage in, including:

- ✓ Ignoring the positive i.e. giving more attention to the negative,

- ✓ Exaggerating the negative i.e. magnifying the negative, and
- ✓ Overgeneralizing i.e. once something bad happened it will always happen.

This therapy directly challenges the logic of an individual's self-blaming, overgeneralizing, learned helplessness and irrational beliefs. It assumes that there is a thought or belief system for every behaviour; for maladaptive behaviours, these beliefs are irrational or illogical.

Some of the symptoms of such irrational and illogical beliefs are self-blame, overgeneralization, external locus of control and learned helplessness. The task of the Rational-Emotive Counsellor in the initial interview is to show unhappy and trouble individuals that:

- ✓ Their difficulties largely results from distorted perceptions and thinking.
- ✓ There is a relatively simple method of re-ordering their perceptions and reorganizing their thinking to remove the basic cause of their difficulties.

According to Carew (1988), the therapist helps the clients by behaving as a frank counter-propagandist by counteracting the counselees irrational, superstitious ideas about themselves, the people around them and their environment. The therapist also encourages, cajole, persuade and where necessary instruct the counselees to perform some activities that are in themselves counter propagandist.

In the counselling relationship, the counsellor is seen as a teacher and the client as a student. The counsellor's responsibility is to show the clients how they become irrational in their thinking and how such irrational thinking is maintained. The counsellor serves as a frank propagandist who contradicts and denies the self-defeating ideas and superstitions of the client. The client must therefore develop rational philosophies of living and practical ways of solving problem. The client is responsible for practicing any learning acquired during the counselling sessions. The client is taught to challenge, contradict and rethink those internalized beliefs that control the negative emotional state and to formulate alternative ways of thinking and action. The goals of REBT counselling are to uncover clients past and present illogical thinking, demonstrate to the client that self-talk is the cause of disturbance and to re-evaluate this self-talk in order to eliminate it and subsequent illogical ideas. This therapy, which is largely didactic, is adopted as the theoretical framework for this study because of its suitability to the subject of this study that is probating students. In using Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy, this study presupposes that probating students are failing in their examinations because of negative or irrational beliefs. Hence the use of Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy will help to point out these beliefs and also help in counteracting them.

According to Ellis (1973) every human being who gets disturbed is telling himself a chain of false sentences which are internalized. This study therefore presupposed that the sample used were experiencing disturbance in themselves as a result of what they were telling themselves in connection with their situation. The study assumed that the samples self-talk were made up of error thinking as was suggested by Ellis (1973). This error thinking include: ignoring the positive, exaggerating the negative and overgeneralization. This form

of thinking is irrational and illogical. Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy was used to directly challenge the sample's irrational and illogical beliefs.

REBT was reported to be effective in reducing tension and anxiety (Fajonyomi, 1997 & Dawood, 2002) and in improving academic performance and achievement motivation (Fajonyomi, 1997 & Abosi, 2004). REBT was also reported to be effective in problem solving and in improving logical thinking (Ellis & Joffe, 2002 & Dawood, 2001). In the treatment of emotional disturbance and in changing behaviour, REBT was also found to be effective (Pindar, 1999 and Gonzalez et al, 2004).

This study was designed to improve the academic performance of probating students using Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy. The problem of this study can be stated as: 'what is the effect of Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of probating students?'

In line with the above problem, two objectives were raised. They were to determine:

- ✓ The effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of the probating students.
- ✓ If there is any significant gender difference in the academic performance of the probating students as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

The following null hypotheses were tested:

Ho<sub>1</sub> Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of probating students.

Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant gender difference in academic performance of probating students as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

## II. METHOD

### A. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was an experimental study. The design of the study was the post test-only control group design. The study involved two groups (experimental and control groups) whose members were randomly assigned. This design was chosen because it provides a basis for comparison between groups in the sense that samples are randomly assigned to groups. The use of randomisation ensures that subjects in both groups are statistically the same at the beginning of the study. This is important so that, any significant difference between the groups at the end of the study can only be attributed to the treatment or its absence. The experimental group was given Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy while the control group was subjected to a discussion on sexuality education.

### B. PARTICIPANTS

The target population for this study was the probating students of the Federal College of Education Yola, Nigeria. The sample for this study was drawn from the NCE II probating students 2005/2006 session (numbering 183). The sample was drawn through stratified random sampling technique. There were two strata consisting of male and female probating NCE II students.

Group size for counselling groups according to Shertzer and Stone (1980) is between six and twelve. However, for this study the group size was twenty (20). The groups were that large in order to cater for subject mortality. The sample was made up of twenty (20) male students and twenty (20) female students i.e. forty (40) probating NCE II students.

### C. APPARATUS

Participants' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) for the session preceding the treatment and their CGPA after the treatment provided data for the study. The treatment procedure consisted of discussion on themes drawn from Rational-Emotive Therapy for the experimental group while for the control group; the themes were drawn from sexuality education. These were discussed in detail in the procedural aspect of the study.

### D. PROCEDURE

The procedure is made up of three phases:

- ✓ Pre Treatment Phase
- ✓ Treatment Phase
- ✓ Post Treatment Phase

#### a. PRE-TREATMENT PHASE

During the first semester preceding the commencement of the treatment, the researcher collected the list of NCE II probating students numbering 183 (79 males and 104 females) from the academic office of the college after having sought for permission to carry out the research. Before the sampling was done, the researcher contacted the College guidance counsellor and the College student affairs officer. The two officers were used to assemble the probating students. They explained to the probating students the reason for the experiment which was to test the effect of a particular therapy in helping to improve students' academic performance. They also introduced the researcher to the probating students. The probating students were stratified by separating the list into two groups (79 males and 104 females). After the stratification, the sample was drawn through random sampling using the 'yes' and 'no' method. Those who picked 'yes' ('yes 1' formed the experimental group while 'yes 2' formed the control group) were part of the sample while those who picked 'no' were excluded. In the first stratum (male), there were twenty 'yes' (ten 'yes 1' and ten 'yes 2') and 59 'no'. In the second stratum (female), there were twenty 'yes' (ten 'yes 1' and ten 'yes 2') and 84 'no'. Based on what the sample picked, they were assigned to experimental and control groups. The study had two groups (one experimental and one control). The sampling exercise took place in the first semester 2006/2007 session.

#### b. TREATMENT PHASE

This is the second phase also referred to as the treatment phase. The researcher served as facilitator for the two groups. The treatment was given in form of a group counselling. Group counselling was chosen to provide a relative basis for

comparison of the effect of the therapy. Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) which is didactic in nature was adopted for the experimental group while the control group was taught sexuality education. The treatment lasted for ten weeks of one hour each. The first session was used to establish rapport between the researcher and the students and also to create an atmosphere of friendship between the students. The first session was also used to by the researcher to explain to the students the purpose of the exercise, to select a group leader, and to set ground rules for group members. The time for meeting was also agreed upon during the first session. Experimental group met between 1-2pm on Tuesdays while control group met between 1-2pm on Thursdays. The 2<sup>nd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> sessions were used for the treatment proper while the tenth session was used to evaluate the entire exercise. The treatment was administered in the second semester. The treatment commenced in the third week of the second semester and lasted for ten weeks.

#### *Summary Of The Experimental Group Sessions*

The experimental group was given Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy. The group was made up of 20 students (10 males and 10 females). The treatment lasted for ten weeks of one hour session per week.

*SESSION 1:* The theme for the first session was introduction of group members. The goal was to get group members to know each other, elect a group leader and set ground rules. Activities during this session were in line with the goal of the session.

*SESSION 2:* The theme for this session was self-talk while the goal was to discuss self-talk (rational and irrational) and its influence on life generally and on academic performance in particular. The discussion was centred on the goal of the session. As part of the activities, members were asked to make a list of the things they tell themselves especially concerning their academics and their ability.

*SESSION 3:* The theme for this session was analysis of self-talk and the goal of the session was to analyse the lists of self-talk made by group members. Activities during this session centred on the lists of self-talk made by group members. In the course of the discussion, members were led to the realization that their self-talk actually forms substrate for their thought which directly influences their lives in general and their academic performance in particular.

*SESSION 4:* The theme for the fourth session was counteracting irrational or negative self-talk and the goal was to teach members how to counteract irrational self-talk through rational or positive self-talk. Activities during this session were centred on counteracting irrational or negative self-talk.

*SESSION 5:* The theme for this session was self-blame and the goal of the session was to discuss self-blame and its negative effects. In the course of the activities, members were encouraged to make a list of areas they have blamed themselves especially in their academic pursuits. They were encouraged not to accept their self-blame as a verdict but to overcome them by being positive about life.

*SESSION 6:* The theme for session six is learned helplessness and the goal was to discuss learned helplessness

which results from irrational or negative thought pattern. Learned helplessness was discussed. In the course of the discussion, group members were assured that all these were their imaginations and that they can change it by changing the way they think. They were also encouraged to learn to say what they want to themselves and not to allow what they do not want to dominate their thinking.

*SESSION 7:* The theme for this session was overgeneralization and the goal was to guide members to recognise what overgeneralization is and how it affects their academic performance. Overgeneralization was explained and demonstrated to group members.

*SESSION 8:* The theme for the eighth session was positive thinking and the goal was to help members to see the incapacitating effect of not thinking positively on their academic performance. Activities during this session centred on the power of positive thinking.

*SESSION 9:* The theme for the ninth session was hard work and persistence and the goal was to discuss the importance of hard work and perseverance with group members. The virtue of hard work was discussed. Examples of hardworking members of the society who succeeded in everything they do were cited.

*SESSION 10:* The theme for the last session was summary and evaluation and the goal was to review previous session, evaluate the exercise and terminate the group. Sessions 2-9 were reviewed. Members were asked questions to find out if the exercise was successful or not. Their responses were satisfactory. The group membership that started with 20 members now had only 16 members (7 males and 9 females). Unfortunately, members who absconded could not be reach to ascertain why they absconded. The group members were informed the exercise has come to an end, they were appreciated for participating in the study and thereafter, the group was terminated.

#### *Summary Of The Control Group Sessions*

The control group was given a placebo. The placebo was a teaching on sexuality education. At the onset of the treatment, the control group was made up of 20 members (10 males and 10 females). The treatment lasted for ten weeks of one hour per session.

*SESSION 1:* The theme for the first session was introduction of group members. The goal was to get group members to know each other, elect a group leader and set rules. Activities during this session were in line with the goal of the session.

*SESSION 2:* The theme for this session was sexuality and components of sexuality. The goal of the session was to discuss what sexuality is and what the components of sexuality are. As part of the activities, the researcher defined sexuality as the total behaviour exhibited by humans. The researcher then discussed the different components of sexuality with the group.

*SESSION 3:* The theme for the third session was sexual orientations and the Goal was to discuss what sexual orientation is and the different sexual orientations. In the course of the activities, the researcher explained the different sexual orientations.

**SESSION 4:** The theme for this session was sexual dysfunction and the goal was to discuss sexual dysfunction, types and causes of sexual dysfunction in both sexes. In the course of the activities, sexual dysfunction, types and causes of sexual dysfunction in both sexes were discussed.

**SESSION 5:** The theme for this session is adolescent sexuality and its consequences. The goal is to discuss adolescent sexuality and its consequences. Activities for this session was centred on the discussion on adolescent sexuality and its consequences.

**SESSION 6:** The theme for this session was teenage/undesired pregnancy. The goal for this session was to discuss teenage pregnancy and the problems associated it. Teenage pregnancy and its attendant problems formed the basis for discussion during the sixth session.

**SESSION 7:** The theme for the seventh session was sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and the goal was to discuss sexually transmitted diseases and their consequences. Sexually transmitted diseases and their examples were discussed during the seventh session.

**SESSION 8:** The theme for this session was the HIV/AIDS and the goal was to discuss HIV/AIDS as a sexually transmitted disease and its devastating effect. During the activities in the session HIV/AIDS was discussed.

**SESSION 9:** The theme for the ninth session was contraceptives and the goal was to discuss contraceptives as measures for preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. The theme was discussed with examples in the course of the activities.

**SESSION 10:** The theme for the tenth and last session was summary and evaluation and the goal was to evaluate the exercise and to terminate the group. Sessions 2-9 were reviewed. Members were asked questions to find out if the exercise was successful or not. Their responses were satisfactory. The group membership that started with 20 members now had only 13 members (6 males and 7 females). Unfortunately, the researcher could not meet with members that absconded to find out why they absconded. The researcher appreciated the group members for participating in the study and thereafter, the group was terminated.

**c. POST TREATMENT PHASE**

This is the third and the last phase. After the treatment, the researcher waited for the end of the second semester after which the participants CGPA collected from the college academic office.

**III. RESULTS**

The data generated for this study were analysed using t-test for paired observations and t-test for independent observations. T-test for paired observation was used to analyse the data generated to compare pre-test and post test results in both hypotheses one and two. This is because it involves a comparison of means generated by the same sample on the variable academic performance. T-test for independent observation was used to analyse data generated to compare experimental and control groups for both hypotheses one and

two. This statistics is suitable because the data involves means obtained from independent observations in order to determine the effect of Rational-Emotive Therapy on the sample.

The first hypothesis states:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of the experimental group compared with the control group.

The results of the analysis to test this hypothesis are presented in Tables 1.1-1.3 below.

Variables	N	M	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t
Decision						
Exp.	16	1.85	0.339	27	7.510	1.703
Reject						
Cont.	13	0.91	0.333			

*Table 1.1: t-test summary of the effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of the sample after treatment*

Table 1.1 revealed that the calculated t (7.510) was greater than the critical t (1.703) at degrees of freedom 27 under 0.05 level of significance. The mean score of the grade point averages of the experimental group (1.85) was by far greater than that of the control group (0.91). The result indicated that the effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of the experimental group was significant compared to that of the control group. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that ‘Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of probating students was rejected.

Variables	N	M	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t
Decision						
Pre-test	16	0.7	0.2	15	14.488	1.753
Reject						
Post-test	16	1.9	0.3			

*Table 1.2: t-test summary of the gain in academic performance of the experimental group after treatment*

From table 1.2 the calculated t (14.488) exceeded the critical t (1.753) at degrees of freedom 15 under 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the gain in academic performance of the experimental group was significant. This was further substantiated by the mean scores of their grade point averages before and after the treatment. Before the treatment, their mean score stood at 0.7 which was why they all probated. After the treatment, the mean score of their grade point averages stood at 1.9 implying that most of them had passed with a grade point average of one and above. The null hypothesis which stated that Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of probating students was rejected.

Variables	N	M	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t	Decision
Pre-test	13	0.6	0.2	12	3.842	1.782	Reject
Post test	13	0.9	0.3				

*Table 1.3: t-test summary of the gain in academic performance of the control group after treatment*

Table 1.3 revealed that the calculated t (3.842) is higher than the critical or table t (1.782) at degrees of freedom 12 under 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that there was a gain in the academic performance of the control group. The post test mean score of the control group stood at 0.9, while the pre-test mean score was 0.6. The implication of the above result was that after the treatment, most students in the control group scored below one point. This imply that though the t (3.842) of the control group was higher than the critical t

(1.782), it still cannot be compared with the experimental (calculated  $t = 14.488 > \text{critical } t = 1.753$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that 'Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has no significant effect on the academic performance of students was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

The second hypothesis states:

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant gender difference in academic performance of the experimental and control groups as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

The results of the analysis to test the above hypothesis are presented in tables 2.1 and 2.2.

Variable	N	M	Sd	Df	Cal.f	Crit.t	Decision
Male	7	1.929	.355	14	.809	1.761	Accept
Female	9	1.789	.333				

Table 2.1: t-test summary of gender difference in academic performance of the experimental group after treatment

Table 2.1 indicates that the calculated  $t (.809)$  which was by far less than the critical or table  $t (1.761)$  at degrees of freedom of 14 under 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there was no gender difference in the academic performance of the experimental group after the treatment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant gender difference in academic performance of probating students as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy was accepted.

Variable	N	M	Sd	Df	Cal.f	Crit.t	Decision
Male	6	1.017	.343	11	1.103	1.796	Accept
Female	7	0.814	.319				

Table 2.2: t-test summary of gender difference in academic performance of the control group after treatment

Table 2.2 revealed that the calculated  $t (1.103)$  was less than the critical or table  $t (1.796)$  at degrees of freedom 11 under 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there was no gender difference in the academic performance of the control group. Hence, the null hypothesis that stated that 'there is no significant gender difference in academic performance of probating students as a result of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy' was accepted. This is expected since the control group was not subjected to Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of this study revealed that:

- ✓ There was a significant gain in the academic performance of the experimental group after the treatment.
- ✓ Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has a significant effect on the academic performance of the experimental group, while the control group did not show any significant effect.
- ✓ There was no significant gender difference in the academic performance of the experimental group after the treatment.
- ✓ There was no significant gender difference in the academic performance of the control group after the treatment.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

From the result obtained in table 1.1 there was a significant gain in the academic performance of the experimental group after the treatment. The experimental group had a grade point average of 1.85 while the control group had a grade point average of 0.91. This indicates that the treatment given had an effect on the experimental group leading to the increase or gain in academic performance, while the control group which was exposed to a placebo did not make any significant gain in academic performance.

The result in table 1.2 revealed that Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy has a significant effect on the academic performance of the experimental group, while the control group did not show any significant effect. The result in table 1.3 also revealed that there was a gain in the academic performance of the control group though statistically not significant.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 both revealed that there was no significant gender difference in the academic performance of both the experimental and the control groups after the treatment.

The first hypothesis examined the effect of Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy on the academic performance of probating students. The findings revealed that Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy had a significant effect on the academic performance of probating students. The hypothesis was therefore rejected. This result agrees with Fajonyomi (1997) and Abosi (2004). This result was also supported by the finding of Pindar (1999) who reported that students exposed to Rational-Emotive Therapy showed more gains in their GPA compared with others exposed to other treatments.

The second hypothesis examined gender difference in academic performance as a result of the treatment given. The result indicated that there was no significant gender difference in the academic performance of the experimental and the control groups after the treatments. The mean score of the CGPA of the sample revealed that the male experimental has a mean of 1.93 as compared with that of the female experimental which is 1.79. On the other hand, the male control has a mean score of 0.93 while the mean score for the female control is 0.89. This therefore indicates that there was gender difference in academic performance of the sampled population though not significant as was indicated by the calculated  $t (.809)$  for experimental group and 1.103 for control group) and the table or critical  $t (1.761)$  for experimental and 1.796 for control group). The hypothesis was therefore accepted.

The implication of this study is that with the use of appropriate treatment procedures, students with academic challenges can adequately be helped to overcome their challenges regardless of their gender. This study also implies that Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy is an effective procedure for helping individuals with academic challenges.

It is recommended that instead waiting to use the therapy as a therapeutic procedure, measures can be taken to use the therapy as a preventive measure. In this case, periodic diagnoses should be conducted to fish out students whose academic performances are not up to expectations and be referred to the counsellor with a referral note stating the

observations made to guide the counsellor. These way cases of failure may be reduced to the barest minimum. Alternatively, the therapy can be inculcated into the General Studies curriculum of tertiary institutions there by ensuring that the information is passed on to the students effortlessly.

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