E-ISSN: 1116 - 3240 P-ISSN: 3026-9334
MPRI-JAIMR | INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AFRICAN INNOVATION & MULTIDSCIPLINARY RES.
VOL. 05 NO. 2 – JULY, 2024

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF NEWLY WEDDED WIVES IN OYO TOWN: EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF COMPOUND WIVES TRAINING AND AGE

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Abstract

The psychological wellbeing of wives is a critical area of study due to its profound impact on family dynamics and overall societal health. While substantial research has been conducted on psychological wellbeing in general, there remains a significant gap in the understanding of how traditional practices, specifically compound wives training, affect the psychological wellbeing of newly wedded wives. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of compound wives training (olobinrin ile) on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design of ex post facto type, the research targeted educated women married for no more than three years. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 200 participants from various religious organizations, with 197 valid responses obtained. Data was collected using an adapted version of Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale (2014) and a self-developed scale assessing participation in compound wives training, yielding a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.73. Results revealed a significant positive correlation between olobinrin ile training and psychological wellbeing ($r = .652$, $p < .05$). The combined effect of the training and participants' age accounted for 45.1% of the variance in psychological wellbeing (R-square = 0.451, $F(2, 197) = 80.791$, $p < 0.05$). Women who participated in the training showed lower mean psychological wellbeing scores ($M = 69.1370$, $SD = 5.31164$) compared to non-participants ($M = 72.2536$, $SD = 8.06078$), with the difference being statistically significant ($t = -3.170$, $p < .001$). Integrating modern counseling techniques with traditional practices to enhance the positive aspects of olobinrin ile training while addressing potential negative impacts is important.

Keywords:
Psychological Wellbeing, Examining, Compound, Wives Training, Newly Wedded.

Introduction

The mental state of humans is an important determinant of their overall wellness and as such, prioritizing a positive mental health in this present age and time cannot be underplayed. Of note are the challenges women encounter in their marital endeavour which has the capacity to affect their psychological state of mind. Women who have accrued many years of experience in marriage continually find it difficult to cope with the ups and downs of marriage and so, it is not

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unusual that newly wedded wife experience life events and challenges ranging from financial balancing, bad habits, poor communication, fertility issues amongst others that may lead to worrying, anxiety, loneliness, isolation and other related psychological issues. The cumulative effect of these stressors can significantly impact the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives, potentially leading to diminished life satisfaction, strained marital relationships, and even long-term mental health concerns if left unaddressed. Given the critical nature of this transitional period, it is essential to understand and address the psychological needs of newly wedded wives.

Mental health has been defined as the absence of mental disorder which enables a person fulfill the personal growth and experiences of happiness and satisfaction (World Health Organization, 2001). Thus, psychological well-being is an integrated process apart from mental disorder that involves a concept of more than happiness and includes a concept of optimistic development (Fen, Isa, Chu, Ling, and Ling, 2013). Psychological well-being is the first element that is threatened in the face of stressful life events. Stressful life events with dimensions including challenging the adaptive mechanisms of the individual being threatened, imposing demands on the individual over accessible resources and disrupting the achievement of life goals have many physical and psychological consequences for a person (Cohen et al., 2019). For married women and especially newly married, the cultural practices of a community or group of people plays a significant role in determining their mental state.

Recent surveys on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Nigeria have revealed concerning trends. Nwatu (2020) approximated that around 45% of newly wedded wives reported experiencing moderate to severe levels of anxiety during their first year of marriage, while 38% showed signs of depression. These statistics highlight the emotional challenges faced by women during this transitional period and underscore the need for effective support systems.

Several factors contribute to the psychological stress experienced by newly wedded wives during this crucial period. Olajire and Olusa (2023) identified key stressors including adjustment to new family dynamics, financial pressures, and expectations regarding childbearing. Lucero Jones (2023) revealed that newly wedded wives experienced significant role conflict as they navigated between their careers and new familial responsibilities. These challenges emphasize the complexity of the transition to married life and the potential impact on psychological well-being. Egbule et al. (2022) identified cultural expectations and societal pressures as vital in shaping the experiences of newly wedded wives. The authors revealed that 55% of newly married women felt overwhelmed by the expectations placed on them to quickly adapt to their new roles, with 47% reporting feelings of inadequacy when unable to meet these expectations. This cultural context highlights the importance of examining how traditional practices like 'compound wives' training may influence psychological outcomes.

Traditional cultural practices reflect values and beliefs held by members of a community for periods often spanning generations (Fang et al., 2015). Every social grouping in the world has specific traditional cultural practices and beliefs, some of which are beneficial to all members, while others which are considered important are harmful to a specific group, such as women. These traditional practices include female genital mutilation (FGM); forced feeding of women; early marriage; the various taboos or practices which prevent women from controlling their own fertility; nutritional taboos and traditional birth practices; son preference and its implications for the status of the girl child; female infanticide; early pregnancy; and dowry price. Despite their harmful nature and their

violation of international human rights laws, such practices persist because they are not questioned and take on an aura of morality in the eyes of those practising them.

In Nigeria, each ethnic group has distinct traditional practices that are accustomed to them. The Yoruba culture in particular is embedded with a lot of rich traditions that has continually been passed from one generation to another. Over the years, Olabode (2015) implies that these traditions have been considered opaque and out of line by a growing number of enlightened folks who are sceptical about incorporating the practices to their life style. Although proponents of the rich traditional practices in the Yoruba system are of the opinion that such practices when fully and carefully applied are of immense benefit to the people of the Community. However, the number of people who considers the practices as unnecessary is growing and in turn, affects their perception of such practices (Olabode, 2015).

Marriage is a significant life transition that brings about numerous challenges and adjustments for newly wedded couples, particularly for newly wedded wives. The Yoruba of southwest Nigeria have a unique way of establishing a family. As in other cultures all over the world, the idea of family among the Yorùbá is basically that of an extended family (Olajire and Olusa, 2023). The Yoruba concept of marriage comes with series of training and of concern to this study is the training ***compound wives*** known in local parlance as 'olobinrin ile' undergo. Olóbìnrin-Ilé are women who are married into a compound/family, and who therefore belong to it by marriage rather than by descent and who constitute an important group in the compound. These newly married women receive mentorship and guidance from experienced wives within the same compound. However, the impact of this traditional training on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives has not been adequately documented.

The prevalence of 'compound wives' (olobinrin ile) training in Oyo Town remains a significant aspect of cultural practice; this was revealed in a prevalence study carried out prior the commencement of this study, with an estimated 67% of newly wedded wives participating in some form of this traditional mentorship. This high participation rate underscores the cultural importance placed on this practice as a means of preparing young women for married life. However, the extent to which this training addresses the psychological needs of newly wedded wives remains understudied.

Compound wives play significant social roles within their marital communities, particularly during ceremonies such as burials, marriages, and festivals. Their contributions include providing entertainment, moral support, and financial assistance to their marital compound (Olabode, 2015). The training of compound wives encompasses a range of practical skills and responsibilities, including assisting at social functions by washing dishes, cooking, cleaning, and performing various other tasks essential during ceremonial periods. Traditionally, newly wedded wives, regardless of their educational or social background, are expected to participate in these activities as part of their integration into the compound. While some women find these experiences enjoyable and fulfilling, a growing number perceive them as burdensome or outdated, particularly when participation is mandated rather than voluntary. The compulsory nature of this training in some quarters raises concerns about its impact on the well-being of newly wedded wives. Sandvik (2021) highlighted the drawbacks of mandatory training programs, noting that they often lead to resistance and resentment among participants. Therefore, forcing newly wedded wives to participate may have unintended negative consequences, not only affecting their attitudes towards the practice but also potentially impacting their psychological health.

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However, this does not negate the potential positive impacts and enormous benefits that the 'compound wives' training offers, especially for newly wedded wives from diverse cultural backgrounds. Mashele (2006) states that this traditional support system provides invaluable social support for newly married women, facilitating their integration into their new family and community. The training serves as a platform for experienced wives to impart wisdom, share practical knowledge, and offer guidance on navigating the complexities of marital life, household management, and cultural expectations. This mentorship can be particularly beneficial for newly wedded wives who may lack familial support or are unfamiliar with the customs and norms of their new environment.

Furthermore, Olabode (2015) noted that the training fosters a sense of community and belonging among the participating wives, creating a supportive network where they can share their experiences, concerns, and seek advice from one another. This social support system can serve as a valuable coping mechanism, helping to alleviate feelings of isolation, loneliness, and the emotional challenges that often accompany the transition into married life. The author highlights that the 'compound wives' training plays a crucial role in promoting marital stability and satisfaction by equipping newly wedded wives with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate their new roles and responsibilities effectively.

Despite the potential benefits of the training, there is a lack of comprehensive research exploring its impact on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives. While this traditional practice has been observed in Oyo Town, its implications on the mental health and emotional state of newly married women have not been adequately documented or analyzed. Previous study, particularly the one that informed this study by Olabode (2015) have predominantly focused on the socio-cultural aspects of the 'compound wives' training, overlooking its potential psychological effects. In light of these, this study investigated the influence of the compound wives training on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between participation in the 'compound wives' training and the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town?
2. To what extent does participation in the 'compound wives' training and their age predict the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town?
3. Are there significant differences in the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives who participated in the 'compound wives' compared to those who did not?

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive survey of expo facto type. The rationale for choosing this design includes its ability to describe existing phenomenon and to collect data, for comparison and evaluation purposes. It equally helps in studying a segment of a population for the purpose of making estimated assertions about the nature of the total population from which the sample was selected. The population for this study comprises all newly wedded wives (not more than 3 years) in Oyo town. 200 (two hundred) participants were randomly selected among educated newly wedded wives in Oyo town. The multi-stage sampling technique was utilized to select the participant. Stage 1, the purposive sampling technique was utilized to select religious organisations because of the concentration of newly wedded wives that can be obtained from there. Simple random sampling was used to select religious organisations with a large population. Ten (10) churches and ten (10) mosques were randomly selected from different local government areas in Oyo town. Participants were then purposively selected in the religious organisations based on education and years of marriage criteria. 200 (two hundred) questionnaires were distributed; however, 197 copies of the instrument were duly retrieved on the spot for analysis. The questionnaire used for the data collection has components of the two (2) variables. The

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psychological wellbeing scale constructed by Ryff (2014) was adapted to be used as a measure of psychological wellbeing along with a self-developed and validated scale to assess individual's participation and perception of the compound wives training. It is a thirty (30) items scale with responses on the likert points. Some of the items of the scale read as follow: —"I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions" *and "I live life one day at a time and don"t really think about the future*ll Oftentimes, 'I a directed on how to carry out functions by aged women', 'I feel delighted to learn new things from my spouse relative'. The scale has a high internal consistency with alphas ranging from .83 - .91. for olobinrin ile training, questions were extracted from various sources as it relates to the variable. The questionnaire was pilot tested and yielded a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.73 while also eliminating questions with weak reliability. The collected data were analysed through frequency count, Correlation and Multiple Regression at 0.05 level of significance. The research instrument was titled 'Psychological wellbeing scale for newly wedded wives.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between participation in the Olobinrin Ile'training and the psychological wellbeing of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town?

Table 1 Correlation computation of Olobinrin Ile Training and psychological wellbeing among participants

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Psychological wellbeing	29.59	10.61	200	.652**	.000	Sig.
Olobinrin Ile Training	26.14	8.93				

**Sig. at 0.05 level

The results presented in Table 1 indicate a significant positive correlation between olobinrin ile training and psychological wellbeing among the participants ($r = .652$, $p < .05$). The positive correlation coefficient suggests that increased exposure to olobinrin ile training is associated with higher levels of psychological wellbeing. This positive correlation aligns with the theoretical underpinnings of the Olobinrin Ile training program, which aims to equip newly wedded wives with the necessary knowledge, skills, and support to navigate the challenges of marriage and promote overall well-being (Olabode, 2015). The program's emphasis on fostering healthy communication, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence may contribute to the participants' psychological well-being by enhancing their ability to manage stress, maintain positive relationships, and cultivate a sense of personal growth and self-acceptance.

The findings are consistent with previous research highlighting the potential benefits of marriage preparation programs on psychological well-being. For instance, a study by Asuquo Asuquo et al. (2021) found that couples who participated in premarital education programs reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction and overall well-being compared to those who did not receive such training. Similarly, Elrayes et al. (2023) demonstrated that couples who participated in a couple relationship education program experienced improvements in communication, conflict management, and overall relationship satisfaction, which are known to contribute to psychological well-being.

It is important to note that the Olobinrin Ile training program is rooted in the cultural context of Oyo Town and the Yoruba tradition, which places a strong emphasis on the role of women in maintaining harmonious family relationships (Shitta-Bey, 2014). The program's integration of cultural values and practices may resonate with the participants, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural identity, which can positively impact psychological well-being.

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Research question 2: To what extent does participation in the Olobinrin ile training and their age predict the psychological wellbeing of newly wedded wives in Oyo town?

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Combined Prediction of Dependent Variable (Psychological wellbeing)

R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.671	0.451	0.445	7.88654

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	10049.969	2	5024.984	80.791	**0.000***
Residual	12252.906	197	62.197		
Total	**22302.875**	**199**			

***Significant at p<0.05**

Table 4 shows the combined effect of olobinrin ile training and their age accounted for a significant portion of the variance in psychological wellbeing, with an R-square value of 0.451 (adjusted R-square = 0.445). This means that approximately 45% of the variation in psychological wellbeing can be explained by the combined influence of these two predictor variables. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results indicate that the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(2, 197) = 80.791$, $p < 0.05$).

The findings from the regression analysis revealed that the combined effect of participation in the Olobinrin Ile training and the age of the participants accounted for a significant portion of the variance in psychological well-being. Specifically, the model explained approximately 45% of the variation in psychological well-being (R-square = 0.451, adjusted R-square = 0.445), with the overall regression model being statistically significant ($F(2, 197) = 80.791$, $p < 0.05$). The significant contribution of the Olobinrin Ile training to predicting psychological well-being aligns with the findings from Research Question 1, which demonstrated a positive correlation between participation in the training and psychological well-being. This consistency underscores the importance of culturally relevant marriage preparation programs in promoting the overall well-being of newly wedded couples.

The inclusion of age as a predictor variable in the model acknowledges the potential influence of developmental and life-stage factors on psychological well-being (Hatch, 2007). Previous research has indicated that age can impact various aspects of psychological well-being, such as self-acceptance, personal growth, and environmental mastery (Sagone and De Caroli, 2014; De-Juanas et al., 2020). The findings from this study suggest that age may interact with the effects of the Olobinrin Ile training, potentially reflecting differences in the participants' readiness, receptivity, or specific needs based on their life experiences and developmental stage.

It is important to note that the regression model explained a substantial portion (45%) of the variance in psychological well-being, but there may be additional factors that contribute to the remaining unexplained variance. Future research could explore other potential predictors, such as socioeconomic status, education level, or specific aspects of the training program, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing psychological well-being among newly wedded wives in Oyo Town.

Research question 3: Are there significant differences in the psychological wellbeing of newly weeded wives who participated in the olobinrin ile training compared to those who did not?

Table 3: T-test Summary Showing Difference in psychological wellbeing

	Participation	N	Mean	St. Dv	Df	T	Sig	P
	Yes	113	69.1370	5.31164	198	-3.170	.001	<0.05

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Psychological wellbeing	No	87	72.2536	8.06078				

The table above revealed that there are significant differences in the psychological wellbeing of newlywed wives who participated in the "olobinrin ile" training compared to those who did not. Specifically, those who participated in the training had a mean psychological wellbeing score of 69.1370 (Standard Deviation: 5.31164), while those who did not participate had a higher mean score of 72.2536 (Standard Deviation: 8.06078). The t-test value of -3.170 with a significance level of .001 ($P < 0.05$) indicates that the difference is statistically significant. This suggests that newlywed wives who did not participate in the training reported better psychological wellbeing on average.

These findings contradict the initial expectation that participation in the Olobinrin Ile training would be associated with higher levels of psychological well-being. The observed pattern suggests that newly wedded wives who did not participate in the training reported better psychological well-being on average compared to those who attended the training. While these findings may seem counterintuitive, they highlight the complexity of evaluating the effectiveness training and the need for further investigation. Future research could employ longitudinal designs, incorporate additional variables that could influence the relationship between participation in the Olobinrin Ile training and psychological well-being. Despite the unexpected results, the study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the evaluation of culturally relevant variables and the factors influencing psychological well-being among newly wedded wives.

This result could be attributed to several factors. First, it is essential to consider the possibility of self-selection bias, as the decision to participate in the training may have been influenced by pre-existing individual differences or personal circumstances that could impact psychological well-being (Balzarotti et al., 2016). For instance, newly wedded wives with lower initial levels of well-being or those facing specific challenges might have been more motivated to seek support through the training program. It is also important to consider the potential influence of confounding variables that were not accounted for in the study. Factors such as socioeconomic status, education level, quality of the marital relationship, or access to other support systems could have influenced the participants' psychological well-being and may have interacted with the effects of the training (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2008; Ge, 2020).

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the impact of the 'Compound Wives' Training, a culturally relevant and contextually grounded marriage preparation program, on the psychological well-being of newly wedded wives in Oyo Town. The findings revealed the relationships that contribute to our understanding of the factors influencing the well-being of this unique population.

While participation in the 'Compound Wives' Training demonstrated a positive correlation with psychological well-being, suggesting potential benefits of the program, the unexpected finding of lower well-being scores among participants compared to non-participants highlights the complexity of evaluating intervention effectiveness. These results underscore the need for a well-grounded approach that considers potential confounding variables, timing of assessment, and the influence of individual differences and personal circumstances.

Notably, the study identified age as a significant predictor of psychological well-being, suggesting that the impact of the training and the specific needs of newly wedded wives may vary across different life stages. This finding emphasizes the importance of tailoring interventions and support mechanisms to address the unique challenges and developmental considerations faced by individuals at different points in their lives.

The cultural relevance and contextual grounding of the 'Compound Wives' Training were evident in its integration of Yoruba traditions and values, which may have resonated with participants and fostered a sense of belonging and cultural identity. However, the study also highlights the need

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for continuous evaluation and adaptation to ensure that the program remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs and values of the target population.

Recommendations

- Enhance cultural relevance and adaptability: While the Olobinrin Ile training is rooted in the cultural context of Oyo Town and the Yoruba tradition, it is essential to continuously evaluate and enhance its cultural relevance and adaptability. This could involve incorporating feedback from participants, collaborating with community stakeholders, and ensuring that the training content and delivery methods resonate with the evolving needs and values of the target population.
- Integrating modern counseling techniques with traditional practices to enhance the positive aspects of olobinrin ile training while addressing potential negative impacts.
- Developing tailored support programs for newly wedded wives that consider individual differences and diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Promoting open communication between couples to balance traditional expectations with personal growth and well-being.

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