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Correlates of Romantic Jealousy Among Nigerian Adults in Romantic Relationships

By

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Abstract

This study examined associations between socio-demographic factors, cultural orientation, personality traits and romantic jealousy (RJ) among Nigerian adults in romantic relationships. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. A sample size of 414 respondents were selected through a multi-stage sampling technique. Redeemer's Romantic Jealousy Scale, Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI), and Communal Orientation Scale were used for data collection. Participants reported 16.7%, 18.4% and 16.2% prevalence of cognitive, emotional and behavioural romantic jealousy respectively. Age, religious affiliation, marital status, employment status, and tribe do not have any significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy. Gender had significant positive relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy. Similarly, educational qualification had a significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of RJ. Cultural orientation was significantly positively related to the cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions of RJ. Extraversion had significant positive relationships with the cognitive and emotional dimensions. Agreeableness had significant positive associations with the three dimensions of RJ. Conscientiousness had significant positive relationships with the cognitive and emotional dimensions, but no significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of RJ. Neuroticism had a significant association with the emotional dimension of RJ but no significant relationship with the cognitive and behavioural dimensions. Finally, openness had significant positive associations with cognitive and emotional dimensions; with no significant correlation with behavioural dimension of RJ. Authors conclude that there is a high prevalence of RJ and that cultural orientation and personality traits are strongly linked to RJ among the participants.

Keywords: Socio-demographic factors, cultural orientation, personality trait, romantic jealousy Nigerian adults, romantic relationships.

1. Introduction

Romantic jealousy has been widely examined (Kara and Deniz, 2021; Pichon *et al.*, 2020). Its forte in congruent relationships has been justified by a mindful rise in care and concern (Boyce *et al.*, 2016). However, its excesses remain a problem that could be pathological. Romantic jealousy can have detrimental consequences in relationships because the most corporate cause of wife pounding and wife-killing is attributed to male sexual forms of jealousy in romantic relationships (Chiweta-Oduah *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, this compels unceasing research on related factors that could be its strong elements. Jealousy was reported as one of the three most robust predictors of partner aggression for men and women (O'Leary *et al.*, 2007; Edalati and Redzuan, 2010). While the emotion regulation literature extensively explores various emotional responses, there has been a notable dearth of attention given to the effective management of jealousy, despite its significant implications. In the context of romantic relationships, jealousy can serve as a potent force that either fortifies the bond or becomes a destructive element. The experience of romantic jealousy unfolds as a complex and paradoxical emotional state, capable of posing a direct threat to the very relationship one seeks to safeguard (Cano and O'Leary, 1997; Aloyce *et al.*, 2023). The ramifications of experiencing such jealousy extend beyond the individual expressing it, influencing the partner and even the perceived or actual rival who is considered a threat to the relationship's stability (Martínez-León *et al.*, 2017; Aloyce *et al.*, 2023).

Jealousy involves three fundamental aspects: Cognitive, Emotional, and Coping. According to White (1981), the cognitive facet of jealousy comes into play when an individual recognizes a potential danger to a cherished romantic relationship. This recognition triggers negative emotional responses. Consequently, individuals employ coping mechanisms to address these threats, ultimately alleviating the adverse emotional effects (White, 1981). Jealousy is a multifaceted emotional response characterized by a sense of insecurity, apprehension, and disquietude related to the potential loss of something valuable. This emotional spectrum may encompass a variety of sentiments, including anger, resentment, feelings of inadequacy, helplessness, and even disgust. Jealousy is a universal human experience, with instances observed in individuals as young as five months old (Draghi-Lorenz, 2000; Hart and Carrington, 2002; Hart *et al.*, 2004). In particular, romantic jealousy denotes a complex interplay of thoughts, feelings, and actions that have the potential to undermine the stability and quality of a romantic relationship. This emotional state arises from suspicions of romantic involvement between one's partner and an actual or imagined rival (Salovey, 1991; White, 1981). Romantic relationships constitute a significant facet of human existence, contributing substantially to overall life satisfaction and psychological well-being. Healthy romantic connections offer companionship, passion, and intimacy, contributing positively to one's life (Gable and Impett, 2012).

Conversely, unhealthy romantic relationships marred by the presence of romantic jealousy may lead to emotions of sorrow, feelings of rejection, a sense of abandonment, and interpersonal conflicts. This, in turn, has the potential to induce psychological distress and emotional suffering. These relationship issues can exacerbate or even trigger pre-existing psychological symptoms like depression, anxiety, and substance abuse (Gable and Impett, 2012). In some cases, romantic jealousy can escalate to pathological levels, causing severe consequences when individuals lose

control over their emotions (Aloyce et al., 2023). While jealousy is a normal and, at times, healthy emotion within relationships, it can become pathological when its intensity, persistence, and insight are compromised, particularly if the symptoms go unnoticed for an extended period. Unfortunately, this aspect of human emotion has not received sufficient attention in terms of effective treatments and interventions (Marazziti et al., 2003).

According to a study conducted by Boyce et al. (2016), romantic jealousy is frequently misinterpreted across various societies and cultures as a sign of affection, implying love. Nevertheless, romantic jealousy carries a range of adverse consequences, encompassing physical and emotional violence within interpersonal relationships, affecting both men and women (Pavela et al., 2014; Aloyce et al., 2023). This underscores the gendered nature of romantic jealousy, placing women at a disadvantage. It's noted that romantic jealousy has been a primary motivator behind men committing acts of violence against their female partners, whereas a substantial number of women have reported engaging in self-defence when faced with violence and intimidation from their partners (Campbell et al., 2003; Stöckl et al., 2013; Aloyce et al., 2023). Additionally, romantic jealousy has been found to contribute to aggression, universally exhibited by both men and women across different cultures (Edalati et al., 2009).

Studies (Aloyce et al., 2022; Buss, 2000; Cano and O'Leary, 1997; Aloyce et al., 2023) have shown that both men and women experience romantic jealousy. The expressions of romantic jealousy, however, depend on cultural contexts, personality traits, and various relational factors. This suggests that cultural and individual characteristics may be linked to jealousy within romantic relationships. There is an ongoing debate about whether jealousy is a universal trait observed in all cultures (Buss, 2000; Buss, 2001), or if it is specific to certain cultural contexts (Salovey, 1991). Given the association of jealousy with aggression and violence, there is a strong indication that romantic jealousy may lead to aggressive behaviour directed at romantic rivals and potentially contribute to intimate partner violence, even leading to fatal outcomes.

Harris (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the literature on jealousy-driven homicides, examining 20 reports from different countries, and the Chicago Homicide Dataset, which reported 1,361 victims between 1965 and 2000. These cases involved sexual jealousy and the belief of sexual infidelity as motivating factors, with 275 perpetrators committing suicide afterwards (Block and Block, 2012). Additionally, extreme levels of romantic jealousy can have dire consequences for the individuals involved and their perceived rivals, sometimes resulting in fatalities (Attridge, 2013; Martínez-León and Peña, 2017). The increasing incidence of this issue poses concerns for public health and societal well-being.

A study by Kolawole (2019) provides evidence of a growing trend in broken relationships, marriages, and courtships attributed to excessive jealousy, a situation seemingly at odds with the historical and cultural background of a multicultural state like Nigeria. This is further compounded by reports of abusive relationships (Chiweta-Oduah et al., 2020; Omoniyi, 2023), which have led to extensive awareness campaigns aimed at curbing domestic violence (Omidoyin, 2018). Reports indicate that Nigerian women experience higher levels of recurrent violence and are more likely

than men to suffer severe injuries (Chiweta-Oduah et al., 2020). In a specific study, it was revealed that 23% of females compared to 15% of males faced the most severe forms of violence, including beatings, choking, and threats involving guns or knives (Namadi, 2017). Moreover, 21% of women versus 11% of men reported experiencing more than ten violent incidents (Adebayo, 2014). These figures surpass those reported in the United Kingdom, where a 2010 survey by the UK Home Office indicated that 7% of women and 4% of men were victims of domestic abuse in the preceding year among over 21,000 residents of England and Wales (Office of National Statistics, 2011). The social implications of such data are substantial, as many instances of intimate partner violence arise from the poor management of jealousy within romantic relationships.

Cultural factors like an individual's "orientation" can significantly influence the likelihood of experiencing romantic jealousy. This perspective suggests that individuals both create and are influenced by their culture to fulfil personal goals. Certain cultural factors have been identified as factors that increase the probability of someone feeling threatened by a jealousy-inducing event (Edalati et al., 2009). In response to such threats, individuals often employ culturally sanctioned coping strategies. Although research has highlighted cultural variations in how people attribute human emotions, there has been limited exploration of how individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds attribute their feelings of jealousy. Socio-cultural orientation, as described by Cantillo (2016), offers a theory that explains why individuals exhibit particular behaviours, establish relationships, and adapt to society and culture. It involves engaging in activities and prioritizing cultural and family goals, which ultimately shape emotions.

Personality traits denote to relatively persistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that extricate individuals from one another (McCrae and John, 1992), and these traits are exhibited over time (Johnson, 1997). An individual's personality influences decision-making, meaning the decision-making outcome depends on their personality (Okafor *et al.*, 2020). The decision may positively or negatively impact a person's social or partner's intimate personal relationship. Bleidorn et al. (2019) have found that personality traits powerfully influence the outcome of social relationships. Similarly, Kern *et al.*, (2014) noted that consciousness affects social relationships. Farooqi (2014) reported that higher conscientiousness and lower neuroticism are linked to higher relationship satisfaction. Studies (Dyrenforth *et al.*, 2010; Finn et al., 2013; Malouff *et al.*, 2010; Mund *et al.*, 2016) have also found Neuroticism to be a significant personality trait that relates to functional social relationships, such that low levels of neuroticism demonstrate happier, healthier and more reliable relationships while the effect of high neuroticism will be contradictory.

Moreover, personality traits can exert an influence on romantic jealousy. The dimensions through which jealousy can be examined fall under the broader spectrum of personality traits, which include neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, collectively known as the Big Five (Costa and McCrae, 1992; Costa and McCrae 2012). These personality traits hold significance in various aspects of life, including interpersonal relationships. For instance, they have been found to predict satisfaction in romantic relationships (Malouff et al., 2010), positive interactions and emotions in parenting (Koenig et al., 2010), and preferences in forming friendships (Altmann and Roth, 2020).

Notably, low neuroticism emerged as a robust predictor of high satisfaction in romantic relationships and positive parenting behaviours (Koenig et al., 2010). Additionally, high levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness were associated with greater satisfaction in romantic relationships, while higher extraversion and openness were found to have positive effects on parenting, depending on the child's temperament (Koenig et al., 2010). In the context of forming friendships, individuals with higher levels of openness and conscientiousness exhibited a preference for cross-sex friendships over same-sex friendships (Altmann et al., 2020).

Surprisingly, despite these associations, there has been limited exploration of whether the Big Five personality traits predict romantic jealousy. However, the available research suggests that neuroticism consistently correlates with higher levels of jealousy (Gehl, 2010). Individuals with high neuroticism scores may experience heightened feelings of inadequacy as a partner, making them more susceptible to perceiving potential rivals as threats (Karakurt, 2012). As for the other Big Five traits, their influence on jealousy appears to be relatively minor, although it's important to note that few studies have comprehensively assessed all five traits (Gehl, 2010). Consequently, comprehending how enduring individual traits play a role in the development of successful interpersonal relationships is of paramount importance. This understanding has substantial implications for relationship commitment and longevity (Hendrick et al., 1988), which, in turn, significantly affects overall well-being and health (Dush and Amato, 2015).

It has been reported that jealousy can harm romantic relationships (Crowe, 2004) and lead to issues related to domestic abuse and violence (Daly et al., 1982). Many cases of intimate partner violence attributed to jealousy in romantic relationships have been reported in literature (Boserup et al., 2020). The physical and psychological health risk of romantic jealousy and the resulting intimate partner violence for both male and female victims and partners is well documented. For example, in Lagos, Nigeria, Oluwole et al., (2020) reported that women experienced various forms of domestic violence. Among the several identified behavioural implications, there was an occurrence rate of 7.8% - 34.8% experience of physical violence, sexual violence was a rating between 27.5% - 46.8%, the experience of psychological or emotional violence was within the rating of 19% - 52.5%, and 19.3% - 63% of the women experience other controlling form of behaviours from their partners.

On the other hand, indigenous gender studies have shown that males also experience domestic violence, in which emotional abuse is more frequently encountered. In a 2016 survey, there was a 97% report of the prevalence of domestic violence from men against women and a 47% prevalence rate of domestic violence from women against men (NOI Polls, 2016). Though the report on the male experience of domestic violence is not as frequent as in the females, in most cases, their experience consistently results in death (Adedipe, 2021; Babajide, 2021; Lambo, 2022; Onoyume, 2021). In a recent study by Ariyo et al., (2023), age was determined as a predictor for the cognitive sub-type of romantic jealousy, while sexual depression, anxiety and dependent attachment styles were found to be predictors of the cognitive and behavioural subtypes of romantic jealousy.

Moreover, studies considering cultural factors had been centred majorly on gender difference, and few other social factors in their engagement in jealousy with less concern for the cultural values imbibed in this individuals' "orientation" to be a factor in possible occurrence of jealousy in romantic relationships (Hromatko et al., 2019; Valentova, 2020). Thus, insight into the potential

role of cultural orientation in jealousy is essential to understanding the impact of jealousy on the quality of intimate relationships in African cultural contexts. However, there is no known indigenous research focused on cultural orientation vis-à-vis the roles of personality traits as regards the level of jealousy. In addition, limited studies have considered the role of personality traits in jealousy globally. There were also limited indigenous studies considering personality traits, gender differences and other personal factors in jealousy occurrence in romantic relationships. Furthermore, no study has shown concern about the joint contribution of cultural orientation and personality traits as a factor that may result in jealousy in romantic relationships. Therefore, in a multicultural environment like Nigeria, there is a need to establish compelling evidence for the role of cultural orientation and personality traits in romantic jealousy.

This lacuna in indigenous studies relating the association between cultural orientation and personality traits and romantic jealousy deserves to be probed since the rise in intimate partner violence exhibiting features of pathological jealousy in the Nigerian context appears unabated. Empirical studies such as the present, are expected to assist in providing further indigenous baseline data for further investigations into the role of cultural orientation and personality traits in the occurrence of jealousy in relationships. The following research questions were raised, based on this identified gap in knowledge.

1. What is the prevalence of romantic jealousy among adults in the Oshogbo metropolis?
2. What are the associations between social demographic variables (age, gender, educational qualification; marital status, employment status and tribe) and romantic jealousy among the participants?
3. Are there significant correlations between cultural orientations, personality traits and romantic jealousy among the participants?

2. Materials and Method

2.1 Participants

This study adopted the multistage sampling techniques. At the first level, a simple random technique was adopted to allow all the towns in the Osogbo metropolis to be involved in this study. This made the researcher engage in balloting to randomly pick seven communities out of the 12 major communities in the Osogbo Metropolis by chance. This selected seven communities through the balloting: *Okeefia, Okinni, Aduramigba, Abeere, Agunbelewo, Ogo-Oluwa* and *Dada-Estate*. Furthermore, the accidental sampling technique was used to select the adults within the specified age range who gave consent to participate in this study within the research setting.

2.2 Inclusion-exclusion criteria

Adults above 20 were chosen for the study based on the inclusion/exclusion criteria. This inclusion ensured accurate research results accounting for probable response errors caused by individuals that might be within the adolescent's age. In addition, this study included all Nigerians who are Adults within the study-specified age who reside in the Osogbo axis of Osun state. Therefore, adults who live in the Osogbo axis of Osun state and were willing to complete and submit the questionnaires to the researcher were allowed to participate. This inclusion criterion allowed the

researcher to ensure that all potential participants were well-informed and understood the study goals.

2.3 Instruments

Redeemer's University Romantic Jealousy Scale (RUN-RJS): Ariyo and colleagues (2022) developed and validated the Redeemer's University Romantic Jealousy Scale (RUN-RJS) to assess the intensity of romantic jealousy within the Nigerian population. This scale comprises 17 items and is organized into three subscales, each intended to assess distinct aspects of jealousy: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. The cognitive subscale consists of five items, aimed at gauging the individual's level of concern and uncertainty about their partner's faithfulness. To determine cognitive subscale scores, participants were asked to indicate the frequency with which particular thoughts concerning their partner occurred, using a response scale that ranged from 1 (never) to 7 (all the time). For example, one item reads: "I have suspicions that my partner might be attracted to someone else." On the other hand, the emotional subscale encompasses six items, which evaluate the intensity of the emotional responses experienced in situations that trigger jealousy. The authors assert that the scale and all of its subscales exhibit robust reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of .92, .85, and .89 for the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural subscales, respectively.

Scores equal to or higher than the norm indicate the presence of pathological romantic jealousy, while scores lower than the norm indicate the absence of pathological romantic jealousy. Adopting the RUN Romantic Jealousy scale for this study yielded Cronbach's alpha of .92, .91, and .66, respectively, for the construct's cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions.

Big-Five Inventory (BFI): The study employed the use of the Big Five Inventory (BFI), which was developed by John and his colleagues in 1991 (John et al., 1991). This inventory consists of 44 self-report items designed to assess various personality dimensions, namely: Neuroticism (8 items) - Measuring emotional stability, for example, "I perceive myself as someone who remains calm under stress." Extraversion (8 items) - Assessing sociability and outgoing nature, for example, "I see myself as someone outgoing and sociable." Openness to experience (10 items) - Evaluating curiosity and openness to various ideas and experiences, for example, "I see myself as someone who is curious about many different things." Agreeableness (9 items) - Focusing on cooperativeness and interpersonal relations, for example, "I see myself as someone who likes to cooperate with others." Conscientiousness (9 items) - Gauging an individual's level of organization and attention to detail, for example, "I see myself as someone who is easily distracted."

Participants were required to rate their agreement with each item using a five-point response format, with options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). As per John and Srivastava's research in 1999, Cronbach's alpha values for the BFI dimensions generally fall within the range of .75 to .90, with an average exceeding .80. Additionally, test-retest reliabilities over 3 months typically range from .80 to .90. Higher scores on the BFI indicate a higher level of the respective personality dimension. In this particular study, employing the BFI scale yielded Cronbach's alpha values for each dimension as follows: Extraversion = .39, Agreeableness = .76,

Conscientiousness = .71, Neuroticism = .69, and Openness = .57. BFI has been used in Nigerian studies (Akinniyi et al., 2019; Nwaka et al 2020; Akpunne et al., 2020).

Cultural Orientation Scale: The study also employed the Communal Orientation Scale (COS), developed by Thompson and DeHarpport in 1998. This scale consists of 14 items aimed at measuring an individual's belief in the importance of considering others' needs and feelings in social relationships, as well as their commitment to helping and caring for the welfare of others. Respondents were asked to rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1 (extremely uncharacteristic of me) to 7 (extremely characteristic of me). The reported Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .86. A high score on the COS indicates a strong cultural orientation, and vice versa. For this study, the COS scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .64.

3. Results

Demographic Characteristics of Participants: The distribution of the participants age was such that 54.6% (226) were within the age range of 21 and 30 years, 34.1% (141) were aged between 31 and 40 years, and 9.7% (40) were aged between 41 and 50 years, while 1.7% were aged between 51 and 60 years. The gender distribution of the participants was such that 44% (182) were males and 56% (232) were females. The majority of the participants (82.4%) 341 were Christians by religious practice, 12.8% (53) were Muslims, while 4.3% (18) were Traditionalist, although 0.5% (2) did not indicate their religious affiliation.

The distribution of participants' educational qualifications was such that 11.8 (49) were Senior Secondary School Certificate holders, 17.4% (72) had the National Diploma, 47.3% (196) had either the Higher National Diploma or First Degree and 22.9% (95) were holders of other certifications though not specified, meanwhile, 0.5% (2) did not indicate their educational qualification. Concerning the participants' marital status, 58.5% (242) were single, 37.9% (157) were married, 2.4% (10) were divorced, 1% (4) were separated from their spouse, and 0.2% (1) were widowed.

The employment status of the respondents was such that 56.5% (234%) were employed, 19.8% (82) were unemployed, and 22.9% (95) were self-employed, although 0.7% (3) did not report their employment status. The participants' tribe revealed that 77.5% (321) were Yoruba, 3.4% (14) were Hausa, and 10.9% (45) were Igbos, meanwhile, 8.2% (34) were members of other tribes though not indicated in this study.

Prevalence of Romantic Jealousy Dimensions

Table 1: *Frequency, Percentage, Mean, and Standard Deviation Showing the Prevalence of the dimensions of Romantic Jealousy*

	N	Mean	SD	F	%	Prevalence					
						Low		Moderate		High	
						F	%	F	%	F	%
Cognitive Dimension RJ	414	30.05	9.04	61	14.7	284	68.6	69	16.7		
Emotional Dimension RJ	414	35.68	9.72	48	11.6	290	70.0	76	18.4		
Behavioral Dimension RJ	414	11.08	5.35	56	13.5	291	70.3	67	16.2		

The findings on the prevalence of the dimensions of romantic jealousy, as indicated in Table 1, show that 14.7% displayed a low appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations, 68.6% displayed a moderate appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations, and 16.7% displayed a high appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations. Concerning the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy, 11.6% displayed low feelings of jealousy, 70% expressed moderate feelings of jealousy, and 18.4% expressed high feelings of jealousy. The findings on the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy indicated that 13.5% displayed low actions when jealous, 70.3% displayed moderate actions to indicate their jealousy behaviour, and 16.2% displayed highly tensed actions to show their level of jealousy.

It was further reported that there was a higher occurrence of emotional jealousy (M=35.68, SD=9.72), than cognitive jealousy (M=30.05, SD=9.04), and behavioural jealousy (M=11.08, SD=5.35). This implies that in Nigeria a multi-ethnic culture, there are higher occurrence of emotional jealousy among others.

Relatedness among the Study Variables

Table 2
Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationships among the Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Age	1															
2. Gender	-.06	1														
3. Religious Affiliation	-.03	.01	1													
4. Educational Qualification	.16**	.07	-.05	1												
5. Marital Status	.63**	-.02	.12*	.10*	1											
6. Employment Status	-.15**	.01	.06	.03	-.04	1										
7. Tribe	.00	-.09	.04	.05	-.02	.14**	1									
8. Cultural Orientation	.05	.17**	-.06	.10*	.02	-.09	-.08	1								
9. Extraversion	.10*	.10*	.09	.02	.08	.00	.04	.13*	1							
10. Agreeableness	.10*	.10*	-.10*	.11*	.12*	.06	-.07	.42**	.28**	1						
11. Conscientiousness	.21**	.05	-.12*	.14**	.19**	-.02	-.09	.36**	.27**	.71**	1					
12. Neuroticism	-.09	.02	.10	-.02	-.12*	.02	.09	-.24**	-.28**	-.60**	-.64**	1				
13. Openness	.03	.17**	-.10*	.16**	.03	.01	-.05	.38**	.29**	.60**	.50**	-.29**	1			
14. Cognitive DRJ	.07	.01	-.12*	.21**	.09	.00	.02	.19**	.24**	.28**	.31**	-.07	.46**	1		
15. Emotional DRJ	.08	.10*	-.07	.13**	.10*	.00	-.00	.22**	.29**	.26**	.31**	-.14**	.48**	.85**	1	
16. Behavioural DRJ	-.05	.11*	.03	.10*	.01	.08	.04	-.20**	.09	-.16**	-.03	.09	.02	.11*	.12*	1
Mean	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	67.05	25.12	35.38	35.20	19.63	35.30	30.05	35.68	11.08
SD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11.97	4.88	6.86	6.51	6.08	6.08	9.04	9.72	5.35

Note: ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, N= 414; Gender was coded: Male=1, Female=2; etc.

The result in Table 2, on the tested demographic factors about the dimensions of romantic jealousy, revealed that age does not significantly relate to the cognitive dimension of emotional jealousy [r(412)= .07, p > .05], this shows that being young or old does not define individual appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations. Similarly, gender had no significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [r(412)= .01, p > .05]; this means that being male does not differ from the female in how an individual appraises jealousy-inducing situations. In a different trend, religious affiliation had a significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [r(412)= -.12, p < .05]. This means that individuals' choice of religious practice does relate to their appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations.

It was observed that educational qualification had a significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [r(412)= .21, p < .01]. This indicated that individuals' literacy levels related to their appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations. Marital status does not have any significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [r(412)= .09, p > .05]; thus it could be said that an individual's status of being married or not does not have any association with their appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations. Also, employment status does not have any significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [r(412)= .00, p > .05]. This shows that the condition of employment does not affiliate with an individual's

appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations. Lastly, Tribe does not significantly relate to the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .02, p > .05$]. This indicated that diversity in cultures or tribes is not linked to an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations.

The relationship between the tested socio-demographic factors and the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy was such that age does not significantly relate to the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .08, p > .05$]. This shows that being young or old does not associate with how an individual feels when jealous. Gender had a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .10, p < .05$]. This is such that being male or female will dignify how you feel when jealous, and this result indicated that based on coding, the females tend to depict how they feel more jealous than the males. Religious affiliation does not have any significant relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = -.07, p > .05$]. This implies that an individual's choice of religious practice does not link with how they feel when jealous. Educational qualification had a significant relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .13, p < .01$]. This is such that an individual's level of literacy affiliates with how they feel when being jealous. In a similar trend, marital status significantly positively relates to the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .10, p < .05$]. This indicated that an individual's marital condition was linked with how they felt when jealous. Employment status [$r = .00, p > .05$] and Tribe [$r(412) = -.00, p > .05$] do not have any significant relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy. This means that an individual status of employment nor their cultural/tribal identity was not affiliated with how an individual feels when jealous.

In respect to the relationship between the tested socio-demographic factors and the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy was such that age [$r(412) = -.05, p > .05$], religious affiliation [$r(412) = .03, p > .05$], marital status [$r(412) = .01, p > .05$], employment status [$r(412) = .08, p > .05$], and Tribe [$r(412) = .04, p > .05$] does not have any significantly relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy, this indicated that these tested personal factors does not have any link with the actions of individuals when jealous. Meanwhile, gender [$r(412) = .11, p < .05$] had a significant positive relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy. This was such that the females tended to display their actions when jealous than the males. Similarly, educational qualification also had a significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .10, p < .05$]. This also shows that an individual's level of literacy affiliates with their displayed actions when jealous.

The relationship between the dimensions of romantic jealousy and cultural orientation was such that cultural orientation was significantly positively related to the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .19, p < .01$]. This implies that individuals' appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is associated with their inclinations of thoughts, feelings and actions being culturally determined. Also, cultural orientation had a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .22, p < .01$]. This shows that an individual's feelings when jealous had a link with their inclinations of thoughts, feelings and actions being culturally determined. The relationship between cultural orientation and the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy was also significant [$r(412) = -.20, p < .01$]. This indicated that an individual's

feeling when jealous is related to their inclinations of thoughts, feelings and actions being culturally determined.

The relationship between personality characteristics and dimensions of romantic jealousy was further revealed in this result. This was such that extraversion had a significant positive relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .24, p < .01$]. This means that an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is affiliated with their level of sociability and display of positive emotions. Agreeableness also had a significant positive relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .28, p < .01$]. This shows that an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is associated with their level of trust and compliance.

Conscientiousness was also reported to have a significant positive relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .31, p < .01$]. This indicated that an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is linked with their achievement striving and rate of self-discipline. In a different direction, neuroticism was observed not to have any significant relationship with the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = -.07, p > .05$]. This certifies that an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is not related to any feeling of impulsiveness and vulnerability. The relationship between openness and the cognitive dimension of romantic jealousy was also positively related [$r(412) = .46, p < .01$]. This implies that an individual's appraisal of jealousy-inducing situations is affiliated with their ability to generate ideas as well as quickened to actions.

The relationship between personality characteristics and the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy was such that extraversion had a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .29, p < .01$]. This means that an individual's feelings of jealousy are connected with their level of sociability and display of positive emotions. Agreeableness also had a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .26, p < .01$], this shows that individuals feeling when jealousy is affiliated with their level of trust and compliance. Conscientiousness also has a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .31, p < .01$]. This indicated that individuals' feeling when jealousy is linked with their achievement striving and rate of self-discipline. Neuroticism also had a significant relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = -.14, p < .01$]; this certifies that an individual's feeling when jealous is related to any feeling of impulsiveness and vulnerability. Openness was reported to have a significant positive relationship with the emotional dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .48, p < .01$]; this implies that individuals' feeling when jealous is affiliated with their ability to generate ideas as well as quickened to actions.

The relationship between personality characteristics and the behavioural dimensions of romantic jealousy was such that; extraversion had no significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .19, p > .05$], this means that the actions taken by individuals when jealous are not affiliated with their level of sociability and display of positive emotions. However, agreeableness had a significant positive relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic

jealousy [$r(412) = -.16, p < .01$]; this shows that the actions taken by individuals when jealous are associated with their level of trust and compliance. Conscientiousness also did not have any significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = -.03, p > .05$]; this indicated that the action of individuals when jealous is not in any way linked with their achievement striving and rate of self-discipline. In a similar trend, neuroticism was observed not to have any significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy [$r(412) = .09, p > .05$]; this certifies that the action of individuals when jealous is not related to any feeling of impulsiveness and vulnerability. The relationship between openness and the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy was also not significant [$r(412) = .02, p > .05$], this implies that the action of individuals when jealous is not associated with their ability to generate ideas as well as quickened to actions.

4. Discussions

This study found a high prevalence of romantic jealousy among the participants. This finding supports Ariyo et al., (2023) who also found a high prevalence of romantic jealousy among female nurses in Benin, Edo state Nigeria. Also, Buller et al (2023) reported a high rate of romantic jealousy resulting in intimate partner violence among the northern Ecuador population. Furthermore, this study revealed that gender has a strong influence on emotional and behavioural jealousy with more of the female involvement in these jealousy acts. This study's findings are consistent with the previous findings of (Güçlü *et al.*, 2017; Kara and Deniz, 2021; Banaszkiwicz, 2022) that associations exist between romantic jealousy and both biological sex and psychological gender. Zandbergen *et al.*, (2015) and Edlund *et al.*, (2022) also confirm gender influence and further stretch that women display more emotional jealousy while men manifest more sexual jealousy. The reports from Ariyo *et al.* (2023) also confirmed that men display more cognitive jealousy, while women display more emotional and behavioural jealousy. On the other hand, (Akile, 2016; Kaufman-Parks *et al.*, 2023) reported differently from this study's findings as their studies concluded that there was no relationship between gender and jealousy.

This study found no significant relationship between age and romantic relationships among Nigerian adults. This supports Kaufman-Parks *et al.*, (2018) and Akile's (2016) research findings who separately reported that there is no significant age difference in self-reported jealousy induction. However, studies by Gould, (2019) and Hromatko *et al.*, (2019) found that age was a strong factor in jealousy intention and that the younger adults were marginally more likely to report feelings of jealousy in relationships. Also, Ariyo *et al.* (2023), in their findings had reported that as age increases there is potency in people engaging in jealousy acts. The difference in these findings could be explained by the cultural and geopolitical differences in the populations. For instance, Nigeria is a multicultural nation with diverse practices.

The present study demonstrated that literacy level influences jealousy in romantic relationships. This was congruent with the Hromatko *et al.*, (2019) study, where it was justified that level of education is a determinant of adults' engagement with jealousy and that the more educated adults reported being most upset by scenarios of sexual infidelity. Again, the influence of ethnic group or tribe on jealousy has been refuted by this study's findings. This justification is not consistent

with the Buunk and Fernandez (2020) findings which extensively discussed that there is ethnic group difference in the occurrence of jealousy in relationships, and ethnic difference occurs more with anxious and preventive jealousy but not with reactive jealousy.

The findings of this study revealed that cultural orientation had a viable impact on the occurrence of romantic jealousy among adults. Accordingly, Khurana and Ahuja (2020) suggest that culture plays a crucial role in romantic jealousy. Hence our research finding is in line with the Mint (2010) study that clarifies that family culture is a determinant of jealousy perception in every relationship; this means that in individuals who are trained with norms and values from monogamous cultures, jealousy acts as a strategic response to perceived or actual relationship threats, unlike individuals whose upbringing were in a polygamous culture. These findings are also in support of Ariyo et al. (2023) who reported that individuals from a monogamous marriage or family upbringing do not differ from individuals in a polygamous family upbringing regarding how they will engage jealously in romantic relationships.

Similarly, the findings of this study were in agreement with the (Croucher et al., 2012) study findings which clarified that individuals from cultures that are egocentric, masculine and patriarchal (e.g., India and the United States) tend to express jealousy more frequently. Again, this study's findings agree with Zandbergen and Brown (2015) that culture is a viable factor in how much an individual engages jealously in a romantic relationship. Meanwhile, Zandbergen et al. (2015) expressed that cultural norms and values increase the chances of jealousy in relationships when there are indications of sexual infidelity rather than reports of emotional infidelity. This, according to Zandbergen et al. (2015), was more strongly predicted by the extent to which individuals adopt collectivistic cultural norms. This study's findings also align with the Canto et al. (2017) study, which showed that men from countries like Portugal and Brazil, which are both classified as high honour cultures, identified more strongly with cultural norms and emphasised the importance of honour, had the feeling of more jealousy especially when their partners engage in sexual infidelity.

This study further revealed that an individual's personality traits influence the perceived occurrence of jealousy in romantic relationships. It was revealed that extraversion determines the extent to which individuals engage in romantic jealousy. This was not in line with the previous study findings (e.g., Richter *et al.*, 2022; Apostolou *et al.*, 2022), which clarified that extraversion or level of sociability does not determine engagement in jealousy while in a romantic relationship. Also, this study has found that agreeableness is strongly linked to romantic jealousy. This is consistent with previous findings of Richter et al. (2022), which have clarified that lower agreeableness predicts a higher level of romantic jealousy. An indigenous study by Agu (2021) in Enugu Nigeria had a consistent result with this study's findings, that agreeableness is a determinant of satisfaction in romantic relationships. Meanwhile, the findings of Apostolou *et al.* (2022) are not in congruence with this study's justifications.

Furthermore, this study found a link between conscientiousness personality traits and romantic jealousy. This finding is congruent with the previous study of Agu (2021), where it was clarified

that conscientiousness as a personality trait predicts romantic relationship satisfaction. However, the findings of (Richter *et al.*, 2022; Apostolou *et al.*, 2022), were of contrary reports. The findings of this study reported neuroticism as a personality trait to be a pivot as reported in many studies to be an enduring trait in determining romantic jealousy. This study finding was in agreement with most studies (McCrae and John, 1992; Buunk, 1997; Wade and Walsh 2008; Gehl and Watson, 2003; Saeed, 2018; Sparks et al, 2020, Agu, 2021; Richter *et al.*, 2022; Apostolou *et al.*, 2022) on the strong relationship between neuroticism personality trait and jealousy in romantic. It was specified in this study that people with high measures of neuroticism will experience more jealousy in relationships.

Finally, the openness personality trait has been found to strongly correlate with an individual's engagement in jealousy while in a romantic relationship. The reports from (Agu, 2021; Richter *et al.*, 2022; Apostolou *et al.*, 2022) were in line with the findings of this study, where it was stipulated that openness to new experiences is a determinant of satisfaction with romantic relationships and individuals with higher scores in openness, experiences lesser jealousy in romantic relationship. However, the studies of (Buunk, 1997; Gehl and Watson, 2003; Gehl, 2010) reports differently as openness to experience was reported in neutrality of impact to jealousy in romantic relationship.

The authors declare that this study is limited in terms of the population and the social-cultural setting in which it was carried out. Also, not all extraneous factors that may influence the relationships of the variables were considered. Hence generalization of the finding should be approached with caution.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

There is a high prevalence of romantic jealousy among the participants. There is no correlation between age, religious affiliation, marital status, employment status, and tribe and the behavioural dimension of romantic jealousy. Cultural orientation is linked to the cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions of RJ. Extraversion had significant positive relationships with the cognitive and emotional dimensions. Agreeableness is positively associated with the three dimensions of RJ. Conscientiousness and openness have significant positive relationships with the cognitive and emotional dimensions, but no significant relationship with the behavioural dimension of RJ. Finally, Neuroticism is strongly correlated with the emotional dimension of RJ but no significant relationship with the cognitive and behavioural dimensions.

Adults in romantic relationships should endeavor to understand their partners personality traits and what they can tolerate or endure while keeping social relationship with others, so as to prevent the provocation of pathological jealousy that might be threatening to the relationship. Also, individuals in relationship with members of other cultural backgrounds should be accommodating and enduring so as to better understand their partners' worldview which most often is influenced by cultural orientation, norms and values.

Ethical considerations

All research ethics, according to the American Psychology Association guidelines, were put into consideration, The Adults were fully informed of the reason for the research, and similarly, the

Adults were requested to participate voluntarily. They were assured that the data and results obtained from this research would be used only for academic purposes. This study was approved by the Ethics and Research Committee, and the Department of Behavioural Studies, Redeemer's University's RUN-IREC Ede, Osun State, similarly all research ethics from the ethical board were adhered to strictly. Also, the guidelines from the ethical body of the Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics were fully considered.

Conflicts of interest

None is declared by authors

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