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# Post Infidelity Stress Disorder and Violence among Intimate Partners in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Infidelity represents a severe relational stressor that may trigger Post-Infidelity Stress Disorder (PISD) and increase the risk of intimate partner violence (IPV), yet empirical evidence within the Nigerian context remains limited.

**Objective:** This study examined the predictive relationship between PISD and IPV and assessed the moderating role of coping strategies, while exploring differences across gender and age groups. **Method:** A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed. Data were collected from intimate partners using standardized instruments measuring post-infidelity stress, coping strategies, and IPV. Multiple regression and moderation analyses were conducted to determine predictive effects and interaction patterns. **Result:** PISD significantly predicted IPV, accounting for 38% of the variance in violent behaviour. Individuals with elevated PISD were 3.14 times more likely to engage in IPV. Females reported higher PISD levels, whereas younger adults demonstrated greater vulnerability to IPV and maladaptive coping. Adaptive coping strategies significantly reduced the strength of the PISD-IPV association. **Conclusion:** Post-infidelity stress constitutes a substantial psychological risk factor for intimate partner violence. The interaction between stress responses and coping styles plays a critical role in shaping behavioural outcomes within intimate relationships. **Contribution:** The findings provide empirical evidence to inform culturally responsive counseling and violence-prevention interventions in Nigeria.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In every intimate relationship, emotional security and trust from both partners form the bedrock upon which mutual respect, commitment, loyalty and bonding are built. However, when trust is broken and emotional security is no longer attainable due to instances of infidelity either from one partner or both, the emotional and psychological aftermath may be highly devastating (Rokach & Chan, 2023; Warach & Josephs, 2021). Accordingly, infidelity ruptures the perceived stability of a romantic union and also introduces a traumatic experience, which most often triggers intense adverse psychological responses. One such known response is Post-Infidelity Stress Disorder (PISD). PISD simply captures the depth of mental and emotional torture experienced by individuals whose partners have betrayed them. Generally, PISD has been associated with symptoms such as mood swings, intrusive thoughts, depression, emotional numbness, anxiety, and even aggression (Padmavathi et al., 2013).

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Earlier studies clearly affirmed that infidelity could be sexual infidelity (physical infidelity), emotional infidelity, and composite infidelity. Sexual infidelity (physical infidelity) occurs if one party engages in sexual activity with another party who is not their boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/ wife (Guitar et al., 2017; Norona et al., 2017; Roby, 2024; Almeida & Fernandes, 2022). It may also mean private uses pornography (McQueen, 2021). Meanwhile, emotional infidelity is said to occur when one of the parties develops feelings of love towards another who is in their main relationship (Guitar et al., 2017). However, composite infidelity is a combination of both sexual (physical) and emotional infidelity (Guitar et al., 2017).

Over time, most researchers in clinical psychology, relationship therapists, and sociologists have been dedicated to understanding how betrayal in romantic relationships results in psychological trauma (Lewis, 2025; Lonergan et al., 2021; Guyon et al., 2021; Warach & Josephs, 2019). In developed countries, relationship therapists and clinical psychologists have begun to recognize PISD as a genuine phenomenon that warrants therapeutic attention. However, the issue of PISD is under-researched in the African context (Nigeria specifically). Possible reason is that PISD are most often silenced, and at the same time, aggression is often normalized in relationships (Prusty, 2025; Abubakari, 2025; Chaudhry, 2025).

Furthermore, intimate partner violence (IPV) is a widespread issue, especially in Nigeria (Oyediran, 2021). It covers physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse perpetrated by one partner against another partner in an intimate relationship (Almeida & Fernandes, 2022). It is evident to note that IPV goes beyond socio-economic factors, substance abuse, cultural norms, and power imbalances and also examines how it results in emotional trauma, especially from partner betrayal. One major factor which has triggered emotional instability in both men and women is post-infidelity trauma. Nevertheless, most Nigerian studies continue to consider both infidelity and IPV as separate constructs. As a result, such studies failed to investigate the effect of emotional betrayal on violent outcomes.

Another critical issue of concern is the gender disposition to the concept of infidelity and its psychological aftermath. Research has evidenced that men view infidelity as a threat to their ego and social dominance, while women often see infidelity as a violation of their emotional security and relational trust (Pinto & Arantes, 2017; Aldahadha & Al-Momani, 2023). This issue is paramount, especially in patriarchal societies like Nigeria, where men who experience infidelity may feel culturally licensed to respond with aggression, which further fuels violence. Some other men may internalize the pain, which may degenerate to depression (Almeida & Fernandes, 2022)

In light of the above, there is a need to develop coping strategies in order to deal with the issue of betrayal and IPV. Conceptually, coping strategies, whether adaptive or maladaptive, determine how well one can overcome emotional challenges. While healthy coping strategies such as social support, therapy, forgiveness and emotional expression can serve as buffers against the adverse outcomes of betrayal, unhealthy coping strategies such as suppression, denial, violence, and substance use can intensify emotional distress and result in violence. In Nigeria, where mental health awareness is very low, and counseling services are inadequate and most often stigmatized, many persons resort to culturally reinforced behaviours such as aggression, inter alia. Hence, understanding the moderating role of coping strategies on the relationship between PISD and IPV is critical, especially in the Nigerian context.

This research is timely given the fact that both cultural and economic priorities in the African context often overshadow the emotional health of the female gender. Hence, this research seeks to evaluate the linkage between post-infidelity trauma and intimate partner violence by adopting a psychological framework. Further, the study seeks to uncover how PISD occur in betrayed individuals, how this stressor differs between males and females. Again, the research also places attention on the relevance of coping strategies in either mitigating or exacerbating the potential for violence. This study is situated in Warri Metropolis with a view to a context-specific analysis on how betrayal trauma is locally experienced and managed.

Despite the intense societal awareness of the adverse effects of intimate partner violence on the victim of such social malady, there is limited academic research evaluating the psychological effects of post-infidelity stress disorder and how it contributes to violent behaviour in intimate partnerships, especially in urban cities like Warri metropolis. Evidently, most victims of infidelity experience intense emotional trauma but are given less attention, are untreated, or are misunderstood. In some cases, this trauma degenerates into a series of emotional abuse, retaliatory aggression and physical violence, while in others, it either results in self-harm or withdrawal. However, where there are no support systems and no formal diagnoses, the issue can be highly devastating.

Moreover, sociocultural norms in the African setting (Warri Metropolis specifically) often discourage open discussion of infidelity and domestic violence, which is, however, not the case in developed countries. Hence, it is an outright misfit for studies conducted in the African context to adopt recommendations from studies conducted in

developed countries. To bridge this identified knowledge gap, the current study seeks to evaluate the effect of post-infidelity stress disorder on intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis.

To achieve the specific objectives of this research, the following five (5) null hypotheses were tested: 1)  $H_{01}$ : Post-infidelity stress disorder has no significant influence on intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis; 2)  $H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between males and females in the outcome of post-infidelity stress disorder consequent upon partner betrayal in Warri Metropolis; 3)  $H_{03}$ : Post-infidelity stress disorder does not significantly predict the possibility of engaging in violence against a partner in Warri Metropolis; 4)  $H_{04}$ : Coping strategies do not significantly moderate the relationship between post-infidelity stress disorder and intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis.

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the effect of post-infidelity stress disorder on intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis. Specifically, the study seeks to: 1) Examine the influence of post-infidelity stress disorder on intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis; 2) Evaluate the gender differences in the outcomes of post-infidelity stress disorder resulting from partner betrayal in Warri Metropolis; 3) Ascertain whether post-infidelity stress disorder predicts the likelihood of involving in violence against a partner in Warri Metropolis; 4) Investigate the moderating role of coping strategies on the relationship between post-infidelity stress disorder and intimate partner violence in Warri Metropolis.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employed a correlational survey research design to examine the relationship between Post-Infidelity Stress Disorder (PISD) and intimate partner violence (IPV) in Warri Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria. The design was appropriate because it enabled the assessment of the strength and direction of associations among variables without manipulation. It also allowed testing of predictive and moderating effects in a natural setting.

### 2.2 Research Object

The study population cut across male and female adults aged 18 years and above living in Warri Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria. The respondents systematically selected covered males and females who have either experienced infidelity or partner betrayal in an intimate relationship. Since the total population is unknown, the Cochran's sample size determination formula was used to estimate an appropriate, statistically valid sample size. The sampling determination size formula is presented below:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 * p * (1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

$n_0$  = sample size

$Z$  = standard normal value at 95% confidence level = 1.96

$p$  = estimated proportion of the population (0.5)

$e$  = margin of error = 0.05

$$n_0 = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2} = 384.16$$

Consequently, the sample size is 385 respondents. However, to capture potential non-responses and incomplete data, the sample size was rounded up to 390 respondents.

To ensure respondents were adequately captured, a multistage sampling technique was adopted. This consisted of three (3) stages. First, we purposively selected densely populated residential areas within Warri Metropolis. The target areas are Jakpa, Enerhen, Udu Road, and Okumagba. Secondly, we stratified the population by gender to avoid gender bias. Lastly, we randomly selected respondents within each gender stratum using a lottery method based on lists compiled in collaboration with community-based organisations, counsellors, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that offer support services to victims of relationship-related trauma.

### 2.3 Data Collection

We sourced the data using a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four (4) sections. Section 1 covered the respondents' demographic data. Section 2 focused on the post-infidelity stress disorder of the respondents using a modified version of the PTSD Checklist. Section 3 focused on intimate partner violence using adapted items from the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). Section 4 captured coping strategies using adaptive and maladaptive mechanisms. All the scales were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree-SD” (1) to “Strongly Agree-SA” (5). Before sending the questionnaire out to the field, it was subjected to face and content validation by three (3) experts in clinical psychology and behavioural research. A pilot test conducted with 39 respondents (i.e. 10% of the sample) yielded acceptable Cronbach’s alpha (CA) coefficients ranging from 0.78 to 0.89, suggesting strong internal consistency.

### 2.4 Procedure

The study adhered strictly to the research protocol and ethical standards as laid down in the 1964 ‘Declaration of Helsinki’ and also in alignment with the ‘Nigerian Psychological Association’ as it relates to human involvement in research and other experimental studies, and in alignment with my university (Dennis Osadebay University) research ethical committee, as they gave approval. We administered the questionnaire to the respondents both in person to ensure wide accessibility. Prior to administering the questionnaire, we briefed the respondents that it would be given to them for research purposes. Also, we assured the respondents that their details are confidential.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

Three (3) estimation techniques were adopted in line with the hypothesis stated in the earlier section of this research. In the case of hypothesis one, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the extent to which PISD predicted IPV. Meanwhile, an independent samples t-test was conducted to test if there is a significant gender difference in the outcomes of PISD resulting from partner betrayal, as in the case of hypothesis one. Again, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to test hypothesis three. In the case of hypothesis four, the logistic regression analysis was adopted to ascertain whether PISD predicted the likelihood of engaging in partner violence. Lastly, hypothesis five was tested using moderated multiple regression analysis with a view to investigating the moderating role of coping strategies on the relationship between PISD and IPV. Justifiably, these estimation techniques were conducted to provide valid insights into the complex nature of the variable under review.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Result

This section presents the study's results, interpreted in line with the stated hypotheses, followed by a discussion of their implications. All analyses were conducted at a 0.05 significance level.

#### a) Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	196	50.3
	Female	194	49.7
Age	18–24 years	52	13.3
	25–34 years	164	42.0
	35–44 years	109	28.0
	45 years and above	65	16.7
Educational Background	First Degree	242	62.0
	WAEC/NECO	109	28.0
	First Leaving Certificate/Below	39	10.0
Total Respondents	—	390	100.0

Source: Researchers compilation (2025)

The survey confirmed that 390 respondents participated: 196 males (50.3%) and 194 females (49.7%). This confirmed that there was balanced gender representation. Also, most respondents were aged 25–34 years (42%),

followed by those aged 35-44 years (28%), while those aged 18-24 and 45+ were the least. About educational background, 62% are first-degree holders, 28% are WAEC/NECO holders, and 10% have a first-level certificate/below. These demographic compositions suggest a diverse adult population with adequate representation across gender, age, and educational levels.

b) Relationship between PISD and IPV (Hypothesis 1)

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which post-infidelity stress disorder (PISD) predicts intimate partner violence (IPV). The results indicated a significant positive relationship:

Table 2. Relationship between PISD and IPV

Predictor Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	1.12	0.15	—	7.47	<0.001
PISD	0.58	0.04	0.62	15.43	<0.001

R = 0.62, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.38, F(1, 388) = 238.12, p < 0.001

Source: Researchers compilation (2025)

This suggests that approximately 38% of the variance in IPV can be explained by PISD. The findings support Hypothesis 1, indicating that higher levels of stress following partner betrayal are associated with increased likelihood of perpetrating intimate partner violence. The result aligns with existing literature linking trauma from partner betrayal to heightened aggression and conflict in relationships. This supports the view that unresolved emotional distress following infidelity may escalate into violent behaviour, emphasising the need for targeted psychological interventions.

c) Gender Differences in PISD (Hypothesis 2)

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to examine gender differences in PISD scores. Results revealed a significant difference between males and females.

Gender	N	%	Mean	Standard Deviation	t (df)	p-value
Male	196	50.3	3.54	0.68	3.41 (388)	0.001
Female	194	49.7	3.87	0.62		

Source: Researchers compilation (2025)

This finding clearly evidenced that females (women) experienced more profound psychological distress following infidelity than men. This outcome stressed the need for gender-sensitive therapeutic approaches to solving the problem.

d) Multivariate Differences in IPV and Coping Strategies (Hypothesis 3)

MANOVA was conducted to test differences in IPV and coping strategies across demographic factors. The analysis showed a significant multivariate effect for age and gender: [Wilks'  $\Lambda$  = 0.89, F(4, 382) = 3.78, p = 0.005]. Post-hoc analyses indicated that younger adults (18-34) reported higher IPV involvement and relied more on maladaptive coping strategies compared to older adults.

This suggests that younger adults may be more vulnerable to engaging in partner violence after experiencing infidelity, potentially due to less-developed emotional regulation skills. Tailored interventions targeting this age group could be beneficial.

e) Predicting Likelihood of IPV (Hypothesis 4)

Logistic regression analysis assessed whether PISD predicts the likelihood of engaging in IPV. The model was statistically significant: [ $\chi^2(1) = 112.46, p < 0.001$ ]. The odds ratio (OR = 3.14, 95% CI [2.35, 4.19]) indicates that individuals with higher PISD scores were over three times more likely to perpetrate IPV. This finding reinforces the predictive power of post-infidelity stress in determining violent behaviors. Psychological support for individuals experiencing PISD may reduce the risk of IPV.

f) Moderating Role of Coping Strategies (Hypothesis 5)

A moderated multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether coping strategies moderate the relationship between PISD and IPV. Results revealed a significant interaction effect:  $\beta = -0.21, t = -3.45, p = 0.001$ .

This indicates that adaptive coping strategies attenuate the relationship between PISD and IPV, whereas maladaptive coping amplifies the risk.

### 3.2. Discussion

The findings highlight the protective role of adaptive coping mechanisms, such as seeking social support and problem-solving, in mitigating the impact of post-infidelity stress on violent behaviour. Intervention programs should therefore incorporate coping skills training. This study provides important insight into the psychological consequences of infidelity and its connection to intimate partner violence (IPV) within the context of Warri Metropolis, Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that post-infidelity stress is not merely an emotional reaction to betrayal but a significant psychological condition that can shape behavioural outcomes in intimate relationships. When trust, an essential foundation of romantic partnerships, is violated, individuals often experience profound emotional instability, including anger, intrusive thoughts, anxiety, and emotional dysregulation. Without adequate coping mechanisms or social support, these reactions may escalate into aggression directed toward a partner.

The results align with trauma-based frameworks that conceptualize romantic betrayal as a form of relational trauma (Warach & Josephs, 2021). Previous scholarship has suggested that infidelity can trigger symptoms comparable to post-traumatic stress responses, particularly when individuals perceive the betrayal as a threat to their identity, attachment security, or self-worth (Anderson, 2025; Warach et al., 2018). In this light, post-infidelity stress represents a destabilizing psychological process that may impair emotional regulation and conflict management (Curtis et al., 2021). Within environments where mental health services are limited or stigmatized, unresolved distress may manifest through maladaptive interpersonal behaviours, including violence.

Gender differences observed in this study further illuminate the complexity of postinfidelity reactions (Wang, 2025). Women reported experiencing more intense psychological distress following betrayal (Gamache et al., 2016). This pattern may reflect the centrality of emotional intimacy and relational security in women's perceptions of romantic commitment. However, cultural norms in patriarchal settings may shape how distress is expressed. While women may internalise emotional pain, men may be more likely to externalise distress through anger or aggressive behaviour, particularly in contexts where masculinity is closely tied to dominance and control (Mendez et al., 2021). These findings highlight the need for gender-sensitive interventions that address both emotional processing and behavioural regulation.

Age-related differences also emerged as a meaningful factor. Younger adults demonstrated greater vulnerability to maladaptive coping and relationship conflict following experiences of betrayal (Guyon et al., 2021). Developmentally, early adulthood is often characterized by identity exploration and evolving emotional maturity (Potterton et al., 2021). Individuals in this stage may have less-developed conflict-resolution skills and emotional regulation capacities (Bonilla et al., 2020). As a result, when confronted with relational trauma, their responses may be more impulsive or reactive. This underscores the importance of preventive education and emotional skills training targeted at younger populations.

A central contribution of this study lies in its examination of coping strategies as a moderating factor. The findings suggest that coping style significantly influences whether post-infidelity stress translates into violent behaviour. Adaptive coping mechanisms, such as seeking social support, engaging in open communication, and practicing emotional regulation, appear to buffer the negative impact of betrayal related stress. In contrast, maladaptive coping strategies, including suppression, denial, and aggression, may intensify the likelihood of violence. These results reinforce transactional models of stress, which emphasize that the consequences of stressful events depend not only on the stressor itself but also on how individuals interpret and respond to it.

Within the Nigerian context, where open discussion of infidelity and domestic conflict may be socially discouraged, individuals often lack structured avenues for emotional processing. Stigma surrounding psychological counseling further limits access to professional support (Tay et al., 2018). Consequently, emotional distress may remain unaddressed, increasing the risk of destructive relational patterns (Ó Laoide et al., 2018). Community-based awareness programs, culturally responsive counseling services, and public education on healthy conflict resolution could play a vital role in mitigating these risks.

This study expands the understanding of intimate partner violence by highlighting post-infidelity stress as a significant psychological predictor. The findings suggest that IPV cannot be fully understood through socioeconomic or cultural explanations alone. Psychological trauma resulting from relational betrayal must also be considered. By integrating trauma-informed approaches, gender sensitive strategies, and coping skills development into intervention frameworks, stakeholders can better address the root psychological mechanisms that contribute to violence in intimate relationships.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

### 4.1 Research Implications

The findings of this study carry important practical implications for mental health professionals, policymakers, and community-based organisations in Nigeria. First, assessment of post-infidelity stress should be integrated into couples counseling, relationship therapy, and violence prevention programs, as unresolved betrayal-related trauma may escalate into intimate partner violence if left untreated. Counsellors and psychologists should adopt trauma-informed and gender sensitive approaches that address emotional regulation, anger management, and healthy communication skills. Preventive interventions targeting younger adults are especially critical, given their heightened vulnerability to maladaptive coping and relationship conflict. At the policy level, there is a need to expand access to affordable and culturally responsive mental health services, while also implementing public awareness campaigns that reduce stigma surrounding psychological support and promote constructive conflict resolution within intimate relationships.

### 4.2 Research Contributions

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by empirically linking post-infidelity stress disorder with intimate partner violence within a Nigerian urban context, thereby addressing a significant gap in African psychological research. Unlike many previous studies that examine infidelity and intimate partner violence as separate constructs, this research integrates them within a unified psychological framework. Further, it identifies coping strategies as a moderating factor. By highlighting the roles of gender and age in shaping stress responses and behavioural outcomes, the study advances a more nuanced understanding of how relational trauma operates in culturally specific settings. The findings provide a foundation for developing culturally grounded intervention models and open pathways for future research on trauma-informed approaches to preventing intimate partner violence in sub-Saharan Africa.

## 5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

### 5.1 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between post-infidelity stress and intimate partner violence. Although significant associations were identified, the temporal direction of these relationships cannot be conclusively determined. Second, the reliance on self-report questionnaires may introduce response bias, including social desirability bias, especially given the sensitive nature of infidelity and violence within intimate relationships. Participants may have underreported violent behaviours or exaggerated emotional responses. Third, the study was conducted within Warri Metropolis, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions in Nigeria or to rural populations with different sociocultural dynamics. Additionally, other potentially influential variables, such as personality traits, history of childhood trauma, socioeconomic status, and substance use, were not examined and may have contributed to the observed relationships.

### 5.2 Recommendation for Future Research Direction

Future studies should consider employing longitudinal designs to examine better the causal pathways between post-infidelity stress and intimate partner violence over time. Such designs would provide deeper insight into how betrayal-related trauma evolves and whether early psychological intervention reduces the likelihood of violent outcomes. Researchers are also encouraged to incorporate qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, to capture the lived experiences of individuals affected by infidelity and to better understand the cultural meanings attached to betrayal and aggression. Expanding research to include diverse geographical regions, rural communities, and different sociocultural groups within Nigeria would enhance the external validity of the findings. Furthermore, future investigations should explore additional moderating and mediating variables, including personality characteristics, attachment styles, religious influences, and socioeconomic stressors, in order to develop a more comprehensive and culturally grounded model of the relationship between post-infidelity stress and intimate partner violence.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that post-infidelity stress is a significant psychological factor influencing intimate partner violence within the context of Warri Metropolis, Nigeria. Individuals who experience intense emotional distress following partner betrayal are more likely to exhibit violent behaviours in their intimate relationships. The findings further indicate that women tend to experience higher levels of post-infidelity stress, while younger adults show greater vulnerability to both violent behaviours and maladaptive coping patterns. In addition, coping strategies play a critical role in shaping behavioural outcomes, as adaptive coping reduces the likelihood of violence, whereas maladaptive coping increases relational conflict. These results underscore the complex interaction between emotional trauma, demographic characteristics, and behavioural responses in understanding intimate partner violence.

The study highlights the urgent need to address post-infidelity stress as part of broader violence prevention and relationship intervention frameworks. Mental health practitioners should integrate trauma-informed assessment and emotional regulation strategies into couples counseling and individual therapy. Particular attention should be directed toward women and younger adults who appear more psychologically vulnerable to the adverse effects of relational betrayal. Promoting adaptive coping skills, such as problem-solving, emotional awareness, and constructive communication, can serve as protective mechanisms against the escalation of conflict into violence.

At the broader societal level, the findings call for strengthened collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and community-based institutions to expand access to culturally responsive counseling services and public education initiatives. Increasing awareness about the psychological consequences of infidelity and encouraging healthy conflict resolution practices may help reduce the normalisation of aggression within intimate relationships. Future research should continue to explore additional social and psychological factors that influence the relationship between post-infidelity stress and intimate partner violence in order to develop more comprehensive and contextually grounded prevention strategies.

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## Author Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Edefe Ulo: Conceptualization, Writing - Original Draft, Methodology; Validation; Formal analysis, Data Curation. Annmarie Nkem Okoli: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing.

## Declaration of Generative AI (GenAI) Usage in Scientific Writing

Generative artificial intelligence tools were used solely to assist with language refinement, grammar improvement, and structural clarity during the preparation of this manuscript. All core research activities, including study design, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, and substantive content development, were conducted independently by the author. The author takes full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the work. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [JGMDS GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work."

## Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no any financial, professional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the conduct or presentation of the work presented in this manuscript.

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