

NARCISSISTIC PERSONALITY, LOVE STYLES AND LOVE SATISFACTION AS PREDICTORS TO INFIDELITY

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ABSTRACT

Love without loyalty cannot prove the purity of love, while loyalty without love, on the other hand, does not give happiness nor love pleasure itself to someone. Infidelity affects the overall functionality and stability within a relationship. For individuals who are married, infidelity is among the factors of divorce. This study focused on the predictor factors on infidelity according to narcissistic personality, love styles and love satisfaction. A number of 160 students Malay Muslims from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia took part in this research was selected using purposive sampling method. Inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data which was collected. Results showed that there was a significant correlation between narcissistic personality and Ludus love style with infidelity. Conversely, results showed that love satisfaction was not significantly correlated with infidelity. Findings also indicated that narcissistic personality was a significant predictor to infidelity however, Ludus love style and love satisfaction was not a significant predictor to infidelity. Besides that infidelity associated with a long-distance relationship, relationship problems such as lack of communication between spouses, dissatisfaction in relationship and responsibility problem.

Keywords: Infidelity; narcissistic personality; love style; love satisfaction; regression

INTRODUCTION

Love has a different meaning for each individual and is said to have an impact on people's lives. Clough (2006) believes that love refers to the desire to get together with loved ones, the desire to help and find the comforts of life. Some researchers state that honesty and loyalty are some of the essential things that need to be noted for couples in love because both of these elements help to establish trust in a loved one. Love without loyalty cannot prove the purity of love, while loyalty without love, on the other hand does not give happiness nor love pleasure itself to someone. Infidelity affects the overall functionality and stability within a relationship. These things not only jeopardize the relationship, but trust and love can also be affected due to mistrust of the unfaithful partner. Based on the study of Kluwer and Karremans (2009) infidelity has a connection with unforgiving attitudes and negatively affect the relationship.

For individuals who are married, infidelity is among the factors of divorce, and this statement can be proved by a study conducted by Kitson (1992). Kitson reported that among the reasons for divorce for men are job commitment, in-laws problem, wife extramarital sex relationship and unknown reasons. In contrast, women reported asking for divorce is because of personality problem, husband's alcohol problem, spouse's extramarital sex relationship, immature husband and untrustworthy. Cleek and Pearson (1985) list a dishonest husband as one reason for divorce. Meanwhile, according to Betzig (1989) dishonesty is seen as a severe threat to the stability of the relationship as well as a cause of divorce in many cultures.

In Malaysia, the results of a study carried out on Muslims and non-Muslims by Samuel and Mohamad Sarif (2008) found that the three leading causes of divorce are caused

by 1) infidelity, 2) no longer love their respective spouses and 3) emotional problems. The term infidelity in the study refers to couples who have had a sexual relationship with someone other than the married spouse. However, in this research had two main objectives is to identify the relationship between the psychological aspects with infidelity and determine the factors that influence infidelity.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

i) Effect of Infidelity on Partner

Generally, infidelity is seen to give a lot of negative impact on married couples than to those in love relationships. Apart from viewed as a severe threat to the stability of the relationship as well as a cause of divorce in many cultures (Betzig 1989), infidelity also affects a person's emotional stability. Fernandez et al. (2007) suggest that men are more easily upset than women against sexual infidelity of the partners because they see infidelity from the sexual aspect, compared to women that are more upset in the emotional infidelity committed by their partners (Fernandez et al. 2007). The emotional infidelity referred to the attention given by the husband to another woman such as giving more attention and help or spending time together. These situations show the differences in perception and response for women and men in the scenario of infidelity.

Atkins et al. (2005) reported that a person who faced infidelity problem in marriage feels more sadness than individuals who have marital problems not related to infidelity. In many cases, couples who are involved in infidelity often experience negative emotions such as anger, guilt, shame or depression resulting in trauma caused by the related incident (Gordon, Baucom & Snyder 2004). Kitson and Sussman (1982) explain that the emotional, psychological and spiritual well-being of both partners are threatened during the process of divorce caused by infidelity. Emotional stability is affected because of the grief felt due to the actions of unfaithful spouses. Infidelity violates the basic norms in relationships and partners who are betrayed feel angry, jealous, humiliated and depressed. The experience of being betrayed by loved ones will lead to self-esteem challenged and can affect a person's psychological well-being.

In addition, infidelity leads to dissatisfaction in relationships and low life satisfaction. There are gender differences in the causes of infidelity. Women who are not faithful are associated with high marital dissatisfaction. In contrast to men, where their motivation to commit infidelity is caused by sexual activity compared with emotional (Glass & Wright 1992) and they commit infidelity as the reason for divorce (Shackelford 1998). According to Shackelford, another factor that encourages a person to commit infidelity is because the man or woman they were having an affair with, is more attractive than their own partner. Women also want to end a relationship if their partner has a relationship or make an appointment with another woman even without having a sexual relationship.

Apart from the problem of divorce and emotional instability, infidelity can cause unexpected serious problems like murder (Daly & Wilson 1988). The issue of violence and murder in a relationship or marriage is caused by the behavior of partners being together with other men or women. The situation also occurs in a few cultures (Wilson & Daly 1992). Vandello and Cohen (2003) address the question of why violence against the wife is done by husband. Wife-beating is said to be one of the acts or way to restore the honor of the man that is tarnished due to the wife's behavior. Some men feel as if they were humiliated by the

cheating wife. The jealousy because of the unfaithful wife has been identified as a cause of abuse and domestic violence that happens in a marriage (Daly & Wilson 1988).

ii) Factors of Infidelity

Infidelity occurs because of unexpected matters, involving the influence of the environment like an opportunity as well as psychological aspects (personality and love styles). Campbell, Foster and Finkel (2002) argue that people with narcissistic personality has a high tendency to cheat on their partners, while according to Wiederman and Hurd (1999) Ludus love style was a significant predictor of infidelity.

Atkins, Baucom and Jacobson (2001) explain that infidelity or unfaithfulness is a common phenomenon that occurs in a relationship of love and marriage and is difficult to understand. The expectations why someone is involved in infidelity is due to dissatisfaction in relationships, lack of commitment, attracted to others, revenge and feeling of inequality in the relationship (Atkins, Baucom & Jacobson 2001).

Commonly, individuals who commit infidelity are associated with women or other men who are said to make the seductive interaction. The fact is, it is not only because of the appearance, but factors such as the opportunity and response also contributed to this behavior. Furthermore, according to a study by Feldman and Cauffman (1999) sexual attraction is the primary purpose of someone looking for another partner which is 53%, followed by the absence of a partner 48% and finally being unable to resist the opportunity available. Allen et al. (2008) said that boredom and lack of emotional support in a marriage is a risk to spouse infidelity. Low quality in communication, less positive and more negative interactions are also associated with infidelity in relationships (Allen et al. 2008).

There is much past research that looked at psychological aspects of infidelity. Among them is the study on perception of infidelity among gender conducted by Pittman and Wagers (2005). The results of the study show that individuals who are not faithful assume that: (1) infidelity is normal and acceptable, (2) an affair is a good thing for them, (3) an affair is committed for revenge to partner's past mistake, and (4) infidelity can be kept or maintained as secret. The above statements are some of the perceptions formed by the individual who cheated on the spouse (Pittman & Wagers, 2005). Glass and Wright (1992) also explain as much as 30% men involved with infidelity reported experiencing difficulty in marriage before having an affair, while 60% women engage in a relationship with another man after being unhappy with their marriage.

Studies on infidelity have been widely found and conducted in Western countries. In deeper aspect, this study aims to see the aspects of personality, love style, and love satisfaction with infidelity. Typically, personality connected with infidelity is narcissistic personality. According to Larsen and Buss (2008) narcissistic personality is a personality disorder problem associated with a strong desire to be an admired individual, selfishness and lack of understanding of the feelings and the needs of partners. Narcissists also tend to feel proud of their achievements and like underestimating the work of others. Not only that, individuals with such personalities often fantasize or dream about prosperity and success, victory, influence, worship of other people and power. They exhibit a feeling of ownership, believe that they should receive the privilege and the honor, despite not doing important things to get the privilege. These individuals have high expectations of themselves and the people around them and have the desire to always be praised. At the same time, these people

are said to have a lack of understanding about feelings and the needs of others and tend to talk about themselves when chatting (Raskin & Shaw 1988).

To strengthen the study, Lee's theory of love styles called "*Colours of love theory*" has been taken to measure respondents' attitudes toward love. In this theory, Lee focuses on the form of real love and introduces a unique love typology. Love styles introduced by Lee (1973) has two parts, namely primary and secondary. Primary love styles are Eros, Ludus and Storge. While the secondary love styles are Mania, Agape and Pragma.

Eros is known as passionate love or love full of emotions (Lee, 1973) and Ludus is portrayed as a game-playing love and enjoys the pleasure in the game of love. Individuals who practice Ludus love styles like couple diversity and change love partners. Then, Storge is also known as the friendship love style. Lee (1973) describes this love style as mature love, based on trust and respect for the loved person.

Next, the first secondary love style named Pragma is a combination of Storge and Ludus love styles. Pragma is known as practical or shopping list love (Lee, 1973) in which they prefer to list the characteristics of the ideal candidates and choose a partner based on the desired criteria. Pragma is a combination of Eros and Ludus love styles. The second love style is Mania or obsessive love associated with jealousies and emotions. Mania love style is connected with Eros and Ludus. Individuals with Mania love style tend to feel insecure in love relationships. Lastly is the Agape love style, which is the combination of Eros and Storge, and is known as altruistic love. The Agapic has a mature way to love and assume that giving love is a task that must be fulfilled to partner without expecting anything in return.

Previous researchers also tested Lee's theory of love in the studies of infidelity and personality. For example, Wiederman and Hurd (1999) conducted a study on adolescent boys and girls who are in love and reported that the Ludus love style is a significant predictor of infidelity. Besides, the Mania love style is found to have a tendency of infidelity caused by anxiety trait possessed by this group. Meanwhile, several studies have been conducted to prove the relevance of narcissistic personality with infidelity. Hunyady, Josephs and Jost (2008) explain that most men and narcissists have a permissive attitude that is more open about infidelity than women and individuals who do not have a narcissistic personality.

Campbell and Foster (2005) conducted a study on narcissistic personality and romantic relationships. The researchers found that female student who has narcissistic personality lack commitment in relationship than female students who are not narcissistic. They have a desire to accept more than one partner for dating and intends to adopt a Ludus love style (game playing). Most individuals in the relationship with the narcissist experienced suffering and its benefits only for short term. Campbell, Foster and Finkel (2002) in their findings comment on positive correlation between narcissism and Ludus. Narcissists have correlation with Ludus love style which connects with the needs for power and autonomy. In fact, narcissistic is associated with Ludus love style, because in the game of love, a narcissist is able to get what they want without commitment and responsibility. Wiederman and Hurd (1999) explain that Ludus love style is a significant predictor of infidelity other than Mania love style that has infidelity tendency due to the anxiety trait possessed.

Thus, based on previous studies, it can be concluded that narcissistic personalities correlate with infidelity in relationships. Past studies have also proven that love styles contribute to such behavior. Hence, the need to carry out this study in the context and culture of Malaysia is important to examine the findings of previous studies that have been investigated.

METHODOLOGY

The data were collected using quantitative methods through the distribution of questionnaires. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling method. Among the main requirements for the respondents are: (1) the respondents must have spouse, whether dating, engaged or married and (2) the respondents agreed to participate in the study. The number of respondents needed to help researchers conducted the study were 160 students (Malay Muslims) of the University Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Questionnaires were distributed to obtain respondents' feedback on love satisfaction, narcissistic personality, love styles and infidelity. The instruments used are Attitudes Toward Infidelity Scale (Whatley 2006), Narcissistic Personality Inventory 16 (NPI-16 short version) by Ames et al. (2006), The Love Attitudes Scale - short version (LAS, Hendrick, et al. 1998) and The Satisfaction with Love Life Scale (Neto 2005). A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed around UKM campus, but only 160 were returned and can be used. The data obtained were then keyed in into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20) for analysis. Validity and reliability tests were conducted before descriptive and inferential analyses were made. The validity and reliability of all the test instruments were good. Furthermore, correlation and regression analyses were carried out to identify the predictive factors of infidelity variable.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Pearson's correlation analysis result (Table 1) showed that there was a significant correlation between narcissistic relationship with infidelity, but the relationship was low ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.05$). In contrast, there was no relationship for love styles and love satisfaction with infidelity.

Table 1. Correlation between independent variables and infidelity

Independent variables	r	Sig.
Narcissistic	0.23*	0.00
Love styles	0.08	0.27
Love satisfaction	-0.09	0.26

* $p < 0.05$

Analysis between all love styles subscale with the dependent variable was also conducted (Table 2). Only Ludus love style was significantly correlated with infidelity and the relationship shown was low, $r = 0.17$, $p < 0.05$. However, Table 1 and 2 were reflected in objective number 1.

Table 2. Correlation between love style (*Ludus*) subscale and infidelity

Love style subscale	r	Sig.
Ludus	0.17*	0.04
Eros	-0.05	0.54
Storge	-0.15	0.06
Pragma	-0.09	0.28
Mania	0.02	0.83
Agape	-0.01	0.93

* $p < 0.05$

Regression analysis using the stepwise method was implemented to identify the factor of fixed variable (Table 3). Both independent variables that have a significant relationship with infidelity which was narcissistic and Ludus love style were included in the analysis. As a result, narcissistic predicted as much as 5.2% on the changes of infidelity variance ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$). The results of the ANOVA in the regression model also showed that significantly, narcissistic was a factor contributing towards infidelity ($F = 8.69$, $p < 0.05$). The result was supported the objective number 2 in this research.

Table 3. Narcissistic personality as infidelity predictor

	β	t	k
Narcissistic	0.14	2.78	0.005*
Ludus	0.11	1.6	0.11
R ² = 0.052			
F (1, 159) = 8.69			

* $p < 0.05$

The findings showed that infidelity was associated with narcissistic personality and Ludus love style. A significant predictor of infidelity on the other hand was narcissistic personality, but the contribution was low. Features found in narcissistic personality enabled an individual with the personality to commit infidelity. This result was supported by the Hunyady, Josephs and Jost (2008) who said that the narcissists have a high likelihood of having an affair with their partner. Although not clear the extent to which infidelity can occur among narcissists, but the characteristics of these groups (such as dishonest, and fond of cheating) were the basis to infidelity. Vaknin (2003) also agreed by saying that, the narcissists were rarely honest and they were willing to do anything including lying in order to be highly regarded by others. Cheating and manipulating skills were the chances used to establish closer contact with more number of individuals.

Based on the six love styles presented by Lee (1973), the study revealed that only Ludus love style has a significant relationship with infidelity and the relationship was low. Arguably, this finding was consistent with the findings of previous studies, such as studies by Wiederman and Hurt (1999) who reported that the Ludus love style was correlated with infidelity. Accordingly, the Ludus nature can explain a little connectedness with partner infidelity and diversity. As confirmed by Wiederman and Hurt (1999), Ludus took pleasure in the romance and believed love can be given to two people simultaneously. Normally, they did not have the intention to make their love partner as husband or wife, and have concerns if the relationship established was getting more serious. Ludus individual assumed infidelity and cheating as something that was reasonable in the relationship (Lee, 1973). The other five love styles, namely Eros, Mania, Agape, Storge and Pragma did not have any relation with the dependent variable of the study.

In fact, the survey results also showed that love satisfaction did not have a relationship and cannot predict infidelity. Apparently, these findings contradicted with previous studies that associated dissatisfaction in a love relationship with infidelity (Barta & Tiene 2005). Clearly, it can be concluded that in the surveyed Malay Muslim sample, the love dissatisfaction cannot be made as an excuse to betray the relationship built. The betrayal mentioned by the researchers referred to the affair of the partner without the knowledge or

consent of the husband or wife. In the context of Islam, love can be consummated only through legitimate and halal relationship.

CONCLUSION

Issues related to domestic problems need to be examined in order to improve the quality of life of Malaysians so that a healthier life from the aspects of physical and mental can be achieved. Infidelity is one of the issues that is associated with today's difficulty in a marriage that leads to divorce and other critical problems. In Malaysia, most of the published studies and articles give more focus on the cause of infidelity from the aspect of the environment that encourages such behavior to happen. The most common examples associated with infidelity are long-distance relationship, relationship problems such as lack of communication between spouses, dissatisfaction in relationship and responsibility problem. It is important for current researchers to explore the aspect of infidelity in detail because this issue has long been studied by Western researchers. Extended research is needed so that the study within the context and the culture of Malaysian society can be varied. It is hoped that this study could give information and help specific parties to solve infidelity problem faced. Hopefully, there are also other researchers who are interested to pursue more serious efforts in exploring the causes of problems and how to address the issue of infidelity from various aspects so that the harmony of the family institution of Malaysian society can be maintained.

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