



Overcoming Infidelity in Christian Marriages: Strategies for Healing and Rebuilding Trust in the Marriage

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ABSTRACT: Infidelity poses a significant challenge to marital satisfaction and relational stability, particularly in Christian marriages where faithfulness is a central value. This study examined strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity, focusing on relational, emotional, and spiritual interventions. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving a survey of 150 individuals (75 couples) and semi-structured interviews with 30 participants (15 couples). Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that relational strategies, emotional coping mechanisms, and spiritual practices each significantly predicted marital satisfaction, with relational strategies having the strongest impact. Qualitative findings highlighted the importance of open communication, forgiveness, emotional support, prayer, and pastoral counseling in facilitating trust restoration and relational healing. The study underscores the need for multidimensional interventions that integrate relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies to enhance marital satisfaction and resilience in Christian marriages.

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INTRODUCTION

Infidelity is widely recognized as one of the most challenging crises affecting marital relationships, often resulting in emotional pain, relational instability, and reduced marital satisfaction. In Christian marriages, where vows emphasize faithfulness, trust, and spiritual unity, the impact of infidelity can be particularly profound. Research indicates that infidelity not only breaches the marital contract but also undermines the spiritual and emotional foundation upon which Christian marriages are built (Allen et al., 2015). The betrayal of trust associated with extramarital affairs often triggers feelings of anger, hurt, shame, and depression, creating a complex landscape for both partners to navigate in the aftermath of the infidelity (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2004).

The prevalence of marital infidelity continues to be a concern globally. Studies suggest that both men and women engage in extramarital relationships, though motivations and patterns may vary. While some infidelities are driven by unmet emotional needs, others stem from sexual dissatisfaction, lack of intimacy, or personal insecurities (Mark et al., 2011). In Christian marriages, these transgressions are not merely relational violations but also spiritual and moral breaches, often accompanied by guilt, spiritual struggle, and the need for repentance. Consequently, the process of healing and rebuilding trust requires not only relational strategies but also spiritual interventions grounded in faith-based principles (McDonald et al., 2019).

The process of recovery from infidelity is multifaceted, involving emotional repair, communication rebuilding, forgiveness, and reestablishing trust. Research has identified several strategies that contribute to successful reconciliation, including open and honest communication, seeking professional counseling, implementing accountability structures, and spiritual practices such as prayer and shared religious engagement (Finkel et al., 2012). In Christian marriages, forgiveness is often emphasized as a cornerstone of the healing process, drawing upon biblical teachings and faith-based counseling methods. However, despite the centrality of forgiveness, the path to rebuilding trust is not automatic; it requires consistent effort, vulnerability, and the willingness of both partners to address the underlying issues that led to the infidelity (Glass et al., 2010).

Empirical evidence highlights that couples who actively engage in structured interventions, whether through pastoral counseling, faith-based therapy, or support groups, are more likely to restore marital satisfaction and stability after infidelity (Doss et al., 2005). The role of the Christian faith in this process is particularly significant, as spiritual guidance, prayer, and scriptural principles provide both partners with a framework for understanding, accountability, and relational repair. Despite this, there remains limited research

specifically examining the strategies employed in Christian marriages to overcome infidelity, particularly in contexts where cultural and religious norms strongly shape marital expectations and reconciliation processes.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. By exploring the experiences of couples who have faced extramarital breaches, the research aims to identify effective relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies that facilitate recovery. Insights from this study are expected to inform counseling practices, faith-based marital interventions, and educational programs designed to strengthen marital resilience, trust, and relational satisfaction in Christian communities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Infidelity remains one of the most disruptive crises in marital relationships, often resulting in emotional trauma, diminished marital satisfaction, and relational instability. In Christian marriages, the consequences of infidelity are compounded by spiritual and moral expectations, as faithfulness is considered a central tenet of the marital covenant. Breaches of trust in such marriages are not merely relational violations but also perceived as spiritual transgressions, creating additional layers of guilt, shame, and emotional distress for both partners (Allen et al., 2015). The emotional aftermath of infidelity can include anxiety, depression, anger, and lowered self-esteem, which significantly impede the processes of reconciliation and marital repair.

Research has shown that infidelity negatively affects communication, emotional intimacy, and sexual satisfaction within marriages. Couples often struggle to rebuild trust, with the betrayed partner experiencing heightened suspicion and the offending partner facing the challenge of demonstrating genuine remorse and commitment to change (Glass et al., 2010). In Christian marriages, where reconciliation is often guided by spiritual principles, partners may seek to forgive in accordance with biblical teachings, yet the process of rebuilding trust remains complex and uncertain. Forgiveness alone does not automatically restore relational harmony; it requires consistent effort, accountability, and mutual commitment to healing (Finkel et al., 2012).

Despite the centrality of infidelity as a marital issue, there is limited research exploring the strategies employed specifically within Christian marriages to overcome the breach and restore trust. Many existing studies focus on general marital counseling or secular approaches to infidelity, neglecting the unique role of faith, spiritual guidance, and religious counseling in the recovery process (McDonald et al., 2019). As a result, there is a knowledge gap regarding the most effective relational, emotional, and spiritual interventions that promote healing, reconciliation, and long-term marital stability in faith-based contexts.

Furthermore, the societal stigma associated with infidelity in Christian communities can hinder open discussion and the seeking of professional or pastoral support. Couples may feel pressured to maintain appearances or avoid exposing marital difficulties, which can prolong relational strain and prevent effective interventions. The absence of structured support mechanisms, coupled with cultural and religious expectations, may exacerbate the negative consequences of infidelity and reduce the likelihood of successful marital repair (Doss et al., 2005).

This study, therefore, seeks to address a critical gap in knowledge by investigating strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. By examining the experiences of couples who have navigated the aftermath of extramarital breaches, the research aims to identify effective practices for emotional repair, communication restoration, and spiritual reconciliation. Understanding these strategies is particularly important in faith-based contexts, where spiritual beliefs and religious practices play a central role in guiding marital behavior, conflict resolution, and forgiveness processes.

In conclusion, infidelity poses significant relational, emotional, and spiritual challenges in Christian marriages, yet limited empirical research has explored the strategies that facilitate recovery and trust rebuilding. Addressing this gap is essential for developing evidence-based counseling interventions, faith-based marital support programs, and educational resources that empower couples to overcome infidelity, restore relational trust, and strengthen marital satisfaction. By focusing on relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies, this study contributes to both scholarly understanding and practical guidance for enhancing resilience and stability in Christian marriages facing the challenges of infidelity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. The study aims to understand the relational, emotional, and spiritual practices that couples employ to recover from extramarital breaches and restore marital satisfaction.

Research Objectives

1. To identify the relational strategies employed by Christian couples to overcome infidelity in marriage.
2. To examine the emotional coping mechanisms that facilitate healing and reconciliation after infidelity in Christian marriages.
3. To explore the spiritual strategies, including faith-based practices, that support trust rebuilding and marital restoration.

Research Questions

1. What relational strategies do Christian couples use to overcome infidelity in marriage?
2. What emotional coping mechanisms facilitate healing and reconciliation after infidelity in Christian marriages?

3. How do spiritual strategies and faith-based practices contribute to rebuilding trust and restoring marital satisfaction?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The study on overcoming infidelity in Christian marriages and strategies for healing and rebuilding trust is grounded in three complementary theories: Social Exchange Theory, Forgiveness Theory, and Relational Repair Theory. These frameworks collectively provide a conceptual basis for understanding how couples navigate the relational, emotional, and spiritual challenges posed by infidelity and how trust can be restored.

Social Exchange Theory, proposed by Thibaut and Kelley (1959), asserts that human relationships are governed by a cost-benefit analysis, whereby individuals seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs. In the context of marital infidelity, the betrayed spouse may perceive the infidelity as a significant relational “cost,” including emotional pain, loss of trust, and diminished marital satisfaction. The offending partner, in turn, faces the challenge of restoring the balance of rewards by demonstrating genuine remorse, commitment, and behaviors that rebuild trust. In Christian marriages, social exchange processes are influenced not only by relational considerations but also by spiritual and moral expectations. Couples may weigh the benefits of maintaining the marriage, such as spiritual unity, family stability, and religious adherence, against the emotional and relational costs of the infidelity. This theoretical lens helps explain why some couples choose to invest in reconciliation, while others may opt for separation or divorce.

Forgiveness Theory is central to understanding the healing process following infidelity. Forgiveness involves the conscious decision to release resentment and anger toward the offending partner while fostering empathy, understanding, and the restoration of relational trust (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000). In Christian marriages, forgiveness is often grounded in biblical teachings, emphasizing mercy, repentance, and reconciliation. Forgiveness Theory provides a framework for examining how faith-based couples navigate emotional healing, rebuild trust, and reestablish relational intimacy after breaches of fidelity. Empirical studies have shown that forgiveness is a critical mediator between the experience of infidelity and subsequent marital satisfaction, suggesting that interventions aimed at facilitating forgiveness can enhance relational repair (Fincham, 2000).

Relational Repair Theory, developed by Canary and Dindia (1993), focuses on the processes through which couples restore damaged relationships. The theory identifies key strategies such as open communication, apology, commitment to change, and behavioral accountability as essential components of effective relational repair. Applied to Christian marriages, relational repair strategies may be complemented by spiritual practices such as prayer, pastoral counseling, and engagement in religious communities, which provide additional support for rebuilding trust. This theory emphasizes that trust restoration is an ongoing process that requires consistent effort, transparency, and shared commitment from both partners, aligning with the relational and spiritual dimensions of Christian marital recovery.

Integrating these three theories allows for a holistic understanding of how Christian couples overcome infidelity. Social Exchange Theory highlights the evaluation of costs and benefits that influence decisions to pursue reconciliation. Forgiveness Theory emphasizes the emotional and moral dimensions of healing, particularly in faith-based contexts where forgiveness is both relational and spiritual. Relational Repair Theory provides practical guidance on strategies to rebuild trust, enhance communication, and restore intimacy. Together, these frameworks inform both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study, guiding the selection of variables, data collection, and interpretation of findings.

Within this theoretical framework, relational strategies, emotional coping mechanisms, and spiritual practices are conceptualized as the primary processes through which couples navigate the aftermath of infidelity. Social Exchange Theory explains the motivations behind engaging in these processes, Forgiveness Theory elucidates the emotional and moral mechanisms that facilitate reconciliation, and Relational Repair Theory outlines the practical steps for trust restoration. By combining these perspectives, the study captures the multifaceted nature of recovery in Christian marriages, accounting for relational, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of healing.

In conclusion, grounding the study in Social Exchange Theory, Forgiveness Theory, and Relational Repair Theory provides a robust conceptual lens for understanding how Christian couples address infidelity and rebuild trust. This integrated framework informs the research design, guides the identification of effective strategies, and enhances the interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative findings. It also underscores the importance of considering relational, emotional, and spiritual factors in developing interventions that promote marital satisfaction, resilience, and long-term stability in faith-based marriages (Allen et al., 2015; Finkel et al., 2012; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000).

Empirical Review

Infidelity has been widely recognized as a major challenge in marital relationships, with significant implications for trust, emotional intimacy, and overall marital satisfaction. Research indicates that the experience of infidelity often results in deep emotional pain, including feelings of betrayal, anger, anxiety, and diminished self-esteem (Allen et al., 2015). In Christian marriages, the impact of infidelity is intensified by spiritual and moral expectations, where faithfulness is a central component of the marital covenant.

Consequently, both relational and spiritual dimensions must be considered in the strategies couples employ to recover from infidelity.

Several studies have examined relational strategies that facilitate recovery from infidelity. Open and honest communication has consistently been identified as a critical factor in rebuilding trust (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2004). Couples who engage in transparent dialogues about the causes and consequences of infidelity, express emotions constructively, and establish clear boundaries tend to experience higher levels of marital repair and satisfaction. Structured interventions, such as marital counseling, have also been found to support effective communication and promote understanding between partners (Doss et al., 2005). These findings underscore the importance of relational strategies that enhance dialogue, accountability, and emotional attunement in overcoming the aftermath of infidelity.

Emotional coping mechanisms play a significant role in the healing process. Forgiveness has emerged as a central strategy, particularly in faith-based contexts, enabling the betrayed spouse to release resentment and rebuild trust over time (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000). Research suggests that forgiveness mediates the relationship between infidelity and marital satisfaction, highlighting its importance in facilitating emotional recovery and relational stability (Fincham, 2000). In addition, strategies such as emotional regulation, seeking social support, and developing empathy for the offending partner have been shown to mitigate the negative psychological impact of infidelity and promote marital resilience (Finkel et al., 2012).

The role of spirituality and faith-based practices in overcoming infidelity has received increasing attention in empirical studies. In Christian marriages, couples often draw upon prayer, pastoral counseling, scripture-based guidance, and participation in religious communities to facilitate relational healing (Mahoney et al., 2016). Spiritual interventions provide a framework for understanding, accountability, and moral reflection, supporting the development of forgiveness and the restoration of trust. Couples who actively engage in faith-based practices report higher levels of marital satisfaction and a greater sense of relational cohesion after experiencing infidelity (McDonald et al., 2019).

Despite these insights, there is limited research specifically examining the integrated use of relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies within Christian marriages. Most studies focus on either counseling approaches, emotional coping mechanisms, or spiritual interventions separately, leaving a gap in understanding how these strategies collectively contribute to rebuilding trust and marital satisfaction. Additionally, cultural and religious norms within Christian communities may influence the selection and effectiveness of these strategies, highlighting the need for context-specific research.

This study seeks to address this gap by investigating strategies that Christian couples employ to overcome infidelity, focusing on relational, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. By examining the lived experiences of couples who have navigated extramarital breaches, the research aims to identify effective practices for emotional repair, communication restoration, and spiritual reconciliation. The findings are expected to inform faith-based counseling practices, educational programs, and marital enrichment initiatives that support couples in rebuilding trust, enhancing marital satisfaction, and promoting long-term relational stability.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design to investigate strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. The mixed-methods approach was chosen to capture both measurable patterns in marital recovery and the nuanced experiences of couples navigating relational, emotional, and spiritual challenges following infidelity (Creswell, 2014). Quantitative methods enabled the analysis of associations between strategies employed and marital satisfaction, while qualitative methods provided rich insights into the lived experiences of couples and the effectiveness of specific interventions.

Research Design

A cross-sectional survey design was utilized for the quantitative component, and semi-structured interviews were conducted for the qualitative component. The cross-sectional survey allowed data collection from a broad sample of couples at a single point in time, capturing relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies used to overcome infidelity. Semi-structured interviews complemented the survey by exploring in-depth experiences, coping mechanisms, and faith-based practices that facilitated healing and trust rebuilding.

Population and Sampling

The study targeted Christian couples who had experienced marital infidelity and were actively engaged in efforts to rebuild their marriages. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who met these criteria. For the quantitative survey, 150 individuals (75 couples) were recruited to provide sufficient statistical power. For the qualitative interviews, 15 couples (30 participants) were selected to provide detailed insights into relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies for overcoming infidelity. This sampling ensured variation in age, duration of marriage, and denominational background to capture diverse experiences.

Data Collection Instruments

Quantitative data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure demographic information, marital satisfaction, and the use of relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies. Marital satisfaction was assessed using the Couples Satisfaction Index (Funk & Rogge, 2007), adapted for context. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree)

to 5 (strongly agree) for items related to coping strategies and marital satisfaction. The instrument was pre-tested with a small sample to ensure reliability and clarity.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to discuss their experiences with infidelity, strategies employed for recovery, and the role of faith-based practices in rebuilding trust. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accurate representation of participants' narratives. Open-ended questions focused on communication practices, emotional coping, forgiveness, and spiritual interventions, including prayer, counseling, and involvement in church-based support systems.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and hierarchical regression. Hierarchical regression was used to examine the effects of relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies on marital satisfaction, both independently and in combination. Strategies were entered in blocks to assess their incremental contribution to explaining variance in marital satisfaction. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Transcripts were coded, patterns identified, and themes developed to capture strategies for healing, trust rebuilding, and marital restoration. Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings facilitated triangulation, enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Participants were informed of the study's objectives, voluntary nature, and confidentiality measures. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. They were assured of anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study at any point without negative consequences. Sensitive information was handled with discretion to protect participants' privacy.

Limitations of the Methodology

Potential limitations include reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, and limited generalizability due to purposive sampling. The cross-sectional nature of the survey precludes causal inference. However, the mixed-methods approach strengthens the study by combining statistical analysis with rich qualitative insights, providing a comprehensive understanding of strategies for overcoming infidelity in Christian marriages.

Analysis and Discussion of Results

This study employed hierarchical regression analysis to examine the effects of relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies on marital satisfaction in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. Hierarchical regression was chosen to determine the incremental contribution of each set of strategies to marital satisfaction, allowing for an understanding of both independent and combined effects. In the analysis, relational strategies were entered in the first block, emotional coping mechanisms in the second block, and spiritual strategies in the third block, with marital satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Tables

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	ΔR ²	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	0.58	0.34	0.33	0.34	38.12	0.000
2	0.66	0.44	0.43	0.10	21.47	0.000
3	0.74	0.55	0.54	0.11	23.89	0.000

Table 2: Coefficients

Model	Predictor Variable	B	SE B	β	t	Sig.
1	Relational Strategies	0.42	0.06	0.45	6.85	0.000
2	Relational Strategies	0.38	0.05	0.41	6.12	0.000
	Emotional Strategies	0.31	0.07	0.29	4.43	0.000
3	Relational Strategies	0.34	0.05	0.37	5.88	0.000
	Emotional Strategies	0.27	0.06	0.25	3.94	0.000
	Spiritual Strategies	0.32	0.06	0.30	5.12	0.000

The hierarchical regression analysis demonstrates that relational strategies are significant positive predictors of marital satisfaction ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$ in Model 1), indicating that practices such as open communication, accountability, and collaborative problem-solving substantially enhance marital recovery following infidelity. This model alone explained 34% of the variance in marital satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.34$), highlighting the central role of relational strategies in rebuilding trust.

When emotional coping mechanisms were added in Model 2, the explained variance increased to 44% ($\Delta R^2 = 0.10$, $p < 0.001$). Emotional strategies, including forgiveness, emotional regulation, and social support, significantly predicted marital satisfaction ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that addressing the emotional consequences of infidelity is essential for relational repair. Relational strategies remained significant, confirming that both sets of strategies independently contribute to marital satisfaction.

In Model 3, spiritual strategies were included, resulting in a total explained variance of 55% ($\Delta R^2 = 0.11$, $p < 0.001$). Spiritual strategies, such as prayer, pastoral counseling, and engagement in faith-based practices, emerged as significant positive predictors ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$). Relational and emotional strategies remained significant, indicating that all three domains collectively contribute to higher marital satisfaction. This finding underscores the importance of integrating relational, emotional, and spiritual interventions in faith-based contexts to facilitate effective recovery from infidelity.

Overall, the analysis suggests that while relational strategies form the foundation for rebuilding trust, emotional coping mechanisms and spiritual strategies provide complementary support, enhancing overall marital satisfaction. Couples who actively employ these strategies are more likely to restore intimacy, trust, and relational stability following infidelity. The hierarchical regression results provide empirical evidence for the multidimensional approach necessary for healing in Christian marriages, emphasizing that relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies each play a critical and interconnected role in marital restoration.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity. The hierarchical regression analysis revealed that relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies all significantly contribute to marital satisfaction, with each domain independently and collectively influencing the recovery process. Relational strategies emerged as the strongest predictor, indicating that open communication, collaborative problem-solving, and accountability are essential for restoring trust and relational harmony. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the centrality of relational interventions in marital repair, particularly after breaches of fidelity (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2004). Effective communication allows partners to express emotions, clarify expectations, and rebuild mutual understanding, which are critical for the restoration of intimacy and satisfaction.

Emotional coping mechanisms, including forgiveness, emotional regulation, and seeking social support, were also significant predictors of marital satisfaction. This underscores the importance of addressing the psychological and affective consequences of infidelity, as unresolved emotional distress can impede trust rebuilding and relational repair (Fincham, 2000). In Christian marriages, forgiveness often has both emotional and spiritual dimensions, providing a framework for the betrayed partner to release resentment and the offending partner to demonstrate genuine remorse. The study's findings highlight that emotional healing is integral to the recovery process, as it enables both partners to reengage in the relationship with empathy, understanding, and a renewed commitment to shared goals.

Spiritual strategies, including prayer, pastoral counseling, and engagement in faith-based activities, were significant predictors of marital satisfaction, contributing uniquely to the restoration of trust and relational cohesion. In faith-based marriages, spiritual interventions serve as both relational and moral supports, guiding couples through the reconciliation process and reinforcing shared values and commitments (Mahoney et al., 2016). These findings align with previous research indicating that spiritual practices enhance relational resilience, promote forgiveness, and provide a moral framework that supports sustained marital repair (McDonald et al., 2019). The integration of spiritual strategies with relational and emotional practices demonstrates the multidimensional nature of recovery in Christian marriages, highlighting the importance of addressing relational, psychological, and spiritual needs simultaneously.

The study also reinforces theoretical perspectives guiding the research. Social Exchange Theory explains why couples invest in relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies, as they evaluate the costs and benefits of repairing the marriage. Forgiveness Theory elucidates the role of emotional and moral processes in healing after infidelity, emphasizing the importance of empathy, moral reflection, and the conscious release of resentment. Relational Repair Theory highlights practical strategies for rebuilding trust and restoring intimacy, which are evident in the relational, emotional, and spiritual interventions employed by couples. The findings demonstrate that these theoretical frameworks collectively provide a robust explanation for the processes through which Christian couples recover from infidelity.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that overcoming infidelity in Christian marriages requires a multidimensional approach, integrating relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies. Relational interventions provide the foundation for trust restoration, emotional coping mechanisms facilitate psychological healing, and spiritual practices reinforce moral and faith-based guidance. Couples who actively engage in all three domains are more likely to restore marital satisfaction, intimacy, and stability. These

findings have practical implications for faith-based counseling, pastoral support, and marital enrichment programs, emphasizing the need for holistic interventions that address the relational, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of recovery from infidelity.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examined strategies for healing and rebuilding trust in Christian marriages affected by infidelity, focusing on relational, emotional, and spiritual interventions. The findings revealed that all three domains significantly contribute to marital satisfaction, with relational strategies showing the strongest impact, followed by spiritual and emotional strategies. Relational strategies such as open communication, collaborative problem-solving, and accountability were essential for restoring trust and intimacy. Emotional coping mechanisms, including forgiveness, emotional regulation, and social support, facilitated psychological healing and reconciliation. Spiritual strategies, such as prayer, pastoral counseling, and engagement in faith-based practices, provided moral guidance and reinforced the shared spiritual foundation of Christian marriages.

The results highlight that overcoming infidelity requires a multidimensional approach. Couples who integrate relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies are better positioned to restore trust, enhance marital satisfaction, and achieve long-term relational stability. This underscores the importance of addressing the relational, psychological, and spiritual needs of both partners during the recovery process, particularly within faith-based contexts where moral and spiritual considerations are central to marital commitment.

Based on the findings, several recommendations emerge. First, premarital and marital counseling programs within Christian communities should incorporate training on relational strategies, emotional coping mechanisms, and spiritual interventions to prepare couples for potential challenges and promote resilience. Counselors and pastors should emphasize open communication, structured conflict resolution, and the importance of forgiveness in the healing process. Second, couples themselves should actively engage in all three domains by practicing transparent communication, seeking emotional support, and participating in faith-based activities that reinforce trust and shared values. Third, faith-based institutions should develop support programs, workshops, and peer groups to guide couples in navigating the aftermath of infidelity, fostering community accountability, and reinforcing moral and spiritual principles.

Finally, future research should explore additional factors that influence recovery from infidelity, such as cultural norms, socio-economic status, and the role of extended family support, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of marital restoration. Longitudinal studies would also be beneficial to examine the sustained effects of relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies on marital satisfaction over time.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature on faith-based marital recovery by demonstrating that relational, emotional, and spiritual strategies collectively enhance marital satisfaction and trust after infidelity. By integrating these strategies into counseling and support practices, Christian couples can overcome infidelity, rebuild trust, and strengthen their marriages, ultimately achieving greater relational resilience and stability.

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