



EFFECTIVENESS OF INTEGRATIVE BEHAVIOURAL COUPLE THERAPY AND LOGOTHERAPY ON PSYCHOLOGICAL EXHAUSTION AMONG MARRIED PERSONS IN IBADAN METROPOLIS.

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ABSTRACT

The alarming rate at which married persons divorce and re-marry is so disturbing in the recent time. Quite a number of them are faced with great challenges of psychological exhaustions which is so worrisome not only to the people concerned but the larger society as well. Therefore, the study examined the effectiveness of Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy on psychological exhaustion among married persons in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria. It adopted a quasi-experimental design with the use of pre-test/post-test and control groups. The study comprised 125 married persons (60 males and 65 females) in Ibadan metropolis. The reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's co-efficient alpha (0.78). The data collected were carefully analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in the post-test scores of psychological exhaustions experienced by the participants due to the experimental conditions (Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy). But there is no significant difference in the post test scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by the participants due to gender ($p > 0.05$). The study recommends Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy as effective therapies to reduce psychological exhaustion among married persons.

Keywords: Logotherapy, Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, psychological exhaustions, Married persons.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the most significant experiences affecting a person's life (Hunler & Gencoz 2005). But recently, the rate of marital exhaustion is worrisome. It seems important that an intervention should be embarked on to save the marital institutions from all forms of exhaustion with the goal of helping those individuals, married persons, and families that are struggling with the symptoms of exhaustion in life. Marital exhaustion is a gradual process that goes through several developmental stages that can end the marital relationship. This occurs when the married persons realize that the relationship is no longer meaningful to them, despite the efforts they are exerting (Deveci, & Deniz, 2016). Studies revealed that one of the factors that diminishes or eliminates the love and interest among married persons and caused *psychological* wellness issues and resulted to cold and impassive relationships is marital exhaustion (Kata and Joiner 2002). *Psychological* exhaustion is a problem that undermines the family foundation, predicts hostile characters, eliminates affections and leads to an accumulation of psychological pressures which in turn, weakens love; leads to a gradual increase in fatigue, monotony and accumulation of small annoyances which eventually aggravate burnout (Carver, Vunger, & Derry, 2003).

Marital exhaustion occurs as a result of unrealistic expectations, unreasonable feelings and challenges of life. At its peak psychological exhaustion in marriage is related to a collapse in marital bliss. Psychological exhaustion triggered by burnout usually occurs as a decline in self-assurance and pessimism toward their marital relationship. Family Studies authorities specify that the occurrence of marital burnout is on the increase recently; consequently, it can be concluded that 50% of married persons experience exhaustion in their matrimonies (Ahrari, Miri, Ramazani, Dastjerdi, & Tabas, 2018).

Psychological exhaustion usually appears as a decrease in self-esteem and a negative approach towards the relationship with one's spouse and feelings of despair and frustration. In fact, mental fatigue includes feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and deception among others (Pines, Neal, Hammer and Ickson, 2011). The psychological exhaustion of burnout manifests itself most clearly in a lowered self-concepts and in a negative attitude towards everything about the relationship,



particularly the mate; when married persons are first in love, they not only adore each other, they also feel pretty good about themselves. This invariably makes them feel good about their regular living. It is as if the magic of love touches everything. Through the rose-coloured glasses of love, both partners, charming and sexy. Life makes sense and is all promise; when exhaustion starts, things are no longer wonderful. Both partners are painfully aware of all the little (or not so little) things that the other one is doing that make them want to jump out of their skin and scream ("the manner in which he hacks ", "the manner in which she drives", "seeing his back", "her unshaved legs"). Their endurance for these and other conducts is severely hampered.

The feeling of bitterness is not limited to the spouse. There is a terrible feeling of personal disappointment; of having failed in the most significant relationship in one's life (even when the fault is not from you) and even if you did everything in your power to prevent it from happening). Looking at themselves in the mirror, victims of psychological exhaustion in marriage see a person they do not like. They discover some offensive faults in themselves they never knew existed. The sense of disappointment like the love before it surpasses the married persons. It affects the way they feel about other people, about life, about the future, and about their ability to love. Olusakin and Ubangha (1996 cited in: Adebisi, Makinde & Olusakin, 2020) emphasized the role of counseling in addressing problems of life whether vocational, educational, personal or social.

Psychological exhaustion occurs as a decrease in self-confidence and pessimism toward relationships, especially relationship with the spouse. When married persons lose their desire and love, even one unsatisfactory occurrence is enough for them to put undesirable tags on their partners. In this case, lack of empathetic from the husbands makes him impassive in his wife's opinion; and if the wife does not fulfill the husband's expectations, then the husband assumes the wife is being hostile. Unrealistic expectations towards the spouse may bring about dissatisfactions and discontent. (Pamuk, & Durmus, 2015) A timely treatment of married persons is of great importance that calls for attention, by considering this phenomenon and its destructive consequences therefore, this study explored the use of Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy in helping married persons who struggle with psychological exhaustion.

Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT), developed by Christensen and Jacobson (1998), is an approach of treating marital distress, with the strategies of helping couples to accept aspects of their partners that were previously considered unacceptable. Logotherapy developed by Frank (1958) on the other hand is a type of psychotherapy that believes that lack of meaning causes mental health issues, so it attempts to help people find meaning with the target of solving their problems. To Logotherapists lack of meaning can lead to "desperateness, emptiness or despair", - symptoms of exhaustion; so they attempt to assist the married persons to discern meaning "with the use of 'experiential values', 'creative values', and 'attitudinal values' (Ameli & Dattilio, 2013).

IBCT focuses on treating marital challenges which could be in form of couple burnout, with the strategies of helping couples to accept aspects of their partners that were previously considered unacceptable since this will provide a viable alternative for building a closer relationship. Logotherapy pays attention on treating marital challenges by making people to see beyond such challenges meaningfully and it also guides couples to alternate their perceptions by focusing on the meaning (satisfaction and fulfilment) that marriage brings.

Studies had shown that IBCT and Logotherapy have gained effective therapeutic outcomes because they have functioned effectively to reduce the symptoms of marital burnout and improvements in marital relationship (Corey, 2004; Gladding, 2003 & Marial, 2015). This research on psychological exhaustion intends to investigate the effectiveness of these therapeutic approaches on reducing psychological exhaustion in Ibadan Metropolis. The study focuses on how to assess and manage symptoms of psychological exhaustion caused by incompatibility between expectations and reality amongst married persons experiencing burnout.



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The indispensability of the family cannot be over emphasized as a fountain of help, liberation, redress and refuge. It is disturbing that family as an institution that should help to ameliorate the psychological pressure exerted on its members and establishes succor to pave way for growth and development seems not to stand to its responsibility recently. It is also worrisome that despite the fact that a number of people who are fascinated by romantic love and got married with the irresistible happiness and high expectation of blissful homes later encounter a lot of challenges in form of the symptoms of one exhaustion or the other that seem to constitute a major threat to their marriage.

Today, family violence and divorces have rapidly been on the increase, the examination of the marital exhaustion has called for attention. For instance, in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo state between 2009 and 2010 the customary courts handled 1,500 cases of divorce (Bamgbose, 2014). Married persons experience psychological exhaustion with the symptoms of - decreased self-confidence, negative feelings toward the spouse, feeling of disillusionment and disappointment toward one's partner such that they find it difficult to enjoy the relationship. They are painfully aware of all the little (or not so little) things that the other one is doing that make them want to jump out of their skin and scream ("the way he coughs", "the way she drives", "the sight of his back"). Their endurance is severely hampered.

A number of qualitative studies had investigated marital instability, divorce rates, occupational burnout, no detailed reports is gotten from the study of the psychological exhaustions experienced by married persons in their marital relationship in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. However, not much has been done in a poor resource, multi-ethnic, and culturally laden country like Nigeria; there is a dearth of information and a gap in research on marital exhaustion in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. In this context, this study intends to add more knowledge to the existing literature on psychological exhaustion by investigating the effectiveness of Integrated Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT) and Logotherapy on psychological exhaustion among married persons in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria.

Purpose of study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of Integrated Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT) and Logotherapy on psychological exhaustion among married persons in Ibadan metropolis.

1. To examine the difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by married persons exposed to integrative behavioural couple therapy and logotherapy and the control group.
2. To determine gender differences in psychological exhaustion experienced by the married persons exposed to integrative couple therapy and logotherapy and the control group.

Research Hypotheses

To aid the study two hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by married persons exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, Logotherapy and the control group.
2. There is no significant interaction effect of gender and experimental conditions on post-test mean scores of psychological exhaustion.



METHODOLOGY

Area of the Study

The research was carried out in Ibadan metropolis, South-Western Nigeria. Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State, by geographical area, is the largest city in Nigeria; but by population however, third after Lagos and Kano. At independence, Ibadan was the biggest and the most populated city in Nigeria and the third in Africa after Cairo and Johannesburg. The city of Ibadan is situated approximately on longitude 3°55'00" East of the Greenwich Meridian and latitude 7°23'47" North of the Equator at a distance some 145 kilometres North-East of Lagos. Ibadan is located in South-Western Nigeria; about 120 km east of the border with the Republic of Benin in the forest zone close to the boundary between the forest and the savannah. There are eleven Local Government Areas in Ibadan metropolis consisting of five urban Local Governments Areas in the city and six semi-urban Local Governments Areas in the fewer cities. However, its population in 2016 is estimated to be 3.16 million (CIA World Fact, 2016).

Research Design

The study is an experimental research. Quasi experimental design was adopted, while pre-test, post-test and control group design was specifically used for the study. Integrative behavioural couple therapy and Logotherapy were the interventions used to manage psychological exhaustion experienced by married persons in Ibadan Metropolis. There were one experimental group and one control group; no treatment was applied to the control group.

Population of the study

The target population for this study comprised of all married persons who are still living with their spouses - nuclear family that experienced psychological exhaustions in Ibadan Oyo state Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling procedure

The sample size consisted of 125 married persons in monogamous relationship. Multistage sampling process was used for this study. At the first stage, using hat and draw method, simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of three communities in Ibadan Metropolis based on the outcome of baseline assessment. Integrative behavioural couple therapy and Logotherapy treatments were used in two communities while the third community was used as the control group with no treatment (IBCT=41, LOGO=45, CONTROL=39).

Instrumentation

The instrument used to collect relevant data has two sections A and B. Section A consisted items seeking information on the participants bio-data while section B is the couple burnout measure developed by Pines was administered to married persons from selected households, community meetings, mosques and churches including (those who have visited their religious leaders for help concerning their marital challenges) to select participants from the population of married persons that experience psychological exhaustion for baseline assessment/ pretest to test the two null hypotheses with the help of trained research assistants. The reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's co-efficient alpha (0.78). Couple burnout measure (CBM) is a self-report instrument, which is designed by Pines (quoted by Basharpour, Mohammadi & Sadeghiveli 2015) to measure the degree of marital exhaustions.

Analysis

After the intervention, post-test of the experimental and the control groups was carried out using the same couple burnout measures. The data collected were carefully analysed and the hypotheses were tested with the use of inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation and analysis of covariance statistics (ANCOVA) to determine whether a significant difference exists in the post-test scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by the participants due to the integrative behavioural couple therapy and logotherapy interventions.

Pilot Study

To ascertain the reliability of the instruments, using a sample of 40 married persons (20males and 20 females), a pilot study was carried out by the researcher before the main study. It is a micro project carried out to identify the possible challenges that might surface before embarking on the main study. The pilot study was carried out by the researcher outside the study area. The estimated values for alpha coefficient derived from each of the sub-scale are: psychological exhaustion ($\alpha = 0.72$) this indicates a good internal consistence of the instrument.

Intervention Procedure

Appointment of Research Assistants

Three research assistants (Bachelor Degree holders), resident in Ibadan were appointed and trained by the researcher for effective data collection. They were trained on how to administer the instruments. The training lasted for two sessions of one hour each. The aims of the study were explained to the research assistants.

Administration of the treatment

The administrations of the research instruments were in three phases and were administered to the participants by the researcher and the research assistants. The phases are as follows:

Phase 1: Pre-treatment Assessment

The researcher, with the help of the research assistants administered personal attribute questionnaire and the couple burnout measure to the participants, a week before the treatment session in the three experimental groups as pre-test/ baseline assessment.

Phase 2: Treatment Phase

The sampled groups for the study were randomly assigned to intervention and control groups. The two intervention groups met once a week for six weeks for a minimum of one hour per session. The control group was on the waiting list.

Phase 3: Post-treatment session

At the end of the treatment sessions which lasted for six weeks, all the research instruments (psychological exhaustions) were administered again as post-test to the participants. This was to find out if the experimental conditions provided a change in the dependent measures.

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the post-test means scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by the married persons exposed to the 3 experimental conditions (Integrative Behavioural Couples Therapy, Logotherapy and the control group)*

Table 1: Descriptive Data on Pre and Post-test Score psychological exhaustion of participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group

Treatment	N	Pretest		Post-test		Mean difference
		Mean	Stdev	Mean	Stdev	
IBTC	41	30.02	1.39	17.05	6.70	-12.98



LOGO	45	30.24	1.32	17.64	6.76	-12.60
CONTROL	39	30.67	1.18	30.54	1.14	-0.13
Total	125	30.30	1.315	21.47	8.27	-8.83

As reported in Table 1 control group had the least mean difference of 0.13 in the post-test score in psychological exhaustion. In addition, participants exposed to IBTC reported the highest gain of 12.98 in the Post-test psychological exhaustion treatment scores slightly more than participants exposed to the LOGO therapy with mean difference post scores of 12.60 and the control group with a mean difference of 0.13. To determine whether a significant difference exists in the post-test scores psychological exhaustion among the participants due to the intervention, analysis of covariance statistics (ANCOVA) was done. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance on the Difference in post-test psychological exhaustion scores among the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Covariates	4711.866 ^a	3	1570.622	50.313	0.00
Intercept	13.043	1	13.043	.418	0.52
Pretest	44.620	1	44.620	1.429	0.23
Group	4332.933	2	2166.466	69.400	0.00
Error	3777.286	121	31.217		
Total	66120.000	125			
Corrected Total	8489.152	124			

R Squared = .555 (Adjusted R Squared = .544) ** p significant 5%

As reported in Table 2, the calculated F value of 64.40 was obtained; it is greater than the F critical of 2.61, $p < 0.05$ given 3 and 124 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected. This implies that there is a difference between the post-tests scores of psychological exhaustion among participants exposed to the Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group. The reported analysis indicated that a significance difference was found in the post-test of psychological exhaustion scores among the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group ($F=69.40$, $p < 0.05$). To determine difference in the experimental condition on psychological exhaustion among the participants. A Least Significance Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was employed. The results are presented in Table 9.

Table 3: Multiple Comparison on psychological exhaustion score among participants exposed to IBTC, Logotherapy and the control group

(I) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	
IBTC				
	CONTROL	-13.191*	1.275	.000
LOGO				



CONTROL -12.697* 1.233 .000

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

The LSD post hoc test were found between the control group and participants expose IBTC with a mean difference of -13.19 ($p < 0.05$) and those expose to LOGO therapy with a mean difference of -12.70 ($p < 0.05$). This implies that the control group had highest post-test scores in psychological exhaustion than participants exposed to IBTC and LOGO therapy. Similarly, participants exposed to IBTC reported a slightly lower post-test psychological exhaustion scores more than that LOGO therapy. This implies that IBTC was slightly better in improving psychological exhaustion than LOGO therapy. However, participants exposed to the control treatment do not reports significance difference in the psychological exhaustion when compare with those exposed to IBTC and LOGO therapy that reported significant improvement in the psychological exhaustion scores.

Hypothesis 2: stated that there is no significant interaction effect of gender and experimental condition on post-test mean scores of psychological exhaustion.

Table 4: Descriptive Data on Pre-test and Post-test psychological exhaustion Scores of participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group according to gender

Treatment	Gender	N	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean difference
			Mean	Stdev	Mean	Stdev	
IBTC	Male	21	30.00	1.30	16.71	6.18	-13.29
	Female	20	30.05	1.50	17.40	7.35	-12.65
	Total	41	30.02	1.39	17.05	6.70	-12.98
LOGO	Male	20	30.75	1.25	18.00	7.12	-12.75
	Female	25	29.84	1.25	17.36	6.48	-12.48
	Total	45	30.24	1.32	17.64	6.70	-12.60
CONTROL	Male	19	30.63	1.16	30.37	1.21	-0.26
	Female	20	30.70	1.22	30.62	1.08	-0.08
	Total	39	30.67	1.18	30.54	1.14	-0.13
Total	Male	60	30.45	1.27	21.47	8.21	-8.98
	Female	65	30.17	1.35	21.48	8.40	-8.69
	Total	125	30.30	1.32	21.47	8.27	-8.83

Table 4 revealed that both male and female participants in the control group reported the least mean difference of 0.13 in the post-test psychological exhaustion. On the other hand, male (13.29) and female (12.65) participants exposed to IBTC reported the highest change in psychological exhaustion change than male (12.750 and female (12.48) participants exposed to LOGO therapy. The analysis also shows that both male and female participants exposed to IBTC treatment with a mean difference of 12.98 had the highest mean difference in the post-test psychological exhaustion than male and female participants exposed to LOGO therapy with a mean difference of 12.60. To determine whether significant difference exists in the post-test scores in psychological exhaustion due to participants' gender, analysis of covariance statistics (ANCOVA) was done. The result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Analysis of Covariance on the Difference in the posttest scores of psychological (psychological) exhaustion and gender across the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4717.795 ^a	6	786.299	24.602	0.00
Intercept	13.871	1	13.871	.434	0.51
Pretest psychological	40.110	1	40.110	1.255	0.27
Gender	1.840	1	1.840	.058	0.81
Group	4326.609	2	2163.305	67.686	0.00
Gender * Group	4.193	2	2.097	.066	0.94
Error	3771.357	118	31.961		
Total	66120.000	125			
Corrected Total	8489.152	124			

a. R Squared = .556 (Adjusted R Squared = .533)

Table 5 revealed that the calculated F of 0.06 is less than the critical F at degree of freedom of 2, 125. This is not significant at 5% ($p > 0.05$). Also, no significance difference in the post-test psychological exhaustion of the participants due to sex and experimental and control condition ($F = 0.07$, $p > 0.05$). This implies that there is no significant difference between post-test scores of in psychological exhaustion due to gender. This implies that there is no significance difference in the post-test scores of psychological exhaustion of participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group of the male and female participants. Thus, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The analysis indicated that participants exposed to interventions experienced significant difference compared to those of the control group. Therefore, hypothesis one was rejected. The participants exposed to IBCT reported a slightly lower post-test psychological exhaustion scores more than that LOGO therapy. This implies that IBCT was slightly better in improving psychological exhaustion compared to LOGO therapy. However, participants exposed to the control treatment do not reports significance difference in the psychological exhaustion when compare with those exposed to IBCT and LOGO therapy that reported significant improvement in the psychological exhaustion scores. This is in congruence with Christensen et al., (2010) where it was confirmed that IBCT demonstrated improvements three to five years after the intervention resulting to an enhancement in relationship satisfaction (Cohen's $d = 1.03$; Christensen et al., 2010).

The findings also showed that both male and female participants exposed to IBCT had the highest mean difference in the post-test scores of psychological exhaustion than male and female participants exposed to LOGO therapy. There is no significance difference in the post-test scores of psychological exhaustion experienced by participants exposed to the Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group between male and female participants. Thus, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

The study therefore revealed the effectiveness of IBCT and Logotherapy interventions in helping married persons to read positive meaning to life and positive behaviour to one's spouse as antidotes to marital burnout.



Conclusion

According to the findings of this study IBCT and Logotherapy training are effective, simple and practicable in reducing psychological exhaustion among married persons. But it must be noted that IBCT has greater efficacy. IBCT training sessions laid emphasis on how to resolve marital problems through acceptance building strategies, helping partners to clarify and communicate their needs and also identify ways of solving each problem through compromise; and by emphasizing controlling variables unique to each partner, the IBCT training reduced universally problematic patterns of reciprocity (exchange of negative behaviour) and brought about improvement in trust, intimacy, and cooperation in the relationship. Similarly, through Logotherapy intervention married persons are able to read positive meaning and behaviour to life and one's spouse as antidotes to psychological exhaustion.

Recommendation

Marriage counsellors should familiarize themselves with the use of IBCT and Logotherapy principles and procedures as well as their treatment packages in assisting married persons to overcome exhaustion symptoms.



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