




Explaining Attitudes Toward Extramarital Relationships Based on Personality Dimensions and Sexual Schemas: The Mediating Role of Sexual Novelty-Seeking

Hamideh. Kaveh¹, Mansour. Abdi^{2*}, Razieh. Jalili³

¹ PhD Student, Department of Psychology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

² Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Arak University, Arak, Iran



³ Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Khorramabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Khorramabad, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: drmansourabdi@gmail.com

Editor

Gholamreza Rajabi
Family Department, Governors
State University, University Park,
Illinois, USA
rajabireza@scu.ac.ir

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Taher Tizdast
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad
University, Tonekabon, Iran. Email: taheer.tizdast@toniau.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Meysam Sadeghi
Assistant Professor of Department of Cognitive Psychology, Higher Education
Institute of Cognitive Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Email: m.sadeghi@icss.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

"Marriage has been recognized as a beneficial and structuring factor for societies, aimed at meeting individuals' personal needs (Sheidanfar, Navabi Nezhad, & Farzad, 2020)."

Comment: The sentence presents marriage as a singular concept that meets individuals' personal needs, but there could be more nuance in acknowledging cultural, societal, and personal factors that influence these expectations. It would be beneficial to clarify how these needs differ across various contexts and individuals, perhaps adding citations from sociological or psychological perspectives to broaden the scope.

"However, numerous issues occasionally arise within marital relationships, often referred to as extramarital relationships."

Comment: The phrase "numerous issues occasionally arise" seems too vague and should be refined. A more precise definition or explanation of what constitutes "issues" (e.g., trust violations, infidelity, etc.) would strengthen the argument. Additionally, the transition to discussing extramarital relationships needs further clarification. Consider linking these issues more explicitly to specific examples or statistics.

"In other words, one of the most detrimental factors affecting family structure and marital relationships is the violation of commitment and trust, addressed within the framework of extramarital relationships (Valenti, Dimoras, & Varela, 2020)."

Comment: The phrase "the violation of commitment and trust" could be expanded to better capture the emotional, psychological, and social complexities of infidelity. Perhaps a brief mention of the psychological theories surrounding trust and commitment could enhance the depth of the argument.

"Extramarital relationships have taken on various dimensions in contemporary times, causing significant harm to familial bonds (Fatehi, 2020)."

Comment: It would be useful to provide a brief explanation of these "various dimensions" mentioned. Are they psychological, emotional, or cultural in nature? More specificity would provide a clearer framework for readers to understand the context in which these relationships occur.

"Research findings also indicate that extramarital relationships have become increasingly prevalent (Mahdizadeh & Dareh Kordi, 2020; Soltani Zadeh & Bajelani, 2020; Bazrgar & Honarparvaran, 2019; Yeeda, Yanagisawa, Ashida, & Abe, 2018; Harris, 2018)."

Comment: While the sources cited are diverse, there is no mention of geographical or cultural considerations in these findings. Are these trends universal, or do they vary across countries or cultures? Including such details would allow readers to understand the global vs. local implications of the findings.

"Extramarital relationships involve emotional and sexual connections formed by a married individual with someone other than their spouse (Pichon, Travis-Cagan, Stern, Stachel, & Bowler, 2020)."

Comment: The definition of extramarital relationships seems limited to only emotional and sexual connections. However, other forms of infidelity, such as financial secrecy or emotional betrayal without physical involvement, might also constitute extramarital relationships. Expanding the definition to include these possibilities could add depth.

"Sexual schemas are another factor influencing the development of extramarital relationships."

Comment: The concept of sexual schemas is valuable, but it could be explained in more detail. What are the specific cognitive mechanisms at play in the formation of sexual schemas? How do these schemas interact with the individual's expectations, desires, and relationship dynamics? Further elaboration would make the concept clearer for readers unfamiliar with it.

"Sexual novelty-seeking often culminates in extramarital relationships or unconventional romantic or sexual activities, primarily characterized by secrecy."

Comment: The concept of secrecy is central here and could be more explicitly linked to psychological or relational outcomes. Does secrecy lead to guilt, cognitive dissonance, or relationship dissatisfaction? Addressing these outcomes could make the argument more comprehensive.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

"Furthermore, attitudes toward extramarital relationships can be categorized into four types: sexual, emotional, combined (emotional and sexual), and virtual (Shiran, Eplaniz, & Wagner, 2019)."

Comment: This categorization is helpful, but the distinction between "sexual" and "emotional" seems a bit simplistic, as many extramarital relationships involve both aspects simultaneously. A more nuanced explanation of how these categories overlap or interact would provide greater clarity.

"What complicates the situation further is the emotional connection formed with the person meeting those needs, which can lead to feelings of love that drive behavior and reactions beyond personal control (Fallahian, Mikaeili, & Yousefi, 2019)."

Comment: The statement about "feelings of love that drive behavior and reactions beyond personal control" is compelling but could benefit from more scientific backing. Are there theories or models of attachment or emotion regulation that explain this dynamic? Referencing such models could strengthen the argument.

"Research on personality dimensions and marital relationships has shown that personality significantly impacts marital dynamics (Firoozi & Kharamin, 2020)."

Comment: The connection between personality dimensions and marital dynamics could be further developed. For example, how do these traits specifically contribute to conflict or satisfaction within the marriage? An exploration of the mechanisms through which personality influences marital quality would add depth.

"The findings obtained from this study indicate that attitudes toward extramarital relationships are positively explained by neuroticism, openness to experience, sexual schemas, and sexual novelty-seeking, and negatively explained by agreeableness and conscientiousness."

Comment: While the findings are presented clearly, more context is needed to explain why certain traits (e.g., neuroticism, openness to experience) are associated with extramarital tendencies. Could these traits predispose individuals to seek novelty or emotional fulfillment outside of the marriage? Elaborating on the "why" behind the associations would improve the discussion.

"Sexual satisfaction among couples with a history of extramarital relationships was lower, and personality traits such as neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience were more prevalent in them than in non-infidelity couples."

Comment: This statement could be strengthened by clarifying whether the lower sexual satisfaction is a cause or consequence of extramarital relationships. Additionally, it would be helpful to discuss the potential moderating factors (e.g., communication patterns, conflict resolution skills) that could influence these relationships.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.