





## Consequences of Online Extramarital Relationships from the Men's Perspective: A Qualitative Study

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### Reviewers

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The research aim is introduced but lacks specificity. It would be beneficial to provide a more detailed statement of the research question, including a brief mention of the theoretical framework or models guiding the investigation. This will help readers understand the study's scope and the specific gap in the literature the study addresses.

In the literature review, the discussion of studies on online infidelity is rather brief. Specifically, when citing Vossler (2016), you mention "online infidelity, often facilitated by digital platforms." It would strengthen your argument to specify which digital platforms (e.g., social media, dating apps, messaging services) are most implicated in extramarital relationships and cite studies that investigate the role of these specific platforms (e.g., Coop Gordon & Mitchell, 2020).

You mention a "purposive sampling method" for selecting participants. It would be valuable to provide more information about how you ensured diversity within the sample (e.g., balancing age, marital status, socio-economic status). This is crucial because purposive sampling can sometimes lead to selection bias, which should be addressed or acknowledged.

The use of semi-structured interviews is appropriate for qualitative research, but I would suggest you provide a brief description of your interview protocol, specifically the types of questions asked. This will allow readers to better understand how the interview process was structured and how it facilitated data collection aligned with your research objectives.

You refer to "stability" in the study, but the concept could be more clearly defined. It is unclear whether you are referring to data consistency, coder reliability, or something else. It would be helpful to reference specific strategies used to ensure inter-coder reliability, such as double-coding a subset of data or having multiple researchers independently analyze the data.

In Table 1, the themes of "concealment of relationship" and "continuation of marital life" are presented as distinct but related categories. It would be helpful to expand on how these categories interact. For example, do men who conceal their relationships also express specific motivations for maintaining marital stability? A more nuanced discussion of the relationships between themes would add depth to your findings.

The inclusion of participant quotes is an effective way to illustrate themes, but you could strengthen the presentation by integrating quotes more fluidly into the narrative. For example, rather than simply inserting a quote ("I prefer to continue my life with my spouse and fulfill my needs through other women"), try to contextualize the quote within the broader discussion of themes. How does this quote illustrate the larger pattern of behavior or motivation?

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sample in this study is limited to men in Mashhad, Iran. Please clarify whether there were any specific demographic characteristics (e.g., age, education, socioeconomic status) that could affect the generalizability of your findings. A more detailed description of the sample characteristics is necessary for readers to assess the applicability of your results to other populations.

You mention using MAXQDA for data analysis, but it would be helpful to elaborate on the specific analysis strategy employed. Did you use thematic analysis, content analysis, or another method? Providing more detail on how MAXQDA was used to identify themes and code data would improve the transparency of your analysis process.

In the section discussing validity, you mention that participants reviewed coded interviews. While this is a good practice for increasing the credibility of qualitative data, it would be beneficial to specify the extent to which this feedback influenced your analysis. Were the participants' feedback incorporated into the final coding process, or was it used to confirm initial interpretations? Clarifying this would enhance the rigor of the validation process.

While you mention that data collection continued until saturation was reached, it would be beneficial to explicitly define how you determined saturation. Did you have a pre-defined number of interviews or any other criteria for concluding data collection? This will improve the methodological rigor and provide clarity for readers.

The results are presented as categories and subcategories, but the transition between the themes is not always clear. Consider providing a short introductory statement at the beginning of each new theme to guide readers through the different aspects of the findings. This would help ensure the flow of ideas is more seamless.

The discussion of findings in relation to existing literature is somewhat general. For example, you cite the work of Rodrigues, Lopes, & Pereira (2017), but the connection to your own results could be more specific. How do your findings extend or challenge their conclusions on extramarital relationships? It would be helpful to provide a more detailed comparison with previous studies that identify motivations for online infidelity.

The theoretical implications of the study are not fully explored. Given the qualitative nature of your work, it would be beneficial to link your findings to broader psychological or sociological theories of infidelity. For instance, how do your results align with attachment theory (Barnett, Moore, Woolford, & Riggs, 2018) or social exchange theory? A more detailed theoretical discussion will enhance the scholarly contribution of the article.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.