

# EFFECTIVENESS OF INTEGRATIVE BEHAVIOURAL COUPLE THERAPY AND LOGOTHERAPY ON BURNOUT EXPERIENCED BY THE MARRIED PERSONS IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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## Abstract

*This study investigated the effectiveness of Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy on burnout experienced by married persons in Ibadan metropolis. It examined the difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of burnout experienced by married persons and it also determined the gender differences in burnout experienced by the married persons exposed to the three experimental conditions (Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, Logotherapy and the control group). The study adopted experimental research design with the use of Pre-test/Post-Test control quasi design. A total of 125 married persons participated in the study. Couple burnout measure was used to gather data to test the two null hypotheses. The reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's co-efficient alpha (0.78). The data collected were carefully analysed and the hypotheses were tested with the use of mean, standard deviation and analysis of covariance statistics (ANCOVA) to determine whether a significant difference exists in the post-test scores of burnout experienced by the participants due to the three experimental conditions (Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, Logotherapy and the control group). The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in the post-test scores of the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy while participants in the control group reported no significant difference. There is no significant difference in the post test scores of burnout experienced by the participants due to gender. The study recommends Intergrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy as an effective therapy to reduce burnout among married persons.*

**Keywords:** *Logotherapy, Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, Burnout, Married persons.*

## INTRODUCTION

Indispensability of peaceful homes cannot be overemphasized in achieving an egalitarian and peaceful society which will eventually increase the rate of economic growth and development. In other words unstable and problematic homes may slow down the rate of productivity of the society resulting to a sort of stagnation in growth and development of the society.

Good marriage is the bedrock of strong societies, being the foundation of a strong family and almost all other relationship depends on it. Makinde (2020) submitted that marriage is the bedrock of all nations and the most intimate of all relationships. These and many other reasons, entitle marriage to call for attention of many scholars. In fact, most married persons began their life with love and they never thought that in future, their flame of love will dwindle. When the fire of romantic love dwindles over time, they seem not to attach meaning to life any longer; other expectations seem not to be met. They are disappointed and felt burnout (Pines, 1996, 2010). Burnout occurs gradually; it is not a sudden occurrence. In fact, love and intimacy diminishes gradually and it is associated with a general exhaustion. Without timely intervention, burnout could result to marital breakdown (Pines, 2002).

Marriage is one of the most important events of life affecting social status as well as the psyche of an individual. It does not only meant to satisfy the fundamental biological need of sexual gratification through a socially acceptable way but also helps the individual to achieve a higher level of personality maturation. Ubangha, Makinde, Idowu, & Ebele (2013) opined that marriage is an important act which many people want to experience in their lifetime. Osareren (2002) views marriage as a union between an adult male and an adult female. Marriage as a relationship is one of the deepest and most fulfilling of human relationships, responding to both man's fundamental and social needs (Srivastava, 2017).

Ayala (2003) posits that burnout is a state of physical, psychological and emotional exhaustion caused by incompatibility between expectation and reality. It is often described as a three-dimensional structure in literature. Burnout is accompanied by such symptoms as physical exhaustion, lethargy and indifference. Emotional exhaustion is characterized by feelings of resentment, unwillingness to resolve problems, despair, depression, meaninglessness and even suicidal tendencies. Symptoms of psychological exhaustion include low self-esteem, a negative view of one's spouse, dissatisfaction with one's spouse and dissatisfaction with oneself.

Somatic exhaustion is due to chronic fatigue that one cannot resolve with sleep. According to Pines (1996) physical exhaustion of burnout is not like the one caused by physical exercise like running a marathon or spending the day raking leaves, it is a chronic fatigue that is unrelieved by sleep. After spending a whole weekend (resting) in bed, victims of somatic exhaustion wake up tired on Monday morning. After dragging their feet all day when night finally arrives, they cannot fall asleep. Occasionally, such people have chronic headaches stomach or back pains. They become susceptible to illness, catching every cold or flu around; some people don't feel like eating ("I have a gigantic bump in my throat"). Others eat compulsorily ("At least" I can get this enjoyment out of life").

Ahmadi , Zaharakar , Davarniya and Rezaiee, (2016) confirmed that burnout in marriage would emerge when the married persons note that despite all their efforts, they could not experience any significant meaning in the relationship and there is no hope of getting such meaning; they become hopeless and despair. It is a common marital problem which many married persons experience. Those who suffer burnout in marriage feel that they have been emotionally destroyed, resented, discouraged and have no interest to explain anything or to take a step towards solving their problems. Burnout among married persons, fuel discouragement, brings about emotional and mental separation among them and marital excitement dwindles.

Olusakin and Ubangha (1996) emphasized the role of counselling in addressing problems of life whether vocational, educational or personal-social. There are variations in the needs, challenges or concerns of people (married persons) which with the help of counselling can be tackled. Despite this, many marriages are at the verge of collapse due to the fact that they are not exposed to tap from the available help in form of marital counselling (therapies) that could help to sustain their marital well-being. The need to redeem the sick homes from collapsing and reinstating mental health is inevitable. According to (WHO, 2001) a person who has good mental health is able to realize his or her own potentials, cope with the pressure of daily living, work efficiently, and contribute to the society. Therefore this study is set out to investigate the effectiveness of Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT) and Logotherapy on burnout experienced by the married persons in Ibadan Metropolis

Behavioural therapies like IBCT sprout from the basic proposal that all behaviour – good or bad, proper or unsuitable – is learned. Anything that is learned can also be unlearned. Of course, that's a bit simplified as humans are multifaceted living being and other influences come into show as well. Integrative behavioural couple therapy recognizes this fact. Rather than focusing merely on the goal of acceptable behavioural adjustments in a relationship, it also emphasises on the goal of emotional acceptance as well. When both partners in a relationship learn to sincerely accept each other, positive adjustments occur more willingly as well as more naturally.

Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBCT) seems to be suitable for married persons burnout as it puts more emphasis on the emotional acceptance within the married persons rather than change and it has also been proved that this approach is quite effective for treating marital distress as it has a different stance regarding relationship distress (Dimidjian, Martell, Christensen, 2008; Christensen, Jacobson and Babcock, 1995). IBCT is based on the fact that fostering acceptance and tolerance is important concerning the improvement of married persons burnout (Cordova, Jacobson, & Christensen, 1998).

According to Ameli and Dattilio (2013), Logotherapy 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 “emptiness, hopelessness, or despair”, -symptoms of burnout; so they try to help people find meaning “through ‘creative values’, ‘experiential values’, and ‘attitudinal values’”. Logotherapy is composed of three basic principles.

The first basic principle is that life has meaning in all circumstances, even despondent ones. The second principle is that the main motivational force is the desire to find meaning in life. Lastly, the third basic principle states that human beings have the freedom of attitudinal options, even in situations of unchangeable affliction. He stressed that people should not suffer unnecessarily in order to find meaning but that meaning was possible when travail is inevitable ((Frankl, 1963 in Varghese 2015).

Logotherapy according to Corey, (2004) and Gladding, (2003) helps married persons to realize the importance of accountability, responsiveness, autonomy and prospectives. Frankl, (1963) declares that no matter how intense the family history, it is possible for an individual to make a positive meaning out of any situation and can find a means of discovering meaning. Logotherapy struggles to understand the complete person, spiritually as well as psychologically. The relationship between the therapist/counsellor and client is “meaning oriented”. Oshamehin (2005) opined that Logotherapy aims at helping people see meaning in their life.

In the logotherapy literature four sources of meaning are regarded as central to maximizing the potential success of an intimate relationship such as marital:

1. Each partner discerns their own personal meaning,
2. Each person self-transcends toward a meaningful intimacy (an unselfish love where the partner is experienced and appreciated as unique),
3. Each partner supports the other in moving toward meaningful possibilities,
4. each partner preserves their own aims in congruence to the objectives of a healthy partnership (Crumbaugh and Henrion, 2004; Spore, 2008).

Family life is not determined by what happens to it, but by how it reacts to what happens. Not by what life brings to us as members of the family, but by the attitude we bring to our life in the family. A positive attitude causes a chain response of constructive thoughts, events and outcome. It is a catalyst, a stimulus that produces amazing results.

While IBCT focuses on treating marital challenges which could be in form of burnout among married persons by helping them to accept parts of their partners' behaviour that were formerly assumed to be unacceptable; Logotherapy's attention was on handling marital challenges by making people to see beyond such challenges meaningfully. In addition, IBCT provides a viable alternative for married persons by establishing a closer relationship, Logotherapy helps married persons to alternate their perceptions by focusing on the meaning (satisfaction and fulfilment) that marriage brings.

Studies have shown that IBCT and Logotherapy have functioned effectively to reduce the symptoms of married persons burnout and improvements in marital relationship (Corey, 2004; Gladding, 2003 & Mairal, 2015). This research on married persons' burnout investigates the effectiveness of IBCT-Logotherapy therapeutic approaches on reducing burnout among married persons in Ibadan Metropolis. The study focuses on an assessment and management of symptoms of physical (somatic), psychological and emotional exhaustions caused by incompatibility between expectations and reality amongst married persons experiencing burnout.

### **Statement of the problem**

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 that seem to constitute a major threat to their marriage which is quite worrisome. It is also bothersome to note that the increasing incidence of separation, divorce, single parent families, remarriage and reconstituted families are on the increase in the recent times such that they find it difficult to enjoy the relationship. These stress not only the families concerned but the society at large. Quite a number of married persons experience weariness, boredom, anorexia, lethargy, chronic headaches, abdominal pain and overeating among others which are signs of physical (somatic) exhaustion. They keep on remembering every unkind words, every inconsiderate act of their mate. Each offence (crime) on their long hit becomes magnified in the twilight of sleep. They are furious. They toss and turn; when they finally manage to fall asleep, they are haunted by nightmares (their home struck by an earthquake) and some people take sleeping pills or drink alcohol to help them fall asleep, but the next morning they awake fatigued, with a splitting headache. The victims of burnout feel more and more weary. 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). This is a problem because it could hinder the perfect performance of their other meaningful responsibilities.

### **Purpose of study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the effectiveness of IBCT and Logotherapy on burnout on among married persons in Ibadan metropolis.

1. To examine the difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of burnout experienced by married persons exposed to IBCT and logotherapy training and the control group.
2. To determine gender differences in burnout experienced by the married persons exposed to the training.

## **Research Hypotheses**

To aid the study two hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of burnout 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 condition on post-test mean scores of burnout.

## **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 largest and the most populous city in Nigeria and the third in Africa after Cairo and Johannesburg. The city of Ibadan is located 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).

## **Methodology**

The study is an experimental research. Quasi experimental research design was adopted, while pretest-posttest control design was specifically used for the study. Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy and Logotherapy were the interventions used to manage somatic exhaustion experienced by married persons in Ibadan Metropolis. 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 used by the researchers to gather data to test the two null hypotheses. The reliability coefficient was obtained using Cronbach's co-efficient alpha (0.78). The data collected were carefully analysed and the hypotheses were tested with the use of mean, standard deviation and analysis of covariance statistics (ANCOVA) to determine whether a significant difference exists in the post-test scores of burnout experienced by the participants due to IBCT and Logotherapy interventions.

## **Administration of the treatment**

### **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 in Akobo Area of Ibadan. The estimated values for alpha coefficient derived from each of the sub-scale are: somatic exhaustion ( $\alpha =0.78$ ), psychological exhaustion ( $\alpha =0.72$ ), emotional exhaustion ( $\alpha =0.79$ ), and burnout ( $\alpha =0.75$ ). These indicate a good internal consistence of the instrument.

### **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 objectives of the study were explained to the research assistants.

### **Intervention Procedure**

This was carried out in three phases:

#### **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.

#### **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, Couple Burnout Measure CBM by Pines, 1996 (the research instrument) was administered again as post-test to the participants. This was to find out if the experimental conditions provided a change in the dependent measures.

### **Data Analysis**

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of “burnout” experienced by married persons exposed to the three experimental conditions (Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy, Logotherapy and the control group) In order to test the hypothesis, analysis of covariance was employed. The reports are presented in Table 1, 2, and 3.

**Table1: Descriptive Data of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group**

| Treatment | N   | Pre-test |       | Post-test |       | Mean diff. |
|-----------|-----|----------|-------|-----------|-------|------------|
|           |     | Mean     | Stdev | Mean      | Stdev |            |
| IBTC      | 41  | 96.39    | 3.15  | 50.59     | 12.25 | -45.80     |
| LOGO      | 45  | 96.82    | 2.89  | 53.53     | 12.05 | -43.29     |
| CONTROL   | 39  | 97.23    | 3.06  | 96.90     | 3.23  | -0.33      |
| Total     | 125 | 96.81    | 3.03  | 66.10     | 23.19 | -30.71     |

The result in table 1 shows that the control group had the least mean difference of -0.33 in the post-test score in the burnout treatment. On the other hand, participants exposed to IBTC reported the highest gain of 45.80 in the post-test burnout scores slightly more than participants exposed to the LOGO therapy with mean difference post scores of 43.29 while the control group with a mean difference of 0.33 has the least difference in the scores. To determine whether a significant difference exists in the post-test scores burnout 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 burnout 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.p |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Corrected Model | 54525.288 <sup>a</sup>  | 3   | 18175.096   | 180.980 | **    |
| Covariates      | .222                    | 1   | .222        | .002    | NS    |
| Pretest         | 559.181                 | 1   | 559.181     | 5.568   | **    |
| Group           | 52389.289               | 2   | 26194.644   | 260.835 | **    |
| Error           | 12151.560               | 121 | 100.426     |         |       |
| Total           | 612762.000              | 125 |             |         |       |
| Corrected Total | 66676.848               | 124 |             |         |       |

a. R Squared = .818 (Adjusted R Squared = .813) \*\* p significance at 5%

Evidence from Table 2 indicates that a calculated F value of 260.84 was obtained; which 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 in burnout among participants exposed to the Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group. The reported analysis indicate that a significance was found in the post-test burnout scores among the participants exposed to Integrative Behavioural Couple Therapy (IBTC), Logotherapy (LOGO) and the control group ( $F=260.84$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). To determine difference in the experimental condition on burnout among the participants, a least Significance Difference (LSD) multiple comparison was employed. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Multiple Comparisons on burnout score among participants exposed to IBTC, LOGO and the control group**

| (I) Group |         | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig.p |
|-----------|---------|-----------------------|------------|-------|
| IBTC      | CONTROL | -44.944*              | 2.266      | **    |
|           | LOGO    |                       |            |       |
| LOGO      | CONTROL | -42.290*              | 2.206      | **    |
|           | IBTC    |                       |            |       |

\*. 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 44.94 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and those expose to LOGO therapy with a mean difference of 42.290 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that the control group had highest post-test mean scores in burnout than participants exposed to IBTC and LOGO therapy. Similarly, participants exposed to IBTC reported a lowest post-test couple burnout scores slightly more than that LOGO therapy in the treatment. This implies that IBTC treatment is slightly better in improving couple burnout than LOGO therapy. However, participants exposed to the control treatment do not reports significance difference in the burnout when compare with those exposed to IBTC and LOGO therapy that reported significant improvement in the burnout scores. By implication, the control group do not improve in burnout when compare with participants exposed to IBTC and Logo therapy.

## **Discussion of findings**

**Hypothesis one** stated that there is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of “burnout” experienced by married persons exposed to the three experimental conditions. The result of the analysis indicated that participants exposed to intervention experienced significant difference compared to those in the control group. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected. The degree of this difference was greater in the group that was exposed to IBCT. But it must be noted that IBCT has greater efficacy than Logotherapy.

**Hypothesis two** stated that there is no significant interaction effect of gender and experimental conditions on post-test mean scores of burnout. The analysis also shows that both male and female participants exposed to IBCT had the highest mean difference in the post-test scores of burnout than male and female participants exposed to LOGO therapy. There is no significance difference in the post-test burnout of 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 results of the hypotheses tested showed that IBCT and Logotherapy are effective therapies to reduce burnout among married persons. The participants improve in love in their relationship and began to have a better understanding to meaning in their relationships they began to shift attention from their problem to meaningful life style. The findings agrees with (Frankl, 2006) who reported that the client’s focus is shifted from the problem or symptom toward areas of life-meaning, with the intended outcome being a lessening of the anticipatory anxiety that supported the continued existence of the original symptom/problem.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study IBCT and Logotherapy training are effective, simple and practicable in reducing burnout among married persons.

## **Recommendations**

- Married persons are encouraged to adhere to meaningful living in their marriage.
- The number of required marital counsellors should be prioritized.
- 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 burnout symptoms.

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