

# Emotional Dependency and Sweethearting in the Bahamas (I): Marital Infidelity

Shamel Y. Rolle-Sands 0000-0002-3415-2569  
Public Hospitals Authority

Terry Campbell 0000-0002-4125-7879  
William J. Fielding 0000-0001-5433-9673  
University of The Bahamas

doi: 10.15362/ijbs.v31i2.633

---

## Abstract

This study examined the relationship between emotional dependency and marital infidelity in The Bahamas. Using an internet-based survey with a snowball sampling method, we analysed responses from 1,735 married individuals. Most respondents  $N = 888$  (51.2%) reported high or severe levels of emotional dependency. Husbands reported higher emotional dependency levels (33.4) than wives (29), and emotional dependency was elevated among individuals engaged in extramarital relationships (36 for unfaithful husbands and 35.8 for unfaithful wives). Additionally, higher emotional dependency scores were reported among both perpetrators and survivors of sexual abuse (47.9 and 50, respectively), while the risk of being a victim of domestic violence increased with higher emotional dependency. These findings suggest that emotional dependency is a factor which may influence infidelity, with potential mental health consequences.

---

## Introduction

Acts of marital infidelity, despite widespread stigmatization, remain visible and prevalent globally, including The Bahamas (Fielding & Ballance, 2023; Haseli et al., 2019). While infidelity rates vary across cultures and demographics, approximately 22% of individuals admitted to engaging in extramarital sexual relations, with countries like Denmark and Thailand reporting higher incidences (World Population Review, 2025). In the United States, approximately 20% of men and 13% of women reported engaging in extramarital relationships (Wang, 2018). Factors like age, gender, and

education level are associated with these rates. Higher educational and income levels are frequently associated with increased infidelity (Spencer et al., 2019).

## Changing Marriage Trends in The Bahamas

Marriage trends in The Bahamas have undergone significant changes over recent decades. Data from the Bahamas National Statistical Institute (2024) indicate that between 2010 and 2022 the legally married population decreased by 2.5% to 97,296 persons. Concurrently, there was an increase (18.2%, to 267,207) in the number of

individuals who had never been married during the same time frame. These patterns align with global trends where individuals, particularly in the 25–29 years age group, are delaying marriage (Harris, 2023; United Nations Development Programme, 2019). Such shifts raise questions about fidelity and relationship stability (e.g.: are relationships less exclusive and/or of shorter duration?), particularly since infidelity continues to challenge traditional, Christian-based expectations of marital exclusivity.

### **Sweethearting: A Cultural and Social Phenomenon**

In Bahamian culture, *sweethearting* is the local term referring to infidelity or extramarital relationships, a practice deeply embedded in the nation's social fabric. Infidelity has been a part of cultural narratives across the Caribbean for decades, as illustrated by Lancelot Pintard's 1960s Calypso version of the song "Shame and Scandal in the Family," which uses humour to highlight themes of infidelity (Elliott, 1998.). Historically, infidelity or sweethearting has been more prevalent among married men reflecting societal norms that tacitly accept male infidelity (Fielding & Ballance, 2022; Fielding & Ballance, 2023). This acceptance is situated within views of masculinity, where having multiple partners is perceived as a sign of male prowess or manliness (Khumalo et al., 2021).

Within the relationship, infidelity frequently signifies underlying issues, such as dissatisfaction and unmet needs. Moreover, the power dynamics within relationships play a role in increasing the likelihood of infidelity, as individuals with perceived power may feel entitled to seek additional relationships, undermining commitment. The breach of trust resulting from infidelity can lead to the dissolution of relationships or marriages, further contributing to psychological and emotional distress

(Rokach & Chan, 2023).

Additionally, societal norms in The Bahamas have traditionally accepted that men have multiple sexual female partners before marriage (Rodgers, 1967), a practice that may predispose them to infidelity within marriage (Grant, 1999). Further, Fincham and May (2017) highlighted that men who adhered to traditional masculine ideals were more prone to engage in sweethearting when feeling emotionally unsatisfied. Conversely, women seeking to fulfil unmet emotional needs sometimes adopted similar behaviours. Indeed, this cultural permissiveness potentially reinforces the prevalence of sweethearting, influencing relational behaviours and expectations (Otterbein, 1966). It should be noted that sweethearting relationships are different from short-term affairs such as a one-night stand in that they are on-going relationships.

### **Sweethearting: Psychological, Cultural, and Relational Implications**

The normalisation of sweethearting have significant psychological, cultural and relational implications. The spouse or partner of the individual involved in the extramarital relationship often faces mental health challenges including emotional trauma and depression (Fielding et al., 2023; Williams et al., 2022). The discovery of a partner's infidelity can lead to feelings such as the fear of abandonment, rage, loss of trust, and decreased self-esteem (Haseli et al., 2019). These reactions can result in anxiety and depressive conditions, affecting both the individual, and in turn, the stability of the relationship and the family overall (Rokach & Chan, 2023).

Culturally, the perception and consequences of infidelity vary widely. In some societies, extramarital relationships are met with social ostracism, while in others, like The Bahamas, such relationships may be tacitly

acknowledged or even expected (Knowles, 2016). For example, in some cultures individuals may experience increased guilt, and isolation, exacerbating mental health issues (Afsharzada et al., 2025).

### **Significance of the Study**

Existing literature on sweethearting within The Bahamas is limited, research focusing primarily on demographic aspects (Fielding & Ballance, 2023). This study examines sweethearting and its association with emotional dependency. Notably, women whose partners are unfaithful face a heightened risk of abuse compared to those with faithful partners. Understanding the motivations behind sweethearting can inform the development of treatment and educational programmes aimed at reducing violence against women (Fielding et al., 2023). This study also facilitates an assessment of the potential benefits, such as material gifts, and risks, including sexual abuse, associated with sweethearting relationships. By examining the emotional dependency levels of individuals engaged in sweethearting, this research seeks to determine whether such behaviour is indicative of unhealthy relationship patterns, thereby opening new avenues for further investigation. This study also aligns with the recommendations of the Bahamas National Task Force for Gender-Based Violence (2015), which advocates for more research addressing gender-based violence.

### *Theoretical Framework*

Emotional dependence refers to an individual's excessive need for validation and emotional support from their intimate partner, frequently leading to feelings of insecurity and fear of abandonment (Dias Alves et al., 2023). Attachment theory suggests that persons who develop insecure attachment styles like avoidant and anxious attachments are likely to experience

difficulties in adult romantic relationships such as emotional dependence (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). While emotional dependence is a natural component of close relationships, excessive dependency can lead to unhealthy attachments patterns, making individuals more vulnerable to infidelity and abusive relationships (Bution & Wechsler, 2016; Lemos et al., 2021).

The interplay between attachment styles, emotional independence and infidelity is complex. It is importance to understand and address underlying emotional needs within relationships to engender and maintain mutual satisfaction and fidelity. This study investigated the relationship between infidelity (i.e., sweethearting) and emotional dependency within on-going heterosexual adult relationships in The Bahamas.

### **Methodology**

#### *Study Design and Data Collection*

Data were collected using a cross-sectional, descriptive design. From September to November 2024, senior university students undertaking a nursing research course used their social media contacts to seed a snowball sample to collect responses from adults (aged 18 or over) who were ordinarily residents in The Bahamas and involved in intimate partner relationships. These contacts not only completed the survey, but also sent the survey to those in their contact lists requesting participation and the engagement of others still to participate. The target sample size was 9,500. This figure was estimated from previous studies on sexual relationships in The Bahamas (Moxey-Adderley & Fielding, 2024) and researchers aimed to obtain completed responses from 300 males who had multiple partners which would give a 95% confidence of obtaining a margin of error of 5.6%. Given that females are more likely than males to respond to internet studies (Moxey-Adderley &

Fielding, 2024), the number of females was expected to exceed this figure. In appreciating that romantic relationships can be dynamic and complex, respondents were asked to report on their current relationship with their primary partner. If respondents were unable to decide who was their primary partner, they were asked to answer the questions as they related to the partner with whom they most recently had sexual relations. Respondents with more than one partner were asked if they considered any of them as sweethearts.

### *Variables and Measurements*

The online survey included questions from the Hurt, Insult, Threaten, and Scream (HITS) Scale (Sherin et al., 1998). This domestic violence screening tool is designed to identify intimate partner violence in clinical and research settings. The HITS Scale consists of 4 questions assessing the frequency of physical and emotional abuse using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *frequently*), with a total score ranging from 4 to 20. This screening tool is reliable (Cronbach's alpha 0.61 - 0.91) and has been validated across diverse populations and languages (Hendershot, et al., 2024). The Partner's Emotional Dependency Scale by Camarillo et al. (2020) is a 22-item self-report tool that measures the respondent's emotional dependence on their partner. It uses a 4-point scale (0 = *completely true* to 4 = *completely untrue*). The first statement, "I am completely satisfied with myself", is reverse coded (0 = *completely untrue* and 4 = *completely true*). Scores range from 0-88. Generally, a score < 10 is considered indicative of low emotional dependence, 11 to 21 moderate dependence; 22 to 36 high dependence;  $\geq 37$  high dependence. This tool is reliable ( $\alpha = .93$ ) and valid (Camarillo et al., 2020). Cronbach's alpha for this study was .88 demonstrating good reliability.

The survey also included questions on

respondents' demographics such as age and marital status, as well as questions about their current partner(s) and the benefits of having multiple sexual partners.

### *Ethical Considerations*

Standard ethical protocols were maintained throughout this study to ensure data integrity while protecting respondents' rights. Respondents were required to answer a single question indicating their consent to participate in the study, otherwise respondents could leave questions unanswered. To maintain confidentiality, no personally identifiable information was collected, and results were reported in aggregate form. Ethical approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board of University of The Bahamas.

### **Results**

A total of 10,393 persons accessed the survey. Thirty respondents (0.3%) declined to participate, while 117 were under 18 years old and 200 were not ordinarily residents in The Bahamas. Since these groups did not meet the eligibility criteria, they were excluded from the dataset. Additionally, respondents who provided little to no answers to the survey questions were excluded.

### *Respondents' Characteristics*

Of 9,738 respondents who provided their sex, 2,502 (25.7%) were male, 7,206 (74%) female and 29 (0.3%) identified as "other." This study focused exclusively on married individuals, and excluded those who were separated or in common-law relationships. This resulted in a final sample of  $N = 2,284$  ( $n = 623$  husbands and  $n = 1,661$  wives). The median age of husbands was 44.3 years, while that of wives was 41.9 years. Among 358 husbands who answered the question, 81.5% reported only one intimate partner (in the last six months), while among 1,309

wives who answered the question 91.1% reported the same. Husbands were statistically more likely to be unfaithful than wives ( $\chi^2 = 29.6$ ,  $N = 1,748$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

### *Sweethearting and Emotional Dependence*

Irrespective of the label that a respondent gave their extramarital partner (sweetheart or other name), the mean emotional dependency score was elevated for both unfaithful husbands and wives compared with faithful respondents. Most respondents (51.2% of the 1,735 who answered the question) reported high or severe levels of emotional dependency (scores over 22); the mean value was 25.5 (SE = .34). Analysis of covariance, with age group as the covariate, indicated a significance difference between the emotional dependency score of husbands and

wives, and when they were faithful or otherwise ( $p < .001$ ). The emotional dependency scores of wives when they were unfaithful increased to a greater extent, in comparison to husbands, as shown by a significant interaction between sex and number of partners, Table 1.

There was a difference between husbands and wives in how they identified their primary partner when the respondent had multiple partners. Wives (21.6%) were more likely than husbands (8.8%) to consider their sweetheart as their primary partner. Married respondents who identified their spouse as their primary partner had lower emotional dependency scores than those who did not (see Table 2). Higher emotional dependency scores were noted when the primary partner was a sweetheart.

**Table 1**

*Mean Emotional Dependency Scores by Number of Partners of Respondent*

No. of partners	Husbands	Wives	Overall	<i>p</i>
One partner (faithful)	30.8	22.2	26.5	<.001
More than one partner (unfaithful)	34.7	34.7	34.7	
Overall	32.8	28.5		
<i>p</i>	< .001			

Note: Analysis of variance, age group as covariate, Interaction.  $F_{1, 1653} = 168.8$ ,  $p < .001$

**Table 2**

*Mean Emotional Dependency Scores by Primary Partner*

Primary Partner	Husbands	Wives	Overall
My spouse	31	22.4	26.7
My long-standing partner	36.5	33.6	35.1
My latest partner	40.1	34.7	37.4
My sweetheart	42.1	40.9	41.5
Overall	37.5	32.9	35.2

Note: Analysis of variance, age as covariate, Interaction.  $F_{3, 1690} = 1.21$ ,  $p = .31$

Below we focus on only those respondents who termed their extramarital partner as a sweetheart. Higher emotional dependency scores were reported when the respondent wanted to formalise a sweethearting

relationship (marry) even though they themselves were already married. Receiving money, but not gifts, in an extramarital relationship was associated with higher emotional dependency scores, Table 3. The

quality of sex with the sweetheart was considered better than their usual partner by 54.9% of respondents; 47.5% of female

respondents received money from their partner and 19.3% wanted to marry their partner.

**Table 3**  
*Mean Emotional Dependency Scores by Benefit of Committing Marital Infidelity*

Benefit of having a sweetheart	Yes	No	Not sure / Sometimes	<i>p</i>
I hope my sweetheart will marry me	47.9	33.4	41.3	< .001
My sweetheart pays for the upkeep of my children	43.4	33.9	38.8	.002
My sweetheart gives me money to live on	43.2	33.4	35.7	.001
I want to have a baby with my sweetheart	42.2	34.6	41	.009
We love each other	40.2	33.4	32.7	.006
My sweetheart makes me feel needed	39.5	31	34.1	.007
My sweetheart is a better lover than my usual partner	39	34.5	32.3	.033
My sweetheart gives me gifts (not money)	38.6	36.2	33.7	.281

Note: Covariates: age group and sex

**Table 4**  
*Mean Emotional Dependency Scores by Sexual Abuse*

Had sexual intercourse with your sweetheart against:	Yes	Not sure, maybe yes	Not sure, maybe no	No	<i>p</i>
Respondent's will (Victim)	50	40.6	42.7	33.3	< .001
Their will (Victimiser)	47.9	40.1	46.4	34.8	.009

Note: Analysis of covariance, sex and age as covariates.

Emotional dependency increased with the frequency of sexual intercourse of the respondent with their non-martial partner, from 30.5 (SE 1.92) with no extramarital sex to 48.5 (SE 3.3) with more than seven occasions of extramarital sex in the last seven days (Analysis of variance, age group and sex as covariates,  $F_{8, 147} = 4.89$ ,  $p < .001$ ), this relationship had a  $r_s = .46$  ( $p < .001$ ). The percentage of respondents who indicated that their sweetheart made them “feel needed,” was similar for those who had sex with their sweetheart less than twice a week and those who had sex more than twice a week (56.5% vs. 67% respectively,  $\chi^2 = 2.69$ ,  $N = 163$ ,  $p = .26$ ), and no statistical difference was found between male and female respondents.

Emotional dependency scores were

correlated the HITS index, which measures domestic violence,  $r_s = .39$  ( $N = 160$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that respondents with higher emotional dependency scores were more likely to be at risk of domestic violence. The association between emotional dependency and being sexually abused or being an abuser is evident from Table 4. In both cases, the victim or victimiser exhibited elevated emotional dependence compared to respondents who were not involved with sexual abuse.

## Discussion

This study highlights associations between emotional dependency, sweethearting, and domestic violence among married individuals in The Bahamas. While online surveys can introduce sampling bias, such as

overrepresentation of females and younger respondents (Fielding & Ballance, 2021), the objective of this research was to examine relational patterns within the target population rather than generalize findings to the wider Bahamian population.

The data reveals that both husbands and wives engage in extramarital relationships, a finding consistent with previous national and regional studies (Bahamas Ministry of Health, 2019; Grant, 1999). The current findings further support the literature that men are more likely than women to have multiple partners (Bahamas Ministry of Health, 2019) and engage in infidelity (Rokach & Chan, 2023).

Respondents in this study demonstrated generally high levels of emotional dependency. According to Camarillo et al. (2020), scores ranging from 22 to 36 reflect high emotional dependency, while scores of 37 or more indicate extreme emotional dependency. Overall, 19% of the 1,735 respondents who answered the relevant questions met the criteria for extreme emotional dependency. These elevated scores might reflect deep-seated psychosocial factors, including the impact of adverse childhood events (Hoogstad, 2008), intergenerational trauma stemming from slavery and oppression (Cameron, 1967), and family violence (Fielding et al., 2016).

A finding of possible concern to the stability of the marriage was that some respondents involved in extramarital affairs also reported their sweetheart as their primary partner. These individuals exhibited significantly higher emotional dependency scores ( $M = 41.5$ ,  $SE = 2.33$ ) than those who identified their spouse as their primary partner ( $M = 26.7$ ,  $SE = .37$ ). Emotional dependency is also elevated among individuals who expressed a desire to formalise their extramarital relationships, such as through childbearing or financial entanglement, both

of which may introduce additional stress within their marriages (Table 3).

Sexual activity was correlated with emotional dependency, with increased frequency of sexual intercourse with extramarital partners predicting higher emotional dependency scores. This may reflect attempts to stabilise fragile relationships or, in some cases, be suggestive of coercion or transactional intimacy. Muise et al. (2016) previously noted that beyond a certain frequency, sexual activity does not necessarily correlate with increased emotional satisfaction—an observation echoed in this study.

Gender differences in emotional dependency were evident, with men ( $M = 31.7$ ,  $SE = .64$ ) reporting higher levels than women ( $M = 34.3$ ,  $SE = .37$ ). This may be linked to findings suggesting that boys in The Bahamas experience more frequent and severe corporal punishment than girls (Moxey-Adderley & Fielding, 2024, unpublished), and brain changes due to corporal punishment potentially contributes to adult dependency patterns and emotional vulnerability. These findings correspond to research by Estévez et al. (2018), which identified childhood trauma and neglect as predictors of adult emotional dependency. Moreover, studies suggest that prevailing parenting practices in The Bahamas may not promote long-term emotional resilience (Fielding & Ballance, 2021), underscoring the importance of early intervention and parental education to correct this.

This study identified a correlation between emotional dependency and domestic violence ( $r = .37$ ) where perpetrators of sexual coercion exhibited significantly higher emotional dependency scores ( $M = 50$ ,  $SE = 3.17$  for victims;  $M = 47.9$ ,  $SE = 6.26$  for perpetrators). These results highlight the broader mental health risks linked to emotional dependency, including increased susceptibility to abuse and impulsive

behaviours (Estévez et al., 2018; Etxaburu et al., 2024). Although Echeburúa et al. (2023) found that emotional dependency was a key factor in men's experiences of domestic violence, this relationship was not observed in the present study. The lack of replication may be due to the uniformly high levels of emotional dependency among respondents or the limited number of participants who provided relevant data ( $n = 64$  husbands,  $n = 101$  wives).

Although infidelity may offer emotional or material benefits as noted in Table 3, this study reveals that such relationships often carry emotional costs. Elevated emotional dependency in the context of sweethearting may compromise an individual's mental health and marital stability. As such, the societal normalisation of sweethearting may promote patterns of infidelity and psychological distress. Recognising emotional dependency as a public health concern invites broader conversations about mental wellness, relationship integrity, and culturally sensitive strategies for fostering healthy partnerships.

### **Policy, Practice, and Future Research Recommendations**

Future research should build on these findings by employing longitudinal designs to examine how emotional dependency evolves over time and influences relationship outcomes. It is also important to explore emotional dependency among a wider range of relationship types, including non-married and same-sex couples, to ensure an inclusive understanding. Further investigation is needed into why men may report higher emotional dependency and how trauma, cultural expectations, and upbringing influence this pattern. Evaluating the effectiveness of targeted interventions will be essential to determine what strategies can reduce emotional dependency and its negative effects. Finally, research on the

intergenerational transmission of emotional patterns and attachment styles may offer insights to inform child development and family policy in The Bahamas.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

This study's strengths include strong reliability, theory-driven research, and so contributes to the national and global literature on emotional dependence. The cross-sectional study design is quick, cost effective, and useful for large samples, providing insights into prevalence and trends. However, it cannot determine causality, is prone to bias, and cannot capture long-term effects. Snowball sampling was efficient, and useful for sensitive topics such as emotional dependence and domestic violence but can also result in a sample that is not representative of the entire population under study, and thus limits generalisability. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into emotional dependency and intimate partner violence within the Bahamian context, which can support future research and interventions.

### **Conclusion**

This study provides insight in the emotional lives of married individuals in The Bahamas, revealing associations between emotional dependency, sweethearting, and domestic violence. The prevalence of high emotional dependency, particularly among those engaged in extramarital relationships, underscores the need for targeted support and culturally informed interventions. Recognising emotional dependency as a risk for mental health challenges and relational instability can help shape effective health and social policies. By promoting emotional wellness, improving parenting practices, and investing in research and education, stakeholders can help foster healthier and more resilient relationships across Bahamian society.

## Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the students in the fall 2024 class of NURS 404 who collected

the data, the comments of an anonymous referee, and to Virginia Ballance for assistance in locating the emotional dependency scale.

---

## References

- Afsharzada, M. S., Etemadi, O., & Naghavi, A. (2025). Marital infidelity: Cognitive, behavioral, emotional reactions, and coping strategies among Afghan women. *Journal of Research in Cognitive and Behavioral Sciences* 14(2), 13–26. <https://ensani.ir/fa/article/605274/marital-infidelity-cognitive-behavioral-emotional-reactions-and-coping-strategies-among-afghan-women>
- Bahamas Ministry of Health. (2019). *The Bahamas STEPS survey 2019: Fact sheet*. <https://dloc.com/AA00083290/00001>
- Bahamas National Statistical Institute (2024). *2022 Census of population and housing: Preliminary results*. <https://cdn.bahamas.gov.bs/tenant/tenantbnsi/documents/All%20Documents/2022CENSUSPRELIMINARYRESULTSFINALApril122023-20240606015028.pdf>
- Bahamas National Task Force for Gender-Based Violence. (2015). *Strategic plan to address gender-based violence*. Ministry of Social Services and Community Development. <https://cdn.bahamas.gov.bs/tenant/tenanttgotb/documents/All%20Documents/GBVREPORT.Final.August2015-1-20240123170749.pdf>
- Bution, D. C. & Wechsler, A. M. (2016). Dependência emocional: Uma revisão sistemática da literatura estudos. *Interdisciplinares em Psicologia*, 6(1), 77–101. <https://ojs.uel.br/revistas/uel/index.php/eip/article/download/23858/18475/112709>
- Camarillo, L., Ferre, F., Echeburúa, E., & Amor, P. J. (2020). Partner's emotional dependency scale: Psychometrics. *Actas Espanolas de Psiquiatria*, 48(4), 145–153. <https://actaspsiquiatria.es/index.php/actas/article/download/308/441>
- Cameron, H. (1967). A review of research and an investigation of emotional dependency among negro youth. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 36(2), 111–120. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2293886>
- Dias Alves, F., Peixoto Camacho, T. P., & da Sila Reis, E. (2023). Emotional dependency and the impacts on the lives of people: An integrative literature review. *International Journal of Scientific Research*, 12(8), 5–9. <https://doi.org/10.36106/ijsr>
- Echeburúa, E., Amor, P. J., Sarasua, B., Zubizarreta, I., Camarillo, L., & Ferre, F. (2023). La dependencia emocional en hombres Maltratadores de su pareja en tratamiento comunitario: un Estudio piloto. *Anuario de Psicología Jurídica*, 33(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.5093/apj2022a1>
- Elliott, S. (1998). Shame and scandal in the family. *Lyrics.com*. <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/2375881/Shawn+Elliott/Shame+and+Scandal+in+the+Family>
- Estévez, A., Chávez-Vera, M. D., Momeñe, J., Olave, L., Vázquez, D., & Iruarrizaga, I. (2018). The role of emotional dependence in the relationship between attachment and

- impulsive behavior. *Anales de Psicología*, 34(3), 438–445.  
<https://doi.org/10.6018/analesps.34.3.313681>
- Etxaburu, N., Momeñe, J., Herrero, M., Chávez-Vera, M. D., Olave, L., Iruarrizaga, I., & Estévez, A. (2024). Buying-shopping disorder, impulsivity, emotional dependence and attachment in adolescents. *Current Psychology*, 43, 1507–1518.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04425-3>
- Fielding, W. J., & Ballance, V. (2021). Knowledge, attitudes and practices of corporal punishment in Bahamian homes. *International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 27, 47–62.  
<https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v27i0.415>
- Fielding, W. J., & Ballance, V. C. (2022). The Bahamian justification for using corporal punishment within the home: A Christian habit? *International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 28, 17–32.  
<https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v28i0.449>
- Fielding W. J., & Ballance, V. C. (2023). Behaviours associated with male “sweethearting” (infidelity) in heterosexual relationships in The Bahamas. *International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 29(2), 46–56.  
<https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v29i2.521>
- Fielding W. J., Ballance, V. C., & Campbell Hall Dean, N. (2023). In The Bahamas “she must give it up”: Sexual abuse of women in heterosexual relationships by their intimate partners. *International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 29(2), 15–32. <https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v29i2.495>
- Fielding, W. J., Ballance, V. & Strachan, I. (Eds.). (2016). *Violence in The Bahamas*. University of The Bahamas
- Fincham, F. D., & May, R. W. (2017). Infidelity in romantic relationships. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 13, 70–74.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.03.008>
- Grant, M. T. (1999). Sweethearting: A study of infidelity among married males and females in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Clark Atlanta University].  
[https://radar.auctr.edu/islandora/object/cau.td%3A1999\\_grant\\_mishelle\\_t](https://radar.auctr.edu/islandora/object/cau.td%3A1999_grant_mishelle_t)
- Hamon, R. R. (2003). “It’s better in the Bahamas”: From relationship initiation to marriage. In R. R. Hamon & B. B. Ingoldsby (Eds.), *Mate selection cross cultures* (pp. 21–42). Sage Publications.
- Harris, A. (2023). *Worldwide marriage statistics*.  
<https://onlinemftprograms.com/worldwide-marriage-statistics/>
- Haseli, A., Shariati, M., Nazari, A. M., Keramat, A., & Emamian, M. H. (2019). Infidelity and its associated factors: A systematic review. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*, 16(8), 1155–1169.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsxm.2019.04.011>
- Hendershot, Q. E., Reto, E. F., Torres-Aragón, A. D., & Johnson, M. D. (2024). Spanish-Language measures of intimate partner violence: A systematic review of psychometric evidence and translation methodology. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 25(5), 3729–3741.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380241259999>
- Hoogstad, J. (2008). Choice theory and emotional dependency. *International Journal of Reality Therapy*, 28(1), 63–68.  
<https://search.proquest.com/openview/67661527eb1aee6b01a03a71d9466e64/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=28902>

- Kemer, G., Çetinkaya Yıldız, E., & Bulgan, G. (2016). Emotional dependency and dysfunctional relationship beliefs as predictors of married Turkish individuals' relationship satisfaction. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 19*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sjp.2016.78>
- Khumalo, S., Mabaso, M., Makusha, T., & Taylor, M. (2021). Intersections between masculinities and sexual behaviors among young men at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Sage Open, 11*(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211040114>
- Knowles, K. W. (2016, May 12). Marriage for three [Letter to the Editor]. *The Tribune*. <http://www.tribune242.com/news/2016/may/12/marriage-three/>
- Laestadius, L., Bishop, A., Gonzalez, M., Illeňčík, D., & Campos-Castillo, C. (2022). Too human and not human enough: A grounded theory analysis of mental health harms from emotional dependence on the social chatbot Replika. *New Media & Society, 1–19*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sjp.2016.78>
- Leemans, C., & Loas, S. (2016). On the relationship between emotional dependency and abuse. *Revue Medicale de Bruxelles, 37*(2), 79–86. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27487692/>
- Lemos, M., & Londoño, N. H. (2006). Construcción y validación del cuestionario de dependencia emocional en población colombiana. *Acta Colombiana de Psicología, 9*(2), 127–140. [http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?pid=s0123-91552006000200012&script=sci\\_arttext](http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?pid=s0123-91552006000200012&script=sci_arttext)
- Lemos, M., Vásquez, A. M., & Roman-Calderón, J. P. (2019). Potential therapeutic targets in people with emotional dependency. *International Journal of Psychological Research, 12*(1), 18–27. <https://doi.org/10.21500/20112084.3627>
- Liverpool, S., Prescod, J., Pereira, B., & Trotman, C. (2023). Prevalence of mental health and behaviour problems among adolescents in the English-speaking Caribbean: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Discover Mental Health, 3*(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44192-023-00037-2>
- Matrimonial Causes Rules (1957) Bahamas (Ch. 125). <http://laws.bahamas.gov.bs/cms/images/LEGISLATION/SUBORDINATE/1957/1957-0001/1957-0001.pdf>
- Merlyn, M., Díaz-Mosquera, E., & Latorre, G. (2024). Types of attachment as predictors of emotional dependence in couples. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences, 11*(8), 178–186. <https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2024.08.019>
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2016). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change*. (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Momeñe, J., & Estévez, A. (2018). Los estilos de crianza parentales como predictores del apego adulto, de la dependencia emocional y del abuso psicológico en las relaciones de pareja adultas. *Behavioral Psychology, 26*(2), 359–377. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A555076772/IFME?u=anon~b4c138e5&sid=googleScholar&xid=977ed651>
- Moxey-Adderley, T. E., & Fielding, W. J. (2024). Aggression and its correlates in the Bahamian community with a focus on corporal punishment. *International Journal of Bahamian Studies, 30*, 15–32. <https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v30i1.557>

- Muise, A., Schimmack, U., & Impett, E. A. (2016). Sexual frequency predicts greater well-being, but more is not always better. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 7(4), 295–302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550615616462>
- Otterbein, K. F. (1966). *The Andros Islanders: A study of family organization in the Bahamas*. University of Kansas Publications.
- Pan American Health Organization. (2020). *The burden of mental disorders in the Americas. Country profile The Bahamas*. [https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/MentalHealth-profile-2020%20Bahamas\\_Country\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/MentalHealth-profile-2020%20Bahamas_Country_Report_Final.pdf)
- ProQuest. (2014). *Commonwealth of the Bahamas*. CultureGrams World Edition [https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/7D7DCF-F8-C4AD-66A3-6344C7E690C4BFD9/bahamas\\_2014.pdf](https://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/7D7DCF-F8-C4AD-66A3-6344C7E690C4BFD9/bahamas_2014.pdf).
- Rodgers, W. B. (1967). Household atomism and change in the Out Island Bahamas. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 23(3), 244–260. <https://doi.org/10.1086/soutjanth.23.3.3629252>
- Rokach, A., & Chan, S. H. (2023). Love and infidelity: Causes and consequences. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(5), 3904. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20053904>
- Sherin, K. M., Sinacore, J. M., Li, X. Q., Zitter, R. E., & Shakil, A. (1998). HITS: A short domestic violence screening tool for use in a family practice setting. *Family Medicine*, 30(7), 508–512. [https://www.kcscgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HITS\\_eng.pdf](https://www.kcscgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HITS_eng.pdf)
- Spencer, C. M., Stith, S. M., & Cafferky, B. (2019). Risk markers for physical intimate partner violence victimization: A meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 44, 8–17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.10.009>
- United National Development Programme. (2019) Progress of the World’s Women. Global factsheet. <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2019/POWW-2019-Factsheet-Global-en.pdf>
- Wang, W. (2018). Who cheats more? The demographics of infidelity in America. *Institute for Family Studies*. <https://ifstudies.org/blog/who-cheats-more-the-demographics-of-cheating-in-america>
- Wife and sweetheart fight through the store of Super Value Cable Beach (2011, April 14). *Bahamas Press*. <https://www.bahamaspress.com/wife-and-sweetheart-fight-through-the-store-of-super-value-cable-beach/>
- Williams, E., Fielding, W. J. & Ballance, V. (2021). Mental health and negative sexual experiences of Bahamian university students. *International Journal of Bahamian Studies*, 27, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.15362/ijbs.v27i0.395>
- World Health Organization. (2020). *Mental health atlas. Country profile The Bahamas*. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/mental-health-atlas-bhs-2020-country-profile>
- World Population Review. (2025). *Infidelity Rates by Country 2025*. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/infidelity-rates-by-country>