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Trust: The Effects of Infidelity Intentions on Young Adults Interpersonal Relationships

Ojal, M.A. *Counselling Psychology, Amity University, Noida*

ojalrana2002@gmail.com

Dr. Babita Prushty, *Associate Professor*

bpurusty@amity.edu

Abstract: This study examines the effects of trust on infidelity intentions and interpersonal relationships among young adults. Utilizing standardized questionnaires, data were collected from 130 participants to explore how trust influences relationship dynamics and the likelihood of infidelity. The results indicate that trust accounts for a minimal amount of variance in both infidelity intentions (0.7%) and interpersonal relationship quality (1.1%). Regression analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between trust and infidelity intentions ($p = 0.327$), nor between trust and interpersonal relationships ($p = 0.227$). Pearson's correlation analysis showed weak associations between the variables. These findings suggest that trust, while important, does not serve as a significant predictor of infidelity intentions or interpersonal relationship quality among young adults. The study emphasizes the need for a broader understanding of relationship dynamics, incorporating factors such as emotional support, communication patterns, and individual differences. The findings offer valuable insights for relationship counseling and education programs targeting young adults. Limitations of the study include its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data. Future research should explore these relationships over time with more diverse populations.

Keywords: *Trust, Infidelity Intentions, Interpersonal Relationships, Young Adults, Relationship Dynamics, Pearson Correlation, Regression Analysis, Emotional Support, Communication Patterns.*

1. Introduction

In modern culture, romantic relationships among young people are increasingly influenced by intricate interpersonal dynamics, with trust serving as a crucial foundation for relational stability. Trust is vital for cultivating emotional stability, mutual respect, and enduring commitment; nonetheless, it is inherently weak and prone to violations. Infidelity, characterised by emotional or physical betrayal of a love partner, is a prominent element undermining trust. Intentions of infidelity, denoting the consideration or readiness to partake in dishonest conduct, have emerged as a central theme in psychology and sociological study, especially in elucidating the motives and repercussions associated with such tendencies. Interpersonal interactions, including communication styles, emotional connections, and societal influences, significantly impact people's views on faithfulness and commitment. Young individuals, often encountering the intricacies of romantic relationships for the first time, have distinct obstacles in sustaining trust within these connections. Elements like as digital communication, changing society standards, and individual anxieties influence inconsistent trust levels and, as a result, differing vulnerability to intents of infidelity. Moreover, previous experiences, attachment types, and peer influences further impact beliefs towards commitment and exclusivity.

The emergence of social media and digital communication has exacerbated marital dynamics by facilitating clandestine contacts, emotional adultery, and possible trust violations. Contemporary young people have more exposure to external temptations, complicating the establishment and maintenance of trust compared to prior generations. Research indicates that persons with less trust in their relationships may be more predisposed to contemplate infidelity as a coping strategy, a means of emotional affirmation, or as a reaction to perceived discontent in their existing marriages.

This research aims to examine the complex interaction between trust, interpersonal relationships, and intentions of infidelity among young people. The study seeks to elucidate the psychological, social, and technical factors that determine how trust mediates the propensity for infidelity and how interpersonal interactions inform individual decisions. Comprehending these dynamics is essential for cultivating stronger, more resilient relationships and alleviating the dangers linked to emotional and physical betrayal. As young people traverse their formative years of romantic involvement, a deeper understanding of these elements will aid in formulating ways to enhance relational trust and commitment, so fortifying the basis of future partnerships.

2. Review of Literature

Infidelity is a common problem in love relationships and may cause a lot of problems, such hurt feelings and the end of the relationship. A person's propensity to engage in adultery may be influenced by their unique attachment style, according to attachment theory. But previous research on the link between attachment type and adultery has shown mixed findings. The goal of this research is to identify any relationships between attachment style, different kinds of infidelity, and other variables that may play a role. The findings provide light on the mental processes that lead up to infidelity by showing that those with a fearful-avoidant attachment style are more likely to intend to cheat. There was also a modest negative association between sexual pleasure, relationship satisfaction, and intents to cheat. The correlation was significantly negative and was shown to be associated with personality qualities including openness to experience and conscientiousness. Insights gained from this study might help direct treatments aimed at preventing infidelity and promoting healthy relationships by expanding our knowledge of the factors that contribute to it. (Fung, 2024).

Extradyadic involvement (EDI) in dating relationships, whether in-person or virtual, was analyzed for its gender-specific associations. All the 561 women and 222 men in the sample had been in an exclusive dating relationship lasting at least 35 months on average; their mean ages were 23.19 and 23.97 years, respectively. The Extradyadic Behavior Inventory, the Attitudes towards Infidelity Scale, and the Investment Model Scale were all administered as self-report assessments to the participants. In this relationship, males reported more instances of physical/sexual EDI in person (23.4 vs. 15.5 %) & sexual EDI online (15.3 vs. 4.6 %) than women did. There was an increased likelihood of EDI for both men and women who had a history of infidelity during a previous relationship. For both sexes, EDI was strongly related with more favorable views of infidelity, lower levels of relationship satisfaction and commitment as well as higher quality alternatives. In a previous relationship, women who reported their partner's infidelity were more inclined to participate in emotional EDI in person or online. The likelihood of engaging in emotional EDI in person was significantly correlated with the length of the relationship and the age at which the first sexual experience occurred. Online sexual EDI was over three times as common among college-educated women. Overall, EDI is becoming more common among both sexes, although men continue to report more physical and sexual extradyadic behaviors, and the factors that contribute to emotional and sexual EDI differ across the sexes. Future research in this area is encouraged by this work, which adds to a comprehensive view of variables impacting the risk of EDI. (Martins, 2016).

3. Methodology

3.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to examine the interplay between trust, interpersonal relationships, and infidelity intentions among young adults.

3.2 Variables of the Study

Independent Variable

Trust: A good romantic relationship rests on trust, which in turn affects commitment, emotional stability, and relationship happiness (Simpson, 2007). It affects how people react to problems in relationships and indicates how much faith they have in their partners' honesty, dependability, and loyalty (Rempel, Ross, & Holmes, 2001). According to Miller and Baker (2018), when trust levels are higher, there is less likelihood of relationship unhappiness and betrayal and stronger emotional attachments.

Dependent Variable

Interpersonal Relationships: Interactions between romantic partners cover all aspects of interpersonal relationships, including emotional, cognitive, and behavioural aspects. Intimacy, communication, dispute resolution, and emotional support are all parts of these partnerships (Fletcher et al., 2015). According to Guerrero, Anderson, and Afifi (2017), the capacity to overcome obstacles as a team and the level of happiness experienced in one's relationships are both influenced by the quality of one's interpersonal interactions.

Infidelity Intentions: An individual's propensity or desire to partake in romantic or sexual encounters outside of a committed partnership is known as infidelity intentions. Factors like as internal values, the quality of one's relationships, and opportunities from the outside world might impact this (Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999). According to Mark, Janssen, and Milhausen (2011), one of the most important factors in determining the durability and commitment of a relationship is the intention to cheat.

3.3 Research Objectives

- 1) To analyse the impact of trust on interpersonal relationships among young adults.
- 2) To examine the impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults.
- 3) To assess the relationship between trust, interpersonal relationships, and infidelity intentions among young adults.

3.4 Hypothesis

- 1) There is significant impact of trust on interpersonal relationships among young adults.
- 2) There is significant impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults.

- 3) There is significant the relationship between trust, interpersonal relationships, and infidelity intentions among young adults.

3.5 Participants Of The Study

The sample was comprised of 129 individuals, with equal representation of males and females, and was picked using a random selection approach. The bulk of the sample consisted of individuals who were in the age bracket of 18 to 30.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The data for this study was collected using a demographic form in addition to the "General Trust Scale Interpersonal Relationships Questionnaire - Short Form and Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale."

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The information was gathered via the use of three surveys: the "General Trust Scale," the "Interpersonal Relationships Questionnaire - Short Form," and the "Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale." Upon receiving an explanation of the study's objectives, participants were asked to complete a battery of questions covering topics such as the study itself, any concerns regarding privacy, the researcher's contact information, and other pertinent factors. It took fifteen minutes to go over the instruments.

3.7.1 General Trust Scale

A six-item Likert scale that asks people to rate the general honesty and trustworthiness of other people based on their comments. In part, these items come from the Yamagishi Trust Scale (1986). Cronbach's alpha, which assesses the reliability of the observed indicators. Good dependability is indicated by values greater than 0.70, even though Cronbach's α values can range from 0 to 1.

3.7.2 Interpersonal Relationships Questionnaire - Short Form

A study conducted by researchers from San Jose State University found that the Interpersonal Relationships Questionnaire (IRQ), specifically its short form (FIAT-Q-SF), evaluates interpersonal behaviours and abilities with an emphasis on areas such as assertiveness, emotional expression, and conflict resolution.

Reliability

With Cronbach's alpha values of 0.93 and 0.91, respectively, the Interpersonal Relationship Inventory—Short Form (IPRI-SF) exhibits strong reliability and excellent internal consistency.

3.7.3 Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale

Infidelity not only exposes one to the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), but it also creates emotional grief and upheaval in the partner's existing relationship. Because attitudes do not necessarily convert into behaviour as well as behavioural intentions, attitudes regarding infidelity can only give partial evidence of who will be unfaithful in the future (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Personality traits are one example of an individual variation that could foretell adultery. Nevertheless, these measures do not directly assess infidelity but rather long-term tendencies towards bad interpersonal behaviour (Hall & Fincham, 2005). So, to gauge the probability of infidelity behaviours (such as planning to conceal the relationship from a desirable other or cheat in the future), we developed a short scale that evaluates behavioural intentions.

Reliability

According to Jones (2009), Olderbak (2008), and Olderbak & Figueredo (2009), the Cronbach's alpha internal reliability ranges from .70 to .81, which is consistently strong across samples. There is currently no data available on the scale's test-retest reliability.

3.8 Statistical Analysis

The research used descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and correlation analysis to look at how the factors affected one another. A thorough comprehension of trust, interpersonal interactions, and intentions of infidelity among young adults was achieved by data analysis performed using SPSS software.

4. Data Analysis

This section details the findings from the research project "Trust: The Effects of Infidelity Intentions on Young Adults' Interpersonal Relationships." The major objective of this study was to investigate how trust levels in interpersonal interactions are related to the likelihood of young people intending to be unfaithful. For the quantitative data, we used standardized questionnaires to make sure we were assessing the essential variables reliably and accurately. By statistically analyzing the replies, we were able to spot trends, correlations, and discrepancies that provide light on the ways in which participants' intentions of infidelity could impact trust and relationship dynamics.

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics of All Variables*

	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Infidelity Intentions</i>	<i>Interpersonal Relations</i>
Mean	18.27132	-7.67442	115.7829

Standard Deviation	4.149081	7.744113	17.32951
N	130	130	130

The descriptive statistics for the three main study variables—trust, infidelity intentions, and interpersonal relationships—are presented in Table 1. These variables were derived from data collected from 130 individuals. There was a reasonably high degree of trust among the participants with relatively low variability, as indicated by the mean score of 18.27 with a standard deviation of 4.15 on the Trust scale. The mean score for infidelity intentions was -7.67 and the standard deviation was 7.74, indicating that there was less of a predisposition towards infidelity on average but more variation among individuals. Despite a more variable distribution of answers, the category of "Interpersonal Relationships" had the highest mean score (115.78) and standard deviation (17.33). This indicates that individuals had strong interpersonal ties. Prior to performing more inferential analysis, these descriptive statistics provide a basic grasp of the overall patterns and distribution of replies.

Table 2: Regression analysis of impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.086899
R Square	0.007551
Adjusted R Square	-0.00026
Standard Error	7.745132
Observations	129

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	57.96742	57.96742	0.966332	0.327466
Residual	128	7618.358	59.98707		
Total	129	7676.326			

(H₁): There is significant impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults.

Table 2 presents the results of a regression analysis conducted to examine the impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults. The R Square value is 0.007, indicating that only 0.7% of the variance in infidelity intentions can be explained by trust. The significance value ($p = 0.327$) is greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05, suggesting that the relationship between trust and infidelity intentions is not statistically significant. Furthermore, the F-value of 0.966 also supports the lack of a significant model fit. Based on these findings,

the research hypothesis (H1), which proposed a significant impact of trust on infidelity intentions among young adults, is rejected. This implies that, within the sample, trust levels do not have a statistically meaningful effect on the tendency toward infidelity intentions.

Table 3: *Regression analysis of impact of trust on Interpersonal relationship among young adults*

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.107091
R Square	0.011468
Adjusted R Square	0.003685
Standard Error	17.29755
Observations	129

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	440.8439	440.8439	1.473382	0.227065
Residual	128	37999.08	299.2053		
Total	129	38439.92			

(H₂): There is significant impact of trust on interpersonal relationships among young adults.

Table 3 shows the results of a regression analysis conducted to examine the impact of trust on interpersonal relationships among young adults. The R Square value is 0.011, indicating that trust explains approximately 1.1% of the variance in interpersonal relationships—an extremely small effect size. The significance value ($p = 0.227$) exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05, indicating that the relationship between trust and interpersonal relationships is not statistically significant. The F-value of 1.47 also supports this conclusion, suggesting the model does not provide a significant fit. Therefore, the research hypothesis (H₂), which proposed a significant impact of trust on interpersonal relationships among young adults, is rejected. These results suggest that trust does not have a statistically significant influence on the quality of interpersonal relationships within this sample.

Table 4: *Pearson Correlation Analysis of relationship between trust, infidelity intentions and interpersonal relationships among young adults*

	Trust	Infidelity Intentions	Interpersonal Relations
Trust	1		

Infidelity Intentions	-0.0869	1	
Interpersonal Relations	0.107091	0.06381	1

(H₃): There is significant relationship between trust, infidelity intentions and interpersonal relationships among young adults.

Table 4 shows the outcomes of a Pearson's correlation study that looked at the connections between trust, intentions to cheat, and relationships among young people. There is a very small negative connection between trust and infidelity intentions ($r=-0.0869$), which means that as trust grows, adultery intentions go down a notch. Nevertheless, this correlation is so weak that it is highly unlikely to have any practical significance. There is a modest positive connection between trust and interpersonal relationships ($r=0.1071$), which means that there is a small but significant association between greater levels of trust and stronger interpersonal relationships. Finally, there is a very small positive correlation of 0.0638 between infidelity intentions and interpersonal connections, suggesting that there is no major influence. The study hypothesis (H₃), which suggested a substantial association between these variables, is rejected since none of the correlations are strong or statistically significant. Based on the data, it seems that trust, infidelity intentions, and interpersonal connections are not significantly interdependent and only moderately associated within the sample.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine how trust influences young people's intentions to cheat on their partners and the strength of their connections with others around them. The studies consistently showed that trust explained just a tiny percentage of the variance in both infidelity intentions (0.7%) and interpersonal relationship quality (1.1%), using standardised self-report measures on a sample of 130 people. Trust alone is not a strong predictor of either the likelihood of considering infidelity or the strength of relationship connections within this cohort, as seen by the non-significant regression effects and weak Pearson correlations.

There are significant theoretical and practical consequences of these results. In order to provide a more comprehensive explanation for why some young adults consider cheating and how trust in relationships leads to good interpersonal outcomes, they propose that models of relationship functioning should include a wider range of constructs, including emotional support, communication patterns, attachment styles, and individual personality factors. Relationship education and counselling programs must cover more than just trust-building activities; they ought to also teach participants how to resolve conflicts, manage their own expectations, and improve their interpersonal skills.

The study may be influenced by social desirability biases and has limitations in drawing causal conclusions due to its cross-sectional design and dependence on self-reported data, however it does make some useful contributions. More sensitive measurements or qualitative methods may be necessary for future studies to fully understand the complex reasons behind infidelity, as the infidelity intentions scale has a negative mean score that might be due to floor effects. How trust and associated factors change over time and in different situations should be better understood using longitudinal designs and more varied samples that include people of varying ages, ethnic backgrounds, and relationship statuses.

Overall, trust is still essential in partnerships, but it doesn't seem to have much of an effect on young people's intents to cheat or the quality of their relationships on its own. To comprehend and cultivate robust, fulfilling interactions in this group, a more all-encompassing, multi-dimensional paradigm is required.

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