

## Decoding the VRS Wave: A case study of factors Influencing MTNL Employees' Decisions Across Age Groups

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### Abstract

Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is an Indian state-owned telecommunications company that runs their operation in Delhi and Mumbai. In year 2019, MTNL launched a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for employees aged 50 and more. The focus of VRS was to reduce the financial constraints of the salaries and there was a need to downsize and streamline the workforce. Around 75% employees opted for VRS. This acceptance rate of VRS was remarkable within the organisations. In this study, we demonstrate how employees of MTNL Delhi decided to go for VRS and what factors influenced them to arrive at VRS decision making process. This study investigates these factors between two age group of retirees that are 50 to 55 years and over 55 years respectively. The main focus of the study is on the aspects of Financial Readiness and Stability, Age-Related Bias and Workplace Perceptions, Skills and Career Transition and Healthcare and Medicare considerations Benefits between these two age group retirees which ultimately influenced them for early retirement. Apart from it, Healthcare and Medicare considerations are a major factor for those who were over 55. In this regard, the existing literatures on the subject are reviewed thoroughly and critical gaps are highlighted. The finding explains how VRS is a complex phenomenon that interplays among personal, professional, financial and health related factors in retirement decision. The study also sheds light on what actually goes through someone's mind when they decide it's finally time to retire early.

**Keywords:** Early retirement strategies, employee motivations, healthcare concerns, organizational transitions, post-retirement planning, retirement planning, skills adaptability, workforce management, workforce optimization, workplace ageism, Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS)

### Introduction

In 2019, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) implemented a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for MTNL employees. The main focus was to optimize its workforce, to reduce the financial instability and to overcome the evolving operational expenditures. The scheme targeted employees aged 50 and above. The VRS included a package of financial compensation and post-retirement benefits. The response was very high and about 75% employees (approximately 14,387 individuals) chose for VRS. It was a very high rate of participation in VRS. This study investigates how employees of MTNL Delhi decided to go for VRS and what factors influenced them to arrive at VRS decision making process. The study is between two age group of retirees that are 50 to 55 years and over 55 years. We've noticed that people in their 50 to 55 years are often thinking ahead to make sure they are financially stable and ready to take on new challenges once they retire. (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Bello, 2019). The important factors like financial security, healthcare coverage and physical and mental health for post-retirement life influenced more to employees

above 55 (French & Jones, 2017; Woźniak et al., 2022). There are many factors that contribute to VRS decision-making. Planning for retirement in term of financial stability, maintaining the lifestyle and mental health well being are critical determinants which allows employees to get confident to chose retirement early (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022). It is also observed that workplace culture, ageism, biases regarding technological adaptability influences the mindset of employees over 55 for early retirement (Das & Ayalon, 2025; Harris et al., 2018; Hegde & Kumar, 2024). Employees between 50 and 55 age group often find that the expertise they've gained at work gives them the confidence and curiosity to start new ventures of their own once they leave the organization (Lee, 2024). Reliable Healthcare and Medicare insurance is huge magnet for employees over 55. It helps them decide if they are truly ready to retire without worrying about future medical bills (French & Jones, 2017; Woźniak et al., 2022). Considering the above factors, this study emphasizes to understand how employees in different age groups react to the decision-making process of opting VRS. This study serves as a guide for employees looking to turn their next career move into a smooth and confident transition.

## Literature Review

The Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) plays a vital role in the transition from active employment to the retirement. There is a need of active planning and have to know about what benefits are being given to the retiree under the VRS. Most of the time, it is mutually benefitted to the retirees and organization. Organization downsizes the workforce and reduces the salary part and employees who choose the VRS option take the financial advantages and get benefitted by the time as they need to be used for themselves in contrast with the traditional retirement. In this study, it highlights the multi dimension impact of VRS on the lifestyle of the retirees how they plan their financial strategies economically in post retirement and how they tackle their overall health and well being. This study investigates these factors between two age group of retirees that are 50 to 55 years and over 55 years.

**1. Retirement Planning:** VRS usually targets older employees who are financially secure enough to move on. For them, leaving the organization becomes a comfortable choice rather than a difficult burden. Apart from this, this provides an opportunity for those with a strong track record and empowers them to pursue personal ventures or secure a new position where their contributions will be valued. There is strong need of financial preparation to secure post-retirement financial status (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Bello, 2019). It is observed that employees aged 50–55 seeks VRS as opportunities when they secure themselves with strong financially readiness, while employees over 55 choose financial stability as priority (Ingale & Paluri, 2025; Amani & Fussy, 2022). The studies related to financial preparedness in VRS decisions emphasizes more on strategic planning for financial readiness while opting to VRS. The 50–55 age group employees stick to the plan to adjust their financial portfolio (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021). This financial planning of employees majorly depends upon the financial education, resources, and counselling. It somewhat provides the deeper understanding to plan finances so that they may be confident during opting to VRS (Ingale & Paluri, 2025; Tiwari et al., 2021). Whereas, the employees aged 50–55 are often look forward to proceed for new avenue with their skill set and calculated risks. VRS provides them a sum short of financial aid to rearrange further prospect of leveraging early retirement to explore new financial opportunities like business , engagement in hobbies that somewhat becomes a new career option or they look for other assignment in other organizations or companies (Bello, 2019; Gallego-Losada et al., 2022). As it has already been discussed, employees above 55 tend to maintaining their financial stability and securing their healthcare and family obligations. Long term planning for financial readiness is more required on decision of choosing VRS to employees aged 50–55 but investment portfolio and saving including pension can compensate them in contrast

employees above 55. Employees aged 50–55 mostly take VRS as a reward and an opportunity to capitalize on personal skills and experiences (Amani & Fussy, 2022; Ingale & Paluri, 2025). During VRS decision, employees take advices and consultancies from financial experts and financial advisors for planning of their finances before opting for early retirement (Tiwari et al., 2021; Gallego-Losada et al., 2022). In view of early retirement, employees in the 50–55 age group addresses more focus on financial adjustment and search for more avenue to earn for financial stability (Amani & Fussy, 2022). Thus, retirement planning is the key element for VRS decision-making. Employees in the 50–55 age group take VRS scenario as an opportunity rather than financial securities and they emphasize more on financial adjustment and planning. Opposite to it, employees above 55 keep more focus on financial stability, health care management and prioritize to their family and social relationship (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Bello, 2019; Ingale & Paluri, 2025; Amani & Fussy, 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021).

**2. Ageism:** There is very thick and a complex interaction between individuals age with respect to their health, burden of job, workplace circumstances and conditions and immediate financial constrains for family needs. Workplace environment keeps a significant role for employees. When there are more eligible and skilled employees in an organisation, they neglect the aged employees. This type of working environment on employees aged 55 and above effects and demoralise them from career development, job satisfaction, and overall well-being whereas it effect less on employees aged 50- 55 (Marques et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2018). Older employees are less adaptable and less technologically proficient as compare to younger employees in the organisation. Theses perceptions create job burdens to older employees. Consequently, most of such employees opt to Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) as a proactive measure (Das & Ayalon, 2025; Hegde & Kumar, 2024). Studies suggest that employees aged 55 and above are more likely to choose VRS when they realize age-related biases in view of technology inadaptability (Das & Ayalon, 2025). Most of such employee feels that they are not professionally efficient and use to take early retirement as a dignified exit from organisations. Research shows that in Indian public sector companies, older managers often feel more pressure from leadership regarding productivity than their younger colleagues do. This constant scrutiny can make early retirement feel like a welcome relief (Harris et al., 2018; Hegde & Kumar, 2024). Most of the time, older employees in organisation are not included in decision-making processes and they are not selected for challenging assignment. This type of circumstances in workplaces evolves the feelings of professional age biases among older employees (Stypińska & Nikander, 2018). These age-related biases restrict the older employees for further career progression. Most of study highlighted that the age related biases in many sectors mostly in manufacturing and IT related organisations are very high due to sudden changes in technological infrastructure. This leads to older employees to get early retirement (Marques et al., 2020; Das & Ayalon, 2025). It has been seen that older employees feel difficulty in adapting to new technological changes that further become a threat of replacement by younger to them. In this line, most of the organisations emphasize more on restructuring and also emphasize on introducing of new technology to enhance productivity and performance. This type of pressure from organisations reduces on aged employees reduce their efficiency and become a barrier for adaptability (Stypińska & Nikander, 2018; Hegde & Kumar, 2024). In other words, retiring is not always a personal choice. It is come as a result of pressure from the organization as they try to modernize with technology and restructuring to boost organisation performance. Lastly, workplace ageism definitely put effect on older employee's decisions to opt for VRS. Organizational structures and cultural attitudes effect on older employees by discriminating them on the basis of age-biases in the workplace (Marques et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2018; Das & Ayalon, 2025; Hegde & Kumar, 2024; Stypińska & Nikander, 2018).

**3. Skills and Experience:** The goal of VRS is very clear in the process .The main motto of the organization to reduce or downsize the workforce effectively, cost cutting or shifting to adopt new technology or need of more modern or skilled workforce. VRS compensate all such issues and helps organization to avoid the negativity of layoffs of their workforce and boost the employee morale and prevent potential legal challenges. Employees aged 50–55 often find themselves more professional and efficient in their skills sets and have good planned roles in their further future after post retirement. Most of them have feeling that their skill are not fully utilized by the organization and take VRS as an opportunity to transfer their experiences and skill sets to new ventures (Sutangsa & Riswanto, 2019; Vickerstaff & Cox, 2005). On the other hand, employees over 55 mostly feel that their life should be more peaceful rather undergoing the process of upgrading their skill for adapting to new technological environment in the organization. Due to this, opting to VRS becomes a way to exit from workplace (Woźniak et al., 2022; Lee, 2024). It is always come into notice that employees aged 50–55 take VRS in the as an opportunity for searching further prospects of career so that hike in the salary may be gained so that they can fulfill the personal well-being and more financial security (Woźniak et al., 2022). Studies indicates that employees in the 50–55 age group are motivated and have a good confidence on their expertise so that they can come forward for entrepreneurship, consultancy, or part-time work (Sutangsa & Riswanto, 2019; Vickerstaff & Cox, 2005). Apart from this, employees over 55 have a mindset of prohibiting for further up skilling and adapting that leads them to retire early (Lee, 2024). This approach in older employees anyhow reflects in their decision and leads them to early retirement. Older employees take technological aspect of automation as a risk, while employees in the younger age focus for upgrading their skill in this tech era (Lee, 2024). This approach differentiate the thinking process of employees aged 50–55 and over 55 and leads to impact on decision process during the phase of VRS for early retirement .The priorities of both age groups are different in respect of early exit from the workforce. In summary, the main factors that come out important in the decision process of VRS are professionalism approach, technological knowhow and upgrading the skill in this tech era. Employees aged 50–55 are perceived to opt to VRS as an opportunities in this contexts, while those above 55 view VRS as a way of graceful exit from the workforce (Sutangsa & Riswanto, 2019; Woźniak et al., 2022; Lee, 2024; Vickerstaff & Cox, 2005).

**4. Healthcare and Medicare Considerations:** Physical health is key factor that has to be maintained in any cost. Health can be managed by regular exercise, healthy eating habits, and undergoing routine health check-ups. A good physical health contributes a lot for making a good mental and emotional state and well being in long-term. Apart from physical health, mental health is also very important. Retirees should prevent themselves from over thinking and unnecessary anxiety. To keep the mental state high, the involvement with their work, society, friends or family is considerably important. Healthcare and Medicare considerations are very much required in employees' decisions to opt for Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS). Employees aged 55 and above are mainly percept the conditions related of chronic health and their healthcare needs that will be increased in later stage of life. They need more comprehensive post-retirement health coverage that also plays an important factor in early retirement (French & Jones, 2017; Frimmel & Pruckner, 2020). For employees in the 50–55 age group, the immediate health concerns are considered less. Therefore, the medical expenses on health concerns are also felt less .The work-life balance in the 50–55 age group becomes a motivational factor for considering early retirement. These employees often take healthcare benefits to secure their postretirement life and they consider more on opening new venture of opportunities (Xie et al., 2021). In contrast, employees aged 55 and above needs more urgent healthcare concerns for managing chronic illnesses and need a comprehensive medical plan. Researches keep more emphasize on a comprehensive medical facilities and medical insurance policies on the healthcare provisions regarding maintaining

physical and mental well-being in post-retirement (Celidoni et al., 2017; Fleischmann et al., 2020). The availability of comprehensive health benefits help to retirees to prevent them from financial burden of medical expenses and also help them for their health management. At this stage of life, many employees feel it's time to step back from physically demanding work and high-stress environments to focus more on their health and peace of mind (Frimmel & Pruckner, 2020; French & Jones, 2017). Research further suggests that VRS should have a good package for healthcare coverage that is directly help employees to take decisions for early retirement. Employees over 55 keep their health on priority as an important factor to opt for VRS in respect of reduce occupational stress and functional capacity (Xie et al., 2021; Fleischmann et al., 2020). Psychological benefits are also being assured with the support of comprehensive medical planning in VRS package. For the 50–55 age groups, healthcare considerations are less and there is a need of long-term planning. These employees should engage themselves on preventive care so that they may able to enjoy post-retirement activities. In contrast, employees above 55, they need more medical care. The designing of VRS packages addressing all age-specific health requirements is very important to ensuring early retirement with financially and medically secure choices (French & Jones, 2017; Frimmel & Pruckner, 2020). In conclusion, healthcare and Medicare concerns are focal point to VRS decisions. Employees aged 50–55 consider healthcare as a need but not a priority whereas, employees over 55 take comprehensive health coverage as a primary factor for early retirement. Therefore, VRS design in health perspective is very important for employee satisfaction, smooth transitions to retirement and it supports long-term medical benefits (Xie et al., 2021; Fleischmann et al., 2020; Celidoni et al., 2017; French & Jones, 2017; Frimmel & Pruckner, 2020).

## Research Gaps

The existing literature on Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) provided the understanding for the factors that influencing early retirement decisions. In this literature review, several critical gaps have been examined that becomes foundation for the present study. The primary gap identified in previous studies is the lack of a comparative analysis between employees aged 50–55 and those over 55 regarding their decision to opt for VRS. While prior studies emphasize on the VRS irrespective of employee age group (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Bello, 2019; Ingale & Paluri, 2025; Amani & Fussy, 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021). In this topic, very limited studies are available how these two age groups differ in their assessment to opt for VRS in respect of maintain financial stability and long-term retirement goals etc. It has been observed from literature review that how employees aged 50–55 participates actively in exploring post-retirement opportunities whereas those above 55, who prioritize financial stability and health care security (Gallego-Losada et al., 2022; Bello, 2019). Secondly, the impact of workplace ageism on VRS decisions has been considered as a major cause for older employees to opt for VRS as exit from job assignment (Marques et al., 2020; Das & Ayalon, 2025; Hegde & Kumar, 2024; Harris et al., 2018; Stypińska & Nikander, 2018). But, the experiences of employees in the 50–55 age are not so much discussed in respect of workplace job structure and towards adapting new technological changes in organization. In literature review, mostly studies are covering the aspects of workers above 55 and not reflecting the age related issues of mid-older employees. This gap in the study is still uncovered. A third gap is related to the skill sets and career orientation. Although studies outline the role of skills and expertise in retirement decisions (Sutangsa & Riswanto, 2019; Woźniak et al., 2022; Lee, 2024; Vickerstaff & Cox, 2005), but it lacks how employees aged 50–55 become more aware of their skills sets compared to those above 55. Employees aged 50–55 see early retirement as an opportunity whereas employees above 55 may focus more on closing the chapter of career prospects and go forward for peaceful lifestyle (Lee, 2024; Woźniak et al., 2022). These differences in attitudes toward career and skill utilization are not covered under the available studies. Finally, healthcare concerns are also a focal point to VRS decisions. Employees aged 50–55 consider

healthcare as a need but not a priority whereas, employees over 55 take comprehensive health coverage as a primary factor for early retirement (Xie et al., 2021; Fleischmann et al., 2020; Frimmel & Pruckner, 2020; Celidoni et al., 2017; French & Jones, 2017). However, healthcare and Medicare concerns impact on employees aged 50–55 is less understood. In the existing literature, the healthcare and medicare provisions mostly focus on older employees rather than employees aged 50–55. This gap regarding how younger older employees take healthcare provisions of VRS to take for early exit decision from organization is still unidentified. In summary, the literature emphasizes that in VRS participation, the retirement planning, workplace ageism, skill sets and healthcare are key factors but, there is a clear need of comparative study across age groups (50–55 vs. 55+) to find out the differences in respect of financial readiness, skill valuation, healthcare considerations and on ageism biases. The study on these gaps will provide a more insight on decision-making processes for early retirement and will inform for designing better VRS strategies.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

Objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Employees aged 50-55 often choose retirement when they feel financially ready, while those over 55 focus more on securing stability.
2. Older employees, especially those above 55, may face age-related biases at work, leading them to consider VRS as an exit option.
3. Employees aged 50-55 are more likely to pursue new opportunities after retirement, while those over 55 may feel their skills are less relevant and choose to retire earlier.
4. Healthcare benefits are a key factor for employees over 55, as many see VRS as a way to secure medical coverage for retirement.

### **Methodology**

In this study, the quantitative research methodology is used to find out the factors influencing retirement decisions. The main motto is to target the two age groups that are individuals aged 50-55 and those aged 55 and above. Accordingly, the data was collected through a questionnaire that was structured to get the data related to financial preparedness, career progression issues, healthcare concerns and post-retirement ventures. The data is thoroughly analyzed using statistics tool which includes the measures of central tendency and variability (mean, standard deviation). It helped for summarize the responses within each group. Apart from it, correlation technique is also used using the Karl Pearson correlation coefficient that helped to calculate the relationships between variables that was assigned across the two age groups. Data which is collected in the form of responses are compared within these groups to identify patterns, correlation and divergent in responses related to their retirement-related concerns. This highlights the comparisons how these factors influence the retirement decisions and experiences of different age groups. The findings will outline the decisive pattern related to the VRS across these age groups to improving retirement planning and support.

### **Sample Size**

**Population Size:** Total MTNL employees who opted for VRS, the count was 14,387 in MTNL (**Sansad:** Sansad. (n.d.). *Annexure: AU1503*. Retrieved December 21, 2024).

**Geographical Scope of the Study:** NCR & Delhi Region

To determine the sample size for a population (half of the total population is considered as MTNL is operational in Delhi and Mumbai and demographic scope of the study is Delhi NCR) at a 90% confidence level with a margin of error of 10%, the sample size formula for finite populations was applied. This formula takes total population size (N), then Z-score for the desired confidence level (Z=1.645) is estimated on population proportion (p=0.5). This keeps maximum variability and the

margin of error ( $E=0.10$ ). After substituting these values into the formula, the required sample size was calculated to be approximately 68. This indicates that a sample of 68 participants within the specified margin of error and confidence level for the given population size.

### **Sampling**

A stratified sampling is used to select 50% of people from two age groups (50-55 and above 55) each out of a sample size of 68. Hence, sample size for age 50-55 and age above 55 comes out to 34 each.

### **Variable**

The independent variable is the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) that impacts the other factors directly that influences the employees to take early retirement. Basically, this independent variable influences employees' decision-making

The dependent variables as identified from objectives are financial readiness, age-related biases, skills and career transitions and healthcare factors. These are all legitimate outcome dependent variables connected to early retirement decisions under VRS.

### **Data Collection Method**

The questionnaire was thoroughly structured and designed to assess various dependent variable that were financial readiness, age-related biases, skills and career transitions and healthcare factors. These variables were influencing the retirement decisions for individuals opting for Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS). The first objective was aligned with the financial readiness and accordingly these questions assigned for self-assessment of financial preparedness. It was a major factor that influencing their financial decisions. It contained the savings, retirement pension plans and family support. The second objective is based upon to age-related biases at workplace. This was definitely influencing the age-related biases and addressing the challenges at the workplaces. The third objective informed about the skills sets that influenced employees to be confident in transitioning to new careers in post-retirement ventures. The final objective investigates healthcare concerns, importance of healthcare benefits that influence for early retirement decisions. The questionnaire was structured into four sections; the first section was related to Financial Readiness and Stability. This section contained questions like 1. How would you rate your financial readiness for retirement at the time of opting for VRS?, 2. Did financial planning play a key role in your decision to opt for VRS? , 3. What factors influenced your decision regarding financial preparedness? and 4. Was having a working spouse a significant factor in your decision to opt for VRS? The second section was related to Age-Related Bias and Workplace Perception. This section contained questions like 1. Have you experienced any challenges in your career progression due to age-related biases?, 2. Do you believe that these challenges influenced your decision to opt for VRS?, 3. How would you describe your experience with technology in the workplace? and 4. Do you think that age-related biases in your workplace have hindered your opportunities for career advancement?. The third section was related to Skills and Career Transition. This section contained questions like 1. Do you feel your skills are being underutilized at your current position?, 2. Are you considering post-retirement ventures (e.g., starting a business, freelancing)?, 3. Do you feel confident in transitioning to a new career or starting new ventures after retirement? and 4. Do you feel your skills are becoming less relevant for continued employment in your current field?. The fourth section was related to Healthcare Benefits. This section contained questions like 1. How important were healthcare benefits in your decision to opt for VRS?, 2. Did the availability of healthcare and Medicare options influence your decision to retire early?, 3. Do you feel that your health required more attention at the time of VRS than earlier in your career? and 4. Are you

concerned about healthcare costs after retirement?. This questionnaire helped us truly understand the many different thoughts and feelings of retirees when making decision of early exit under VRS.

## Data Analysis

A systematic approach was followed through the response choices using Likert-scale where each response was categorised and assigned with a specific weight based on its value. Each response assigned with weight in term of "1 = Not ready" to "5 = Fully ready,". The weights assignment varied with range from 1 to 5 respectively. Similarly, for binary or categorical options, weights assigned as "Yes = 3," "Sometimes = 2," "No = 1," and "Not applicable = 0." Accordingly, the sum of all weights for each response was calculated by multiplying the number of participants selecting each option by the corresponding weight and then adding these results. For instance, if 10 participants chose "1 = Not ready" (weight = 1) and 15 participants selected "5 = Fully ready" (weight = 5) for a financial readiness question, the total weight would be  $(10 * 1) + (15 * 5) = 10 + 75 = 85$ . The maximum possible weight is determined based upon the highest value on the scale. As an example, in a Likert scale that kept as 1 to 5 where the maximum weight would be 5. Accordingly, the response weight for each question was calculated as given by the each participant by dividing the sum of the maximum weight and then multiplying it by 100 to get it in percentage. This process standardizes it in term of metrics to get the result effectively. The response weights of participants aged above 55 and those aged 50-55, that are connected with objectives of the study such as financial readiness, age-related biases, skills, career transitions and healthcare benefits were requested, were gathered accordingly. Regarding the Objective 1, which focused on financial readiness and stability, the participants aged above 55 had a response weight of 98 and 92 was recorded for participants aged 50-55. In analysing the role of financial planning in opting for VRS, the weights were 92 and 97. The impact of financial preparedness the weights of 92 recorded for the above-55 group and 84 recorded for the 50-55 group. The responses on working spouse highlighted a remarkable difference, with weights of 13 for participants above 55 compared to 53 for the 50-55 groups. In Objective 2, focussing to age-related bias and workplace perception, participants above 55 had response weights of 40 and 48 for challenges in career progression compared to 31 and 36 for the 50-55 age group. Regarding workplace technology experience, the weight was higher for the 50-55 group at 88, as it was 68 for participants above 55. Similarly, age-related bias effecting career advancement outlined weights of 50 for the above-55 group and 37 for the 50-55 group. Objective 3 focused on skills and career transition. Participants aged above 55 provided a weight of 75 much lower than the 88 recorded by the 50-55 group. Interest in post-retirement ventures recorded the weights of 84 and 96 for the above-55 and 50-55 group, respectively. The confidence in transitioning to new ventures recorded at 74 and 89 respectively. The responses on their skills were becoming less relevant, then weights dropped to 44 for the above-55 group and 26 for the 50-55 group. The responses on questions under objective 4 related to healthcare benefits, healthcare's importance in VRS decisions expressed a major difference, with weights of 72 for participants above 55 and only 19 for those aged 50-55. The availability of healthcare options influencing early retirement recorded the weights of 43 and 22, respectively. Participants aged above 55 expressed a greater concern about health requiring more attention (74 vs. 43) and healthcare costs after retirement (94 vs. 85) compared to those aged 50-55. These results highlighted in different perspectives between these two age groups.

## Key observations from the data (Comparative Analysis)

The participants above 55 expressed more financially readiness that recorded as 98 than the participants aged 50-55 groups where it was 92. The aged 50-55 group more emphasized on financial planning rather than above 55 (97 vs. 92). Both groups influenced with the financial factors, but above 55 group participants weighted it slightly higher (92 vs. 84). Responses on

question of working spouse, aged 50-55 group expressed it high than participants above 55 (53 vs. 13). The participants above 55 participants expressed that they faced more career challenges and age-related biases (40 vs. 31; 48 vs. 36). The aged 50-55 group participants showed more interest toward technology (88 vs. 68). Above 55 participants had showed narrow mindset for career advancement (50 vs. 37). Both groups expressed that their skills not fully used in their job assignment but the score was high in aged 50-55 group's participants (88 vs. 75). The participants' aged 50-55 groups were more inclined with positive vibes of the confidence in post-retirement ventures (96 vs. 84; 89 vs. 74). The participants above 55 showed more concern about healthcare than the aged 50-55 group participants.

### Statistical Analysis

The standard deviation analysis differentiated how the two age groups responded to the questionnaire. For participants aged above 55, the mean score was 57.5. It showed a moderate level of agreement about their retirement decisions. The variance was 707.42. That was indicating that there was variability of responses. The standard deviation was 26.64. That showed that responses were slightly spread out. This suggests that above 55 group participants had approach that were basically influenced by personal factors such as finances planning, career experience or health concerns. For the younger age group (50-55), the mean was higher at 64.38. It showed they were confidence in their retirement-related decisions. However, their variance was also higher. The standard deviation was 30.25. It reflected that there was wider spread in responses. This means that the younger age group (50-55) had more diverse thinking. This difference signified that it might percept due to differences in approach in different career stages, financial planning and further post-retirement goals. Overall, the older group had more consistent in their responses. The younger group reflected marginally less consistency in responses. The Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis showed that the overall correlation across all questions was 0.84. It was a strong positive relationship. It reflected that both groups shared more or less similar responses. Looking at the objectives individually: for objective 1: Financial Readiness and Stability, this had a very strong correlation of 0.965, for objective 2: Age-Related Bias and Workplace Perception, this had a correlation of 0.962, for objective 3: Skills and Career Transition, this had a highest correlation of 0.988 and for objective 4: Healthcare Benefits, it had a lower correlation of 0.783. In summary, the analysis showed that the two age groups generally have very similarity in the responses regarding financial readiness, workplace challenges, and career transition plans. In other hand, analysis showed a major differences in healthcare-related priorities, where older participants show high concern about healthcare.

### Conclusions

After looking at the data analysis, we now better understood why people choose VRS. We specifically looked at two groups those aged 50 to 55 and those over 55 to see how their reasons for retiring differ. The financial readiness of older participants was high and their mean score was 98. The aged between 50 and 55 group's participants mean score was 92. It shows that the older participants are more prepare for retirement in term of financial preparedness. It is due to their less left service span and less family liabilities in comparison of aged 50 to 55. However, both groups outline variability in their responses. The older group had a standard deviation of 26.64 vs 30.25 in comparison of younger group. This highlights the difference in opinion towards financial readiness. Although both groups suggests that financial planning is very important in decision of retirement. The younger participants (50-55) addressed financial readiness as very critical in decision of retirement as reflected in their mean score of 97. It suggests that financial planning plays a major role in their decisions of early retirement. This group gives more importance on finding new venture after retirement. Regarding age-related biases in the workplace, older participants addressed more

challenges. Their mean score was 40 as compared to 31 for the younger group. This indicates the older workers faced age-related biases. Such biases become a factor for their choice to opt for VRS. Both age groups had moderate to high variability in their responses. It means these challenges basically faced by the older participants more. There was a strong correlation (0.962) in both groups for understanding of age-related biases. The study also points out the need to reduce age discrimination in workplaces and ensure equal career opportunities. In terms of skills and career transitions, both groups agreed for up skilling in post retirement. However, the younger group more incline to moving into new opportunities. Their mean score was 96, while the older group's score was 84. This shows that both groups emphasize on the matter of transitioning careers but younger group show more optimistic. The higher variance and standard deviation of 30.25 in the younger group, they are well aware and confident of their further career orientation. In other hand, the older group displayed a more consistent approach toward peaceful retirement life. Ultimately, older participants rated healthcare benefits more important. The mean score for healthcare was higher than that of the younger group (94 vs. 85). This reflects older retirees' have more concern about their health and their health related issues. The positive correlation of 0.783 shows an importance on healthcare role in the decision-making process for VRS. The variance in the younger group suggests they have different thought and opinion about healthcare considerations. These findings highlight the importance of considering age-specific needs when developing retirement policies in view of finances, career transitions, and healthcare.

## Recommendations

It is learnt from the conclusion that retirement programs, such as Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS), significantly influence the decision to opt for early retirement. This impact varies across different age groups. For people in the 50–55 age brackets, the decision to opt for a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) is difficult one. Because they still have many years of "financial life" ahead. They have to comprehensively make a roadmap for long-term earning, saving and for payout. Before retirement, they have to look forward for further opportunities in respect to earning using their skill sets and experiences. They should more aware to their financial liabilities and should also concern towards their healthcare management. On the other hand, for those 55 and older, the VRS decision is often influenced by their environment (technological knowhow), workplace bias or a lack of career growth. It is also learnt, many employees in this brackets also choose VRS to start their own business. It comes with their financial preparedness to hold this VRS as an opportunities. Active involvement in their routine work, self awakening and regular health checkups and exercise may release the feeling being old. Furthermore, since many retirees still want to contribute to the society, this becomes a framework for the helping others in the form of consultation or opening new ventures.

## Limitations and Future Research

This study only looked at a small group of people within a specific age as this sample size may not fully represent the entire retiree population. The two age groups targeted for this study, 50–55 and 55 and above, represent specific age blocks. However, the data within these blocks can vary significantly at the individual age level. The data can differ based on their specific age (such as being 51, 52, or 53 years old). The findings are based on self-reported data, which can prone to biases such as social desirability or inaccuracies in recall. Moreover, in this study, the data collected in a very short period from participants in one instances to observe long-term effects of Voluntary Retirement Schemes (VRS) with respect of various factors like financial stability, mental health, and post-retirement careers. But, viability of data may differ in long run due to change of participant's requirements and perceptions. The data for this study is collected from Delhi and NCR region that limit its applicability to other regions in view of different thought process for retirement

decision or in cultural contexts. Future research could address these limitations by using a more diverse sample, incorporating longitudinal data to track changes over time. The further study should include participants from different socioeconomic backgrounds, industries, and geographical locations. Apart from this, the impact of VRS on retirees should also be explored for understanding in respect of retiree's well being in long run.

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