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Emotional Intelligence and Gender as Predictors of Infidelity Among Heterosexual, Monogamous Couples

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Abstract

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MA, Capella University, 2011

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The rate of families being impacted by divorce is high. Studies show that infidelity remains the number one cause of divorce or the dissolution of relationships; however, couples with a higher level of emotional intelligence (EI) have demonstrated a higher rate of marital satisfaction. The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to determine if gender, EI, ethnicity, and age, individually or in combination, can adequately predict infidelity among persons in committed, heterosexual, monogamous relationships. EI theory served as the theoretical foundation for this study. Using an online survey methodology, each participant answered four qualifying questions and, when qualified, took the Schutte Self-Report Inventory test, a 33-question instrument designed to measure a person's EI level and provide data for the other predictor variables. Logistic regression was used to analyze the data and answer the research questions. The statistically significant results, c2(6) = 23.25, $p < .01$ for the omnibus test of model fit showed that the combined effect of all six predictors significantly predicted whether a person committed infidelity or not. The results also demonstrated that marriage versus cohabitating was a significant factor in whether a person committed infidelity or not. This study showed that infidelity negatively impacts everyone in a variety of ways. Helping to predict, prevent, and heal from infidelity will affect positive social change by reducing the negative long-term effects of infidelity for couples, families, and those professional helpers working with this community.

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Dedication

I dedicate this book to the individuals and families—the couples and the children—that have been negatively impacted by infidelity. My hope is that this study can help prevent that pain from occurring.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge and thank my chair, Dr. Neil McBride, for all his help, patience, encouragement, and assistance to get me to this point and to my committee member, Dr. David Yells, for all of his well-appreciated and much needed assistance.

Thank you to my brother, Jimmy, who put up with helping me overcome my many obstacles. From helping me navigate my very first online course to being my tech guru. Although you are my younger brother, you have always been there for me in any way I needed. I appreciate it and want you to know that I acknowledge it and do not take it for granted.

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Lastly, thank you to my husband, Jeff, my son, Jordan, and my daughter, Faith. I appreciate their patience and forgiveness for all the times I had to focus on school. Without their love and understanding, this endeavor would have been unbearable, and for showing me that when things are difficult, it is an opportunity to try harder. Most of all, I acknowledge and appreciate all my many blessings in life. No matter how hard things may appear, I am grateful for the security in knowing that there are people who love me and will always have my back. Thank you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019), each year, over 1 million couples in this country get married; however, the divorce rate is almost as high as the rate of marriage in this country. According to a national study (inclusive of 45 states yet excluding CA, HI, NM, IN, and MN), 44% of married people in 2019 got divorced or annulled (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). This figure is an average with some states like California being over 2 times this rate. These divorce rates are concerning, considering the severe and adverse economic, social, and psychological effects it brings to families. Schramm et al. (2013) found that the state of Texas spends an additional $3.18 billion (i.e., 12% of the state budget) each year to assist families dealing with additional financial hardships due to divorce (e.g., medical, food, housing, utilities, and childcare). Many studies have examined the antecedents of divorce across many cultures, confirming that infidelity is one of the most frequently cited reasons (Moller & Vossler, 2015).

There are many definitions of infidelity. Some individuals have defined infidelity as sexual infidelity, some as extradyadic sexual actions, and some as emotional disloyalty (Shimberg et al., 2016). For example, a couple who agrees to swap partners for sexual purposes does not view intercourse with another person as infidelity (Moller & Vossler, 2015). However, if they stray beyond the agreed-upon terms, the breach in the agreement would be considered infidelity and would be experienced as a betrayal. Similarly, many counselors feel that participants who have a sexual addiction are not guilty of infidelity, leading to a great deal of room for interpretation (Moller & Vossler, 2015).

For the purposes of this study, infidelity was defined as a form of emotional or sexual activity that is an act of betrayal and unfaithfulness to an individual's committed partner. Furthermore, it is the act that undermines the exclusivity agreed upon by the persons involved (Moller & Vossler, 2015). According to Jackman (2015), over 34% of men and 24% of women have had an extramarital sexual relationship during the life of their relationship, and the rate of infidelity has surpassed 40% from the past 2 decades. Jackman reported that about 68% of women and 74% of men reported a willingness to have an extramarital affair if assured they would never get caught.

The high rates of divorce due to infidelity signal a research need to understand the underlying reasons for the increasing rates in infidelity given the adverse, long-term effects that infidelity and subsequent divorce, in general, have on the entire family. Evidence has shown that infidelity causes long-lasting hurt, distrust, lack of future intimacy, depression, and a negative impact on all members of the family, including the children (Wang et al., 2012). For example, in a study conducted with 99 students of divorced parents and 94 students of nondivorced parents, when asked similar questions about their feelings towards relationships, their parents, and security, 3 times as many college students who were from divorced homes had doubts wondering if their fathers ever even loved them (Laumann & Emery, 2005).

Children of divorced parents suffer from insecure attachment styles, physical and psychological health concerns, and increased rejection sensitivity (Schaan & Vogele 2016). These concerns include fear, rage, grief, aggression, poor performance in school, low self-esteem, depression, and suicidal ideation (Oppawsky, 2014). Schmidt et al.

(2016) also showed decreased loyalty and mistrust amongst parents and children because of infidelity. Those children that are in the position to keep secrets lose trust in both parents and future relationships. Additionally, infidelity is often perpetuated by children of unfaithful parents because they are more likely to engage in infidelity in their own relationships (Schmidt et al., 2016). Consequently, a need exists to investigate the dynamics surrounding infidelity to assist people in avoiding acting in ways counterproductive to the well-being of their families.

The goal of the present study was to examine the personal qualities of an individual that increases their likelihood to commit infidelity. Helping ascertain both the "why" and the "justification" behind infidelity will hopefully work towards reducing the frequency of infidelity and the damage it causes to the families. To better understand this concept, it was necessary to have an increased understanding based on a person's emotional intelligence (EI) and level of empathy of the perceived mindset of men and women and how it affects their views on fidelity in committed relationships. Studies have demonstrated that men and women have diverse beliefs about the correlation between love and sex in a relationship. According to Yeniceri and Kokdemir (2006), women are more apt than men to want love and an emotional attachment due to the importance women place on security and stability in their relationships. In contrast, men are more focused than women on possession due to the importance men place on reproduction, youth, health, and a physical appeal in their relationships. As a result, women are more sensitive and distressed over the threat of an emotional relationship than men are because men are more sensitive to the concern of physical paternity acts of infidelity. When

infidelity is an emotional act, it leaves the other one feeling more rejected, insufficient, and at fault (Yeniceri & Kokdemir, 2006). However, research demonstrates that physical acts of infidelity are bothersome to both sexes (Yeniceri & Kokdemir, 2006) and, therefore, I included gender as a variable in the study.

The current research shows that distress, narcissism, sexual insecurity, sexual congruence, religion, and/or culture are determinants of infidelity (Davila & Bradbury, 2001). Despite these results, research has continued to indicate that although these factors do contribute to infidelity, they are not strong enough or sole determinants of fidelity (McNulty & Widman, 2014).

Background

Research continues to demonstrate the critical effect EI has on a person's decision-making skills in connection with their professional relationships (Santos et al., 2018). The research further contends that the responsiveness of a person's emotions is the foundation of effective decision making. Santos et al. (2018) stated that an individual's EI is based on their ability to effectively understand another's feelings and reactions and often is the dominant factor that tempers and dictates their actions in how they choose to make decisions. This process becomes the foundation of beliefs and what dictates each person's own narratives and perceptions (Santos et al., 2018).

Additionally, EI is what allows a person's reasoning ability to resolve emotional problems (Yip et al., 2020). EI also correlates the connection between physical stimulation and excitement by taking negative actions, such as infidelity. For example, Yip et al. (2020) found that a person with a lower EI had a higher risk of maladaptive

behavior than a person with a higher level of EI. However, the current literature has failed to evaluate the correlation between the ability to make favorable or unfavorable ethical judgments, which would lead an individual to choose or not choose infidelity as a solution in monogamous, committed relationships.

Problem Statement

Although divorce rates are lower than they have been in decades, largely due to the fact that fewer people are choosing to get married instead of cohabitating (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019), they are still high and continue to have a negative impact on all family members. These statistics are alarming, considering the severe and harmful economic, social, and psychological effects divorce brings to families. Infidelity is one of the significant causes of divorce (Scott et al., 2013). Infidelity is so pervasive that inevitably at some point, a majority of married couples will experience it. Infidelity brings some of the same if not more long-lasting hardships on families as divorce does, regardless of whether divorce is the outcome of infidelity (Scott et al., 2013). Couples' counselors agreed that infidelity is one of the most challenging concerns to help couples overcome (Moller & Vossler, 2015). Therefore, it is crucial to better understand the potential factors contributing to infidelity in the first place to have better tools to work towards reducing these adverse outcomes. Specifically, in this study I determined whether there was a difference in a person's EI based on their gender, ethnicity, age, and whether they had committed infidelity.

Oberle et al. (2017) suggested that there are gender differences in perceptions of infidelity and how infidelity happens. They established that a person's action, stress level,

and type of infidelity are affected by their gender. The authors demonstrated that most women, unlike men, have affairs because they are unhappy in their marriage and overwhelmed by pressure to be responsible for marital success. Men, on the other hand, are reported to have affairs for sexual reasons (Williams & Knudson-Martin, 2013).

There is some empirical evidence that suggests that there are significant gender differences in EI. Cabello et al. (2016) showed that overall, women display a higher level of EI than men. Additionally, the authors divided EI into four parts: the perception of one's emotion, the enabling and qualifying of thoughts, the empathy of one's emotions, and the handling of and working through a person's emotions. In certain parts of EI, women ranked higher than men (Cabello et al., 2016).

The findings of Cabello et al. (2016) could lead an individual to deduce that a person who commits infidelity has a lower level of EI. This line of reasoning is supported by Kunnanatt (2004), who contended that a person's EI is their capacity to use their emotions positively for interpersonal connections in social and emotional surroundings to produce a mutually positive result for all parties. Therefore, a low EI could result from the inability to sustain positive interpersonal connections that are mutually beneficial to those involved in the relationship in contrast to the necessary traits that allow an individual to successfully understand another person's state of mind and feelings, which are traits that are imperative to a successful relationship (Fischer et al., 2018). Specifically, Fischer et al, (2018) suggested that women tend to have a higher degree of interactive social skills compared to men; thus, women seem to have higher EI compared to men. Yet, in a contrasting study, Chita-Tegmar et al. (2019) demonstrated there was no

evidence to support that women's EI is higher than men's EI. Therefore, due to the lack of current research addressing the difference in a person's EI and its effect, I included gender as a variable in this study.

Recognizing that a person's EI level influences their ability to communicate effectively and positively with others affects marital satisfaction. Couples who communicate effectively have a happier and more fulfilling relationship (Zeidner et al., 2013). Therefore, it is the goal of this study that determining these differences in EI and whether they are present given gender (i.e., women compared to men) and infidelity (i.e., self-reported yes or no) will hopefully contribute to assisting couples in understanding and avoiding infidelity and the damage it causes families.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to investigate whether gender, EI, ethnicity, and age can adequately predict, individually or in combination, infidelity among men and women in committed, monogamous, heterosexual couples who self-report infidelity. Current research has demonstrated that a person's EI affects their relationship both personally as well as professionally and further suggested that, unlike a person's intelligence quotient, a person's EI can develop (Grant, 2007). Although research has been conducted on relationships, infidelity, and EI individually, the relationship between infidelity and EI remains unclear. Current research has provided evidence to suggest that EI does explain the success of a person's interpersonal relationships in the context of school or in the workforce (Sliwa, 2019). For example, Di Fabio et al. (2012) found that a person's decision making at work is related to their EI.

However, relatively little is known about the role of EI in marriages. It is possible that the results from Di Fabio et al. could be applied to interpersonal relationships like couples. However, no study to date has demonstrated if gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together are adequate predictors of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Given the research problem and purpose, I developed the following research questions and hypotheses to guide this study:

RQ1: Is gender a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$1: Gender is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A1: Gender is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ2: Is EI a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$2: EI is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A2: EI is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ3: Is age a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$3: Age in not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A3: Age is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual

couples.

RQ4: Is ethnicity a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual

couples?

H_04: Ethnicity is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

H_A4: Ethnicity is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

RQ5: Are gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together a predictor of infidelity among

monogamous, heterosexual couples?

H_05: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together are not a predictor of

infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A5: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together is a predictor of infidelity

among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

Theoretical Framework

I used the EI theory as the theoretical framework for this study. Salovey and

Mayer (1990) offered the first real definition and explanation of EI. They defined EI as

the ability to examine and access not only our own thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes

accurately but that those of others as well and to appropriately use them in our decision-

making process towards our interactions with others. The theory indicates that there was

a direct connection between a person's level of EI and their level of select personality

traits, such as empathy (Barchard et al., 2016). Clarke et al. (2016) demonstrated that

women generally have a higher level of EI, but this gender difference can be affected by the type of test conducted. It appears that some difference exists among women's self-reported EI scores based on whether the EI construct is measured as an attribute or as a level of performance (Clarke et al., 2016). Likewise, determining whether a person's EI affects how they act or react to infidelity remains an open question.

Hopkins and Deepa (2018) showed a correlation between a person's EI and their ability to make ethical decisions. EI has been shown to influence a person's behavior, attitude, commitment, and conflict resolution. A person with a higher EI is more capable of adapting their reasoning to guide them in implementing the kinds of positive decisions and actions that are required in healthy, committed relationships (Hopkins & Deepa, 2018). This strong decision-making ability afforded to individuals with strong EI can lead a person to evaluate the ethics of their behavior. Their choices further demonstrated a direct correlation between a person's EI and their ability to resolve obstacles in a positive manner that finds favorable resolutions that strengthen communication and both professional and personal interactions (Hopkins & Deepa, 2018).

Nature of the Study

In this nonexperimental, quantitative study, I used a causal-comparative approach. I sought to investigate whether four nonmanipulated, existing independent variables— gender (i.e., women and men), ethnicity (i.e., White and non-White people), age, and EI (as measured by scores on the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [SSEIT])—have an individual and/or interactional effect on the dependent variable of infidelity. The specific goal was to ascertain whether gender, EI, ethnicity, and age,

individually or together, adequately predict fidelity. Since the criterion variable of infidelity was measured as a binary nominal variable (i.e., yes, or no), multiple logistic regression was used to analyze the data and answer the research questions. Therefore, I sought to determine whether a person's infidelity status (i.e., the dependent or criterion nominal variable) can be predicted by EI, a continuous (i.e., interval) independent or predictor variable; age, a continuous (i.e., interval) variable; ethnicity, a nominal (i.e., categorical) variable; and gender, a nominal (i.e., categorical) variable, among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

Definitions

Couples: For the purposes of this study, a male and a female in a heterosexual, committed relationship that are living together with or without the legal standing of marriage.

Divorce: Although divorce is a legal process that is reserved for legally married couples, for the purpose of this study it included separation from committed, cohabitating couples.

EI: Although referring to an emotional quotient (EQ), this concept is referred to as EI for the duration of this study. It is an individual's ability to comprehend, practice, and confidently manage their own emotions to discharge anxiety, communicate successfully, sympathize with others, resolve encounters, and soothe struggles. It allows a person to align with their emotional state, turn intent into deed, and make well-versed conclusions regarding what is most important to themself (Segal et al., 2019).

Ethnicity: Although the definition of ethnicity is predominantly defined based on one's language and culture, and one's race is defined as the differences in people's physical, cultural, and behavior. For the purpose of this study only, ethnicity encompassed all previously mentioned traits and characteristics.

Infidelity: For this study, infidelity was the act of any form of sexual or emotional activity that was a betrayal and unfaithfulness to their spouse that undermines the exclusivity agreed upon by the persons involved (Moller & Vossler, 2015).

Marriage: Only for this research study, a married couple is two people of consenting age who are civilly bound to one another and consist of one male and one female.

Monogamy: Being in a committed heterosexual and/or emotional relationship with one companion at a time (Schacht & Kramer, 2019).

Assumptions

I made three assumptions in this study. First, it was assumed that all participants had been truthful in self-identifying their relationship status. I also assumed they would truthfully report their state of infidelity. The third assumption was that each participant who agreed to participate met the inclusion criteria regarding their age, monogamous relationship status, and length of time in the relationship.

Assumptions were also associated with the data analysis process. Multiple logistic regression is the appropriate statistical test to use when assessing predictors of a dichotomous outcome variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). One advantage of logistic regression was that it allows the researcher to mix different types of predictors (e.g.,

scaled, and categorical) simultaneously, which was applicable to the current study which involved categorical (i.e., gender and ethnicity) and scaled (i.e., age and EI) predictors (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The one major assumption related to my use of logistic regression was the absence of multicollinearity. I used zero-order correlations to assess whether multicollinearity existed. Multicollinearity exists when the correlation among the predictors in the regression model are too high and can weaken the analysis by inflating the size of the error terms in the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). If the results demonstrated a correlation between gender and EI that exceeded 0.80, this would signal a multicollinearity threat (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). If a multicollinearity threat occurs, I would have analyzed the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable separately and not used logistic regression.

Scope

The scope and parameters for the study were confined to heterosexual adults who were currently in a committed, monogamous relationship for at least 3 years at the time of the study. I examined if a person's gender, level of EI, ethnicity, and age are significant predictors of their infidelity status. The sample population was confined to adults over the age of 21years old living in the United States that met these requirements. The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning community was not included in this study. Qualtrics, the data source, provided all the necessary responses from qualified subjects within the guaranteed 2 weeks.

Limitations

One potential limitation to the survey used in this study was that the respondents felt uncomfortable sharing responses about infidelity, a very personal and sensitive topic that often causes social judgment. I identified a limitation in the need to trust that the participants' responses on this topic were truthful. Additionally, in today's social climate, there is an increase in people who do not want to report or define themselves by their gender. Lastly, participants who met the inclusion criteria for this study may have previously been in relationships that did not meet the current inclusion criteria. Uncontrollable carry-over effects and confounding variables may have influenced the results. Consequently, sample selection was a primary concern when confronting this potential limitation, and it was a direct benefit of using a professional data collection service, Qualtrics, that offered a guarantee to supply the necessary quantity of participants that met all of the inclusion criteria.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it can extend the field's understanding of the role of EI in interactions and relationships that extend beyond the workplace and other professional settings, which has dominated EI research up to this point. The findings of this study have the potential to advance understanding of how EI potentially influences the risk of infidelity in couples who are in committed, long-term relationships, which could aid counselors in assisting couples who are most at risk (see McNulty & Widman, 2014). Therapists reported that infidelity is the third most challenging issue to help people heal from, and it continues as the leading cause of divorce (Hall & Fincham,

2006). This study can potentially contribute to a better understanding of the traits that enhance the prediction of an increased likelihood of the dynamics that contribute to committing infidelity.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I discussed the harmful effect infidelity has on families. The purpose of the study was to examine whether infidelity can be predicted by gender, a person's level of EI, ethnicity, and age for people in committed, monogamous, heterosexual marriages. This information will hopefully be able to assist both families and counselors in preventing and helping to heal from infidelity, which remains one of the world's leading causes of divorce (see Moller & Vossler, 2015). In Chapter 2, I will review the literature regarding gender, EI, and infidelity as well as highlight the research gaps that the present study aimed to fill.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to examine whether gender, EI, ethnicity, and age can adequately predict, individually or in combination, infidelity among couples in monogamous, heterosexual relationships. In the following literature review, I provide a comprehensive overview of issues related to gender and infidelity differences when it comes to EI. According to the National Marriage and Divorce Rate, 45% of all marriages end in divorce (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019) and infidelity is cited as the most common reported reason for divorce (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017).

Although gathered from nonrandom, small, and convenience reports, such as the Kinsey report or other media outlets, marital infidelity in the United States has been reported as high as 75% (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017). According to a Gallup Poll in 2013, 91% of Americans felt that committing infidelity was morally wrong despite its prevalence (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017). Additionally, Labrecque and Whisman (2017) concluded that approximately 25% of men and approximately 15% of women have committed infidelity in their lifetime. Therefore, examining potential trends in EI, gender, age, and ethnicity among married couples that did or did not deal with infidelity was a critical topic worthy of investigation. McNulty and Widman (2013) concluded that the ability to identify personal characteristics and attributes associated with people who committed infidelity would allow for the development of preventive or interventive tools to reduce infidelity frequency.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the extant literature to provide the rationale and reasoning for considering gender, EI, ethnicity, and age as predictors of infidelity. An overview of EI as a construct will be provided through a discussion of the origins of psychological research, its applicability to professional and personal relationships, and important correlates/determinants of it. Given that this research was specific to the topic of infidelity in heterosexual relationships, I consider how EI is an important factor to consider as couples (specifically heterosexual, committed couples) navigate challenges that brings about infidelity. How couples' levels of EI can mitigate personality factors (e.g., narcissism, empathy) that influence the likelihood that infidelity is also discussed. I also present the role that both age and ethnicity play related to the ability to accurately interpret emotional cues and nonverbal, facial expressions. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a rationale for gender differences in EI, generally, and in the context of infidelity, more specifically.

Literature Search Strategy

For this research study, I located peer-reviewed journals using psychological databases, such as the PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, ProQuest, EBSCO, SAGE Journals, and SocINDEX. A search of Walden University's library for primary sources provided selected books and journal articles on the psychology topics of infidelity and marriage fundamental to this literature search. Key search terms used were *infidelity, affair, adultery, cheating, ethics, gender, male, female, monogamy, extra-dyadic relationship, marriage, marital quality, marital satisfaction, narcissistic tendencies, narcissism, empathy, morality, religion, spouse, age, race, ethnicity, partner, parental infidelity,*

Emotional Intelligence, sexual infidelity, extramarital sex (EMS), relational infidelity, mate retention, sex, Emotional Intelligence Tests/Evaluation, empathy, emotional quotient, emotional affair, physical affair, cyber, divorce, in-pair copulation, EQ, and *EI.* Although I predominantly used the Walden University Library for my searches, Google Scholar, non-peer-reviewed articles, and current books discussing both EI and infidelity were utilized as well.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical framework that guided this study was the EI theory. Salovey and Mayer (1990) offered the first real definition and explanation of EI, although foundational aspects of the theory were posited as far back as over 2,300 years ago by Aristotle. The theory implies that there is a direct relationship between a person's level of EI and their level of choice character behaviors, such as empathy or narcissism (Barchard et al., 2016). As of 2000, the EI theory had been divided between various models of thought, such as the ability model, trait model, and combined ability and trait model (i.e., mixed model). The ability model made popular by Mayer and Salovey (1997) deals with a person's emotionally correlated cognitive abilities and combines a person's intelligence and experiences, believing that EI is a form of competence not instinct. For example, during conflict, a person with a low EI will focus more on why they are right rather than listen to the other person and see where their actions might have contributed to the conflict. They have difficulty listening to others and seeing things from another person's perspective. Specifically, the ability model defines a person's intelligence and ability in emotions instead of using statements or figures (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017). In the

ability model, it is claimed that EI is an individual's ability to precisely identify, distinguish, and recognize their own and others' emotions and to use this skill to make enlightened, socially applicable, and advantageous reactions (Ali et al., 2016). The thought is as people are able to acquire or possess skills in other areas, like mathematics or language, people can also acquire or possess emotional skills. The ability model is based on a person's ability to identify, evaluate, and communicate emotions precisely; the ability to read and create positive reactions when they start to escalate the ability to recognize emotions; and the ability to normalize emotions to stimulate both emotional and intellectual development (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017). The four key processes involved in EI ability are perception, problem solving, understanding, and regulating (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017).

The trait model of EI holds that there are a wide range of personality attributes (rather than abilities as suggested by the ability model) that lead to emotionally intelligent performances or one's traits (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017). In the model, the trait EQ refers to people's level of emotional reasoning, which is very similar to how EI is conceptualized. The predominant differentiation between EI and EQ is based on how they were developed and how they are measured (Mayer et al., 2004). According to Mayer and Salovey (2014), EI is used when referring to a person's ability and traits, whereas EQ is used when referring to a person's EI trait only. In the trait model, people's personalities, temperaments, and characteristics, such as contentment, joy, self-esteem, hopefulness, positivity, and confidence, are described (Andrei et al., 2014). The trait model focuses on a person's emotionally correlated traits, such as understanding and

accurately being able to read a person's nonverbal body language for self-perception (Andrei et al., 2014). The model comprises noncognitive reactions and sentiments related to self-assessments and self-control (Petrides et al., 2007). Individuals typically provide their own perceptions of these traits via self-reported measures (DiFablo & Palazzeschi, 2015; Zeidner et al., 2013). The EI trait symbolizes emotionally correlated character traits from individual favorites, attentional motivation, relational manners and performance, and intentions, all of which are prone to impact the choices people make when faced with relationship obstacles (Hughes & Evans, 2016). These EI traits influence people's decision making (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017). Often a difference between types of EI is the ability to discern between emotions that self-regulate people and ones that focus on the behaviors of others, including verbal and nonverbal cues (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017).

The process of using one's EI in a positive way is to recognize the pattern of a successful cycle: identify emotions, convey emotions, identify emotions, control one's own emotions, and then regulate another person's emotions (Elfenbein & MacCann, 2017). Research has shown that people with a higher EI have an increased level of social skills and healthy social and personal interactions and relationships (Cikes et al., 2018). Additionally, research has demonstrated certain ethnicities have an easier time having their facial responses accurately understood and that interracial interpretation is harder to discern especially among negative expressions (DeBusk & Austin, 2011). Healthy personal relationships can translate into lower accounts of infidelity. Individuals' behaviors that frequently affect their choices and goals (Hughes & Evans, 2016).

History of EI

Studies have demonstrated that success in both a person's professional and educational career is often affected by their level of intelligence, or IQ; however, the complete measure of a person's intelligence includes their cognitive ability as well as their social or EI (Killian, 2012). Social intelligence is referred to as a person's ability to comprehend and control their interactions and relationships with other people.

Aristotle once said that "a person's true happiness should not be judged in an instance or a day, but throughout their life" (322 B.C.E., Book I, Part 7). Plato over 2,000 years ago discussed the importance of understanding the personality traits of another person and how they would affect their actions such as trust or laziness (Mayer, 2014). Sigmund Freud had a similar perspective, leading to the development of new therapeutic methods that would increase patient's own self-awareness (Mayer, 2014). Freud believed that letting people be overly emotional was their inability to let their ego rule over their immature id and that good judgment should overrule emotional impulses (Salovey & Mayer, 1995).

Freud followed the foundation of Aristotle, which eventually led to the premise formed by Salovey and Mayer (1995) that the individual should make choices that work towards the benefit and collaboration with other people that facilitate the greatest individual and collective good. For example, when doing something altruistic that benefits both society as well as oneself, it becomes both pro-social as well as pro-individual.

In the 1950s, Wechsler (1951) extended testing on general intelligence to include parts of a person's EI (Killian, 2012). Then Gardner (1983) in the book *Frames of Mind* built on Wechsler's idea that there are multiple and distinct forms of intelligence. In one of the earlier recognitions of EI, Gardner postulated that intelligence included an individual's aptitude in spoken, mathematical, spatial, melodic, movement, interpersonal, and intrapersonal manners. Salovey and Mayer's (1990) concept of EI builds on Gardner's conceptualization by encompassing critical interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that individuals must possess to understand their own emotions and those of others. In addition, EI has been shown to be an important part of a person's overall intelligence; however, initially, the concept of EI did not get the strong support of the psychological community. It was not until Mayer and Salovey that it began being more widely used as a construct and only then did researchers begin to examine the psychological benefits of. For example, EI has been shown to be a more reliable predictor for success both professionally and personally than a person's IQ (Killian, 2012).

Other authors and studies have promoted constructs similar to EI without explicitly naming them as EI. One such example is Brady et al. (2020) who posited that a person who can self-regulate their emotions and actions can avoid immediate forms of gratification, such as sex gambling, or binging, such as on alcohol or food. They further assessed that this ability is often impaired when under the influence, sick, or overly stressed; therefore, it was demonstrated that the temptation was only impacted and diverted by the individual's ability to properly self-regulate their emotions and actions.

Other researchers have shown that EI results in more accurate and effective conflict resolution because it allows individuals to have better recognition and awareness of their own emotional perceptions and actions (Mayer, 2015). The strong conflict resolution benefits afforded to individuals with strong EI extend to overcoming emotional obstacles in both their personal and professional lives (Zeidner & Kloda, 2013). Mayer (2015) explained that effective conflict resolution is achieved by people interpreting both the verbal and nonverbal cues they are presented with, categorizing them, comparing them to other similar behaviors in similar situations, and resolving them in a mutually beneficial manner.

EI can be defined as the ability to manage emotional information correctly as well as effectively detect, create, and alter the emotion in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1995). A person's traits, both cognitive and emotional, work together to understand and implement useful tactics of interaction both professionally and personally (Salovey & Mayer, 1995). Understanding the process of EI is recognizing that although many times people want to do what feels good and offers the most immediate gratification, a person with a high EI can quell immediate, short-term gratification for the benefit of a long-term gain. However, here a debate still exists within the field of psychology on whether EI is an ability as explained by Mayer and Salovey (1995) or whether it is a trait (Zeidner et al., 2013).

More recent conceptions of EI involve self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management, and self-management (Chernis & Goleman. 2001; Killian, 2012). Cikes et al. (2018) expanded this concept in connection to interpersonal

relationships in explaining their positive results of a happy and successful relationship as the awareness and appearance of emotion, the application of emotions to expedite understanding, the emotional expertise and insight of emotion, and the handling of one's emotions. This division led to the inquiry between whether a person's EI is based on one's cognitive ability or their personality traits, which remains a matter of debate.

Application of EI

Understanding the application of EI helps people distinguish between and recognize feelings and sentiments in both themselves and others. The application of EI has positive effects on different types of relationships. For example, Goleman (2002) showed that healthy interpersonal behavior in different contexts, like a company or a classroom, is directly influenced by the positive EI of leaders in those contexts.

Emotionally focused therapy emphasizes the importance of EI in building and maintaining successful personal relationships (Killian, 2012). As part of the therapy, there is a connection and correlation between a person's EI, level of empathy, and their ability to forgive others (Killian, 2012), which are key components with healthy couples and interpersonal relationships. Additionally, EI is a major factor in ensuring solidity and bliss in committed relationships. The degree of positive and negative experiences such as feeling loved, cherished, respected, or disconnected, and conflicted impacts the interaction in a couple (Cikes et al., 2018).

Empathy is a critical component of EI because it allows individuals to understand the perspectives of others and facilitates company cohesiveness (Klare et al., 2014). Empathy is the ability to understand and show care for another person's

perspective (Shimberg et al., 2016). It operates as a tool in which individuals, couples, and coworkers can gauge the emotional situation and reactions of others. Empathy promotes healthy decision making, relationship building, and coping in traumatic or demanding conditions (Klare et al., 2014).

EI is also used to help not just couples in counseling but also counselors to better assist their clients. Research has shown that EI can mitigate the risk of burnout that counselors face from having to constantly listen to clients' stress and problems (Gutierrez & Mullen, 2016). Having a higher EI implies a higher ability to cope with troubling emotions in a positive manner. The benefits of EI extend to other professions such as doctors, teachers, and nurses (Gutierrez & Mullen, 2016). For example, EI has been shown to have a positive effect on not just the educators but the students as well as was demonstrated in studies evaluating the performance of high school students (Marquez et al., 2006), and the emotional, social, and health of university students in a study conducted by Extremera and Fernandez-Berrocal (2006).

EI is based on the development of a person's self-efficacy, which is the agency that people have about their abilities to control situations, including personal and social interactions. Self-efficacy in EI is a determinant of people's successes and failures in previous interactions with people. EI assists in determining the choices that couples make, inclusive of being unfaithful (Salavera et al., 2017). The way couples deal with their own emotions and how effectively they can distinguish and control their own and their partner's emotions, is an important quality for relationship satisfaction (Cikes et al., 2018).

EI could be an important determinant of the likelihood infidelity will occur in strained marriages or relationships. The intersection of using one's emotions and cognition determines a positive, healthy solution (Humphrey et al., 2007). Specifically, individuals with a higher level of EI have superior social skills and improved social relations (Brackett et al., 2006). Furthermore, higher levels of emotional aptitudes are often associated with higher rates of successful intimate relationships (Zeidner & Kloda, 2013). People's ability to effectively understand both their own as well as their partner's emotions contribute to sustaining intimacy and a happy connection (Cikes et al., 2018).

In contrast, a lower EI prevents individuals from listening accurately, demonstrating empathy to another person's struggle, staying calm, and amicably resolving conflict. Studies revealed that those with higher EI scores could take their partner's perspective and cooperate, which allows for greater marital satisfaction by either agreeing, resolving, or eliminating obstacles in their relationships (Zarch et al., 2014). It is this ability to use both a person's intellectual intelligence as well as their accurate perception of other emotions that facilitates a healthy solution (Humphrey et al., 2007).

A person's EI consists of five competency areas (Salavera et al., 2017). The first competency involves knowing and understanding a person's own emotions. The second competency is the ability to handle emotions. The third competency is the ability to inspire oneself to act accordingly in the best interest. The fourth competency involves recognizing other people's emotions. The last competency includes the ability to create relations (Salavera et al., 2017). EI is a mitigating factor in determining the success of

people in all parts of their life. It allows people to resolve obstacles utilizing emotions appropriately. Thus, it will enable us to regulate ourselves and others' emotions to reduce our own and others' stress levels (Salavera et al., 2017).

The research related to understanding EI is based on two different paths (Fischer et al., 2018). As suggested earlier, Mayer et al. (2000) proposed that a person's EI is based on a person's cognitive ability. In contrast, Perez et al. (2005) determined that one's EI is a personality trait. The better the ability to understand and relate to another person's emotions the higher the success of their relationship, which is a strong indicator of a higher level of EI (Fischer et al., 2018).

The Impact of EI on Education and Professional Success

The difference between the two personality types, one's cognitive ability or personality trait, is found in several sectors and goes back to the days of Machiavelli who believed that fear was a stronger instrument for success than kindness. In a similar manner, Steve Jobs who is the epitome of success was not known to lead by kindness. In 2013 Dr. Adam Grant demonstrated with data that leading people with kindness and understanding without expectations of personal gain led people to be extremely successful regardless of their field (Cote, 2014).

Business CEO's and company executives have debated which brings more success for decades. Although one is able to point to Steve Job's success despite his low EI, it was his second in command that worked to oust him, and that when he changed his mannerism in the second half of his career, he was most successful (Cote, 2014). Knowing how to effectively assess the situation and handle it appropriately does not

require a certain type of behavior but an understanding of what was needed for the betterment of others. One such example was the culture at General Electric who made it their policy to each year lay off the bottom 10 percent of the company. The purpose was to help each person grow to their full potential (Cote, 2014).

Research in EI demonstrates the value and the added success in a person's workplace and school. For those individuals who have a higher level of EI, the benefits of working with people in such situations created less tension, increased employee retention, increased performance, and increased client or customer satisfaction (Codier et al., 2013). Employees with a higher EI view conflict in a positive method, utilize better methods of conflict resolution, and have a lower turnover rate (Codier et al., 2013).

Having the skills to interpret and handle the emotional mood related to workplace conflict is an essential aspect of one's achievement at work. Too often working in academic environments we have seen that academic-related intelligence is prioritized over one's emotional status. Klare et al. (2014) demonstrated that too frequently intelligent people with high academic qualifications and exceedingly advanced critical skills do not seem to have the same ability to recognize and accurately respond to the emotional requirements and needs of others.

Often in the workforce emotional components and interactions are ignored. As a result, employees feel degraded or unimportant which creates a poor and productive workplace. For example, it is when organizational leaders in a top decision-making position do not have the ability to interpret the accurate responses of their co-workers to return the intelligent people or people with a high IQ too often appear as incompetent and

callous, which inhibits success (Klare et al., 2014). These findings highlight the importance of a high EI.

Additionally, students that possess a higher level of EI are more successful in school, such that their attitude towards academics is positive, they do not feel that others owe them, and they take responsibility for their own actions (Wolfe, 2019). Furthermore, it has been shown that students who are able to carry out self-directed learning, which is a positive byproduct of a higher EI, are more successful in school (Zhoc et al., 2018). There is a direct correlation between a student's GPA and their level of EI. Students will inevitably at some point encounter negative results or comments from their peers or teachers. Students with EI tend to not internalize constructive feedback but rather they use it to accurately problem solve, and improve their work, which ultimately leads to stronger success (Zhoc et al., 2018).

The Impact of EI on Interpersonal Relationships

EI is the ability to accurately assess our mood and that of others to interact with them positively and effectively (Zarch et al., 2014). Couples with a higher EI are able to adjust their perceptions and attitudes towards conflict, cultivating an appreciation of relationships, and encouraging permanency, stability, and coherence (Zarch et al., 2014). Moreover, couples that utilize proper methods of conflict resolution and demonstrate empathy and understanding are less likely to escalate the conflict, use negative strategies, or withdraw from the relationship (Zarch et al., 2014).

Both EI traits and EI abilities are directly correlated with marital happiness. High EI allows married couples to regulate their level of emotion during exchanges (Zeidner et

al., 2013). Specifically, EI helps individuals in a long term committed relationship to accurately read their partner's emotions, integrate their emotions and cognitive understanding, and comprehend the significance and connotation of their emotions. Also, committed couples can regulate the emotions of self, especially during a disagreement, using a constructive level of anger during a dispute (Zeidner et al., 2013). Furthermore, high EI committed individuals are better able to help manage and empathize with their partner's emotions (Zeidner et al., 2013).

Gender and EI

Research in EI has previously stated that there are gender differences in EI. Specifically, women are purported to be stronger in EI than men. Porterfield and Kleiner (2005) found supporting evidence of this finding by reporting statistically significantly lower EI scores for men than for women. They concluded that women are better than men at understanding both their own emotions and those of others (Porterfield & Kleiner, 2005). They also showed that women had higher empathy and social skills scores whereas men had higher motivation and self-regulation scores (Porterfield & Kleiner, 2005). More recent research has shown a less significant difference between the sexes (Fischer et al., 2018).

Fisher et al. (2018) demonstrated that women were more secure with their self-reporting of EI then men were. There was an underlying assumption that women were able to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions more effectively than men could (Fischer et al., 2018). Men although were equally as able to recognize target and non-

target emotions but their interpretations of them were not as accurate (Fischer et al., 2018).

Although the idea of a gender discrepancy in EI exists, there continues to be a dispute as to the reason for the gender gap given research's strong reliance on self-reported data in examining EI (Lopez-Zafra & Gartzia, 2014). Research has stated that part of the concern of gender bias in EI is dependent on the type of test administered. The Mayer and Salovey EI Test (MSCEIT), which tests a person's ability, was formulated to determine the way a person perceives a situation, puts an accurate value on the action or emotion, and then is able to express a response successfully (Lopez-Zafra & Gatzia, 2014). These factors can be accessed and influenced by a person's gender bias and experience.

Stereotypes that are based on gender are assigned certain character traits such as compassion or warmth, which are considered female character traits versus anger or bravery which are considered male traits (Lopez-Zafra & Gartzia, 2014). The stereotypes alone do offer support for the perception that women are stronger in EI than their male counterparts. This bias shows up in assessing gender difference in EI as it affected the way men chose their responses as to not be associated with female characteristics. In contrast to that, women factored in their preconceived ideas of how emotional they are supposed to be when making their decisions. The findings support the notion that gender bias is a strong factor for determining results of a person's level of EI (Lopez-Zafra & Gartzia, 2014).

Despite the challenges with measuring gender differences in EI, companies and organizations are increasingly recognizing EI as an integral necessity for strong effective leadership (Porterfield & Kleiner. 2005). As such there is a growing trend in the increase of women in leadership and managerial positions, which further shows broad acceptance that women are stronger than men in EI. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 1972 only 18% of women held leadership positions in contrast to as of 2016 when almost 40% hold leadership positions.

Several studies have been conducted evaluating whether gender affects one's level of EI. Some have demonstrated that women can cope healthily with their emotions despite men, having higher levels of self-reported EI (Petrides, 2016). This finding is supported by more recent findings that show that men are more forgiving than women on the issue of infidelity (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017).

Gender and Infidelity

According to the institute for Family Studies, men are more likely than women to commit infidelity. Overall, 35% of men in comparison to 28% of women have had some form of adultery during their committed relationship (Wang, 2018). The specific statistical disparity from other studies adjusts depending on the age of the person in the study. Research shows that the gender disparity in infidelity increases with age (Wang, 2018). Among college students, 23% of married men and 12% of married women have committed infidelity (Shimberg et al., 2016). Furthermore, approximately 40 to 70% of college students who strongly believe in monogamy hooked up with another person. Of these hookups, 26% of them were already involved in a serious monogamous relationship

(Shimberg et al., 2016). Although there have been studies evaluating the reasons for these gender disparities, such as social norms or perceptions, McNulty and Widman (2013) demonstrated that there is no significant difference in results associated with ability or mistreatment. However, when tested, a strong direct correlation between infidelity and high sexual ability was shown among both female and male married individuals (McNulty & Widman, 2013). The study further stated that there is a lack of ability for narcissistic men to feel sexual empathy for their wives, which is a trait that seems to be unique to men (McNulty & Widman, 2013).

Men and women also differ in their tactics of preventing their mates from committing infidelity. In a study conducted by Ein-Dor et al. (2015), the authors evaluated the rivalry sensitivity method that women and men pay attention to different emotional cues when looking to prevent infidelity. Studies have shown that women focus more on potential rivals and men focus on the emotional cues of their partner both with the hopes of preventing poaching of their spouse. Over 50% of both men and women have admitted to trying to steal someone else's partner. In addition, 87% of men and 94% of women have admitted to being propositioned while in a committed relationship (Ein-Dox et al., 2015). The results showed that women are more devious in their exploration and men are more direct and forceful (Ein-Dox et al., 2015).

There are significant gender differences in rates of infidelity. Men consistently report higher rates of infidelity than women (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017). Over the past few decades, the gender gap in the rate of infidelity has narrowed. In the middle of the 20th century, it was reported that approximately one third of all men in a

monogamous relationship and one fifth of all women in monogamous relationships have committed infidelity (Shimberg et al., 2016). More recent studies now show that approximately 25% of married men and 15% of married women have committed infidelity, demonstrating that men commit physical infidelity with an increased rate of 66% over women (Shimberg et al., 2016). This inequality is removed when one includes emotional and non-sexual infidelity (Shimberg et al., 2016).

Gender differences in perceptions and interpretations of infidelity have been associated with gender differences in infidelity prevalence. These gender differences in perceptions and interpretations of infidelity are rooted in cultural assumptions and expectations of gender (Williams & Knudson-Martin, 2013). For example, one thought is that the reason women engage in infidelity at lower rates than men are because women are more empathic than men (Toussaint & Webb, 2005). Nonetheless, most studies conclude that women are slightly stronger than men in decoding emotions (Fischer et al., 2018). However, history demonstrates that women are often placed in more social-emotional situations, such as primary caretakers for children, in romantic relationships, or in certain professional positions. Nevertheless, according to the emotional sensitivity hypothesis, the difference in their ability to accurately assess the subtlety of the cues is a strong mitigating factor. The more subtle the cues, the more sensitive women are to them. The subtlety of cues often causes women to interpret cues with more intensity. However, men can read facial expressions when non-subtle to the same degree as women (Fischer et al., 2018). The results further demonstrated that women were more

apt to discern emotions such as hatred, joy, contentment, unhappiness, and disbelief (Fischer et al., 2018); emotions directly affect relationship satisfaction amongst couples.

These factors potentially explain why women are more negatively impacted by emotional infidelity where in contrast men are more negatively impacted by physical infidelity (Green & Sabini, 2006). Additionally, research shows that men are more likely to have a sexual affair and continue to view such acts as less immoral than women do (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017).

Age and EI

Whether society influences it, or it is a natural gender progression, research has demonstrated that males tend to hide their feelings of sadness at an increased rate as they age in contrast to females increase their demonstration of anger (Parmley & Cunningham, 2014). Additionally, research has demonstrated the importance of adults as they age to continue to be successful with their social interactions in relationships and their ability to be empathically accurate and to appropriately share in these emotions (Wieck & Kunzmann, 2015).

Of concern is the accuracy of one's understanding of the other's emotions which are based on the cognitive ability of understanding and interpreting them at high speed (Wieck & Kunzmann, 2015). These cognitive abilities that rely on a person's executive functioning skills and working memory slow down with age inhibiting the accuracy of one's accurate interpretation of emotions (Wieck & Kunzmann, 2015). However, this information may be inaccurate if the subject being accessed is significant or important and age related for an older individual (Wieck & Kunzmann, 2015).

An additional concern centers around the effect of age on EI is the potential deterioration on prosody in aging adults. The minimal research that exists appears to state that the level of ability to discern the tone and pitch accurately as one displays vocal emotions is often missed (Mitchell et al., 2011).

Infidelity and Ethnicity

Although the rate of divorce has slightly declined over the past decade, the rate of cohabitation and non-marital childbearing has increased. Society has seen a dramatic change in the family unit. These changes have been most notable in non-White homes, especially in Black families (Ellison et al., 2010). According to a study conducted by Ellison et al. (2010), fewer than half of Black and Latinx couples are living with their married spouses in comparison to over half of White couples.

Additionally, there is a different perception of potential infidelity among ethnicities that affects couples' outcome and rate in committed relationships. A study conducted by Jagestic (2012) demonstrated that magazines that appeal to Black women versus White women discuss infidelity with a higher rate of frequency. More so, Essence magazine focuses on the rate of Black men committing infidelity and their need to have a higher level of restraint compared to Marie Claire magazine that appeals to White women of the same age. Marie Claire discusses infidelity as both a female and male issue (Jagestic, 2012).

Further research has shown that Black men commit infidelity at a higher rate. This theory postulates that it is due to a disparity amongst potential sexual partners that occurs due to the increased number of women to men. A fact that is based on a discriminatory

bias of violence and incarceration of Black men (Parker & Campbell, 2017). The next highest rate of infidelity falls on the Latinex community. This is due to the accepted understanding and acceptance that men are prone to commit infidelity and the cultural concept of men being the predominant financial support for the family and therefore women are hesitant to further pursue the act (Parker & Campbell, 2017).

The Results of EI - Empathy Versus Narcissism

Shimberg et al. (2016) offer further explanation of how personality traits (namely narcissism) influence individual differences in whether people engage in infidelity. They show that narcissists tend to avoid attachments and have low empathy (Shimberg et al., 2016). People with low empathy are less apt to contemplate the effect and outcome of their actions on their partners. Emotions such as guilt that would be associated with betrayal and infidelity are nonexistent for narcissists (Shimberg et al., 2016). People with low levels of empathy have low concern about the satisfaction of their partners. This lack of concern allows narcissists to justify why infidelity is acceptable (Shimberg et al., 2016).

According to McNulty and Widman (2013), there is a correlation between narcissism and the sexual aspects of infidelity in personal relationships when narcissism is demonstrated through a sexual nature. Narcissism plays out in sexual infidelity in the following ways: (a) narcissists are more likely to use sexual manipulation, (b) narcissists are more likely to have a pompous sense of sexual competence, (c) narcissists are more likely to desire sexual privilege, and (d) narcissists are more likely to lack sexual empathy (McNulty & Widman, 2013).

Campbell et al. (2002) established that narcissists utilize forms of manipulation in their intimate relationships with the goal of having their own sexual needs and self-esteem satisfied (Shimberg et al., 2016). Narcissists tend to have an unbalanced sense of entitlement to happiness and relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, they lack empathy, which is a character trait that encompasses feeling the emotions of another (Shimberg et al., 2016). Additionally, the sense of entitlement and a pompous sense of sexual competence that narcissists display affect the ability to experience remorse, and forgiveness, which are factors that allow individuals to avoid infidelity urges. People with low level or no empathy cannot demonstrate compassion in ensuring a healthier more satisfying relationship nor in understanding the long-term effect of their actions (Shimberg et al., 2016) ultimately predicting a higher rate of infidelity.

The link between narcissism and infidelity is based on the premise that narcissists have a higher tendency to take advantage of others. They have a lower rate of empathy toward other individuals and a universal certainty in their proficiency in their skills (McNulty & Widman, 2013). Additionally, they tend to be more callous, and egocentric, have increased impulsivity, and poor self-control, and are manipulative for their own gain (Adams et al., 2014). Moreover, they tend to have more sexual partners, low commitment rates, and deceptive sexual behaviors all leading to an increased rate of infidelity (Adams et al., 2014).

Moreover, narcissists enjoy a sense of risk taking and are not as willing to consider their mate's feelings as they are willing to risk being caught to provide for their own desires and sexual self-prowess (Adams et al., 2014). A previous study conducted by

Jones and Weiser (2014) concluded that there was no correlation between narcissism and the desire to take increased chances. However, it did not consider the difference between an individual's personality and behaviors. Using the Sexual Narcissism Scale, McNulty and Widman (2013) found that husbands and wives who felt entitled were more likely to commit infidelity than husbands who were unable to demonstrate sexual empathy for their wives. Lastly, those husbands and wives that were more confident in their sexual ability had a higher degree of infidelity (McNulty & Widman, 2013).

EI and Relationship Satisfaction

Infidelity is directly associated with diminished relationship fulfillment in couples. It is the number one cause of divorce. Additionally, the spouses of those who commit infidelity incur a decreased level of self-esteem and increased stress (McNulty & Widman, 2013). Furthermore, infidelity has the potential for being costly to both parties. Additional spending, alimony due to divorce, unwanted pregnancy from infidelity, or potential sexually transmitted diseases (Barbaro et al., 2015) are some of the notable costs of infidelity.

There are several explanations why both ability and trait models of EI are associated with higher relationship satisfaction. According to Mayer et al. (2000) the main factors of ability EI should influence both the encoding of relationship-relevant data as well as the management of each person's emotions during interactions with their significant others. On the "output" side, EI correlates to improved skills both in regulating one's own feelings and reactions, such as productive articulation of resentment during a disagreement, and in adjusting the emotions of another person's emotions, such

as reassuring a mate who is offended. Brackett et al. (2005) demonstrated that strong EI competencies and the management of negative feelings and reactions are directly connected with relationship satisfaction (Zeidner et al., 2013).

The combination of these two factors that accurately encodes another person's emotions as well regulates one's own emotions connect marital satisfaction and a person's EI. However, oftentimes when only one partner has a high EI the recognized benefits of high EI benefit only one of the two partners. Additionally, sometimes the additional marital satisfaction occurs through the support of one's partner. The higher the EI the higher the reliability of the interactions between couples the higher the relationship satisfaction between partners (Zeidner et al., 2013).

Trait EI measures have been effective in calculating adaptive coping skills in an assortment of relationship situations and circumstances (Zeidner et al., 2013). The level of coping is a vital component to the concept of trait EI. The result is that a person with a high trait of EI is equipped to be able to protect situations to be successful even when confronted with higher life's stressors, creating positive interactions and solutions for couples (Zeidner et al., 2013).

The risk of infidelity is greatly increased when marital satisfaction is not present, but EI could play a mitigating role in preventing infidelity from occurring. Agreeableness and conscientiousness are two personality traits that strongly contribute to the level of satisfaction and are affected by a person's level of EI (Shackelford et al., 2008). When a person has a higher EI they can communicate more effectively and they can empathize with their partner's feelings, which in turn leads to increased harmony amongst couples

and lower rates of infidelity. Marital satisfaction is indicative of the level of harmony between the couple. When a person gets irritated and annoyed in a satisfying and healthy relationship, using a higher level of EI allows them to work through their issues by using empathy, self-control, and an increased understanding of the other person's self-control (Zarch et al., 2014).

Those with a low EI have increased struggles with their relationships. With couples, disharmony results from quarrels and disputes over personal aspirations, objectives, principles, interests, and concerns (Zeidner & Kloda, 2012). Lack of EI presents couples with the challenge of navigating relationship stressors and disputes over such things as money and in-laws. The quality of the relationship's satisfaction is a predictor of marital bliss (Zeidner & Kloda, 2012). When there are fewer moments of agreeableness individuals are willing to take a greater risk with other sexual partners than individuals who are more agreeable and are willing to hurt and risk their committed relationship for additional sexual gratification. Another predictor is the level of conscientiousness that affects a person's willingness to take sexual risks (Shackelford et al., 2008) both traits that are determined by their level of EI. Additionally, recent research has shown a trend of reduction in infidelity amongst couples who are married rather than in a committed cohabiting relationship (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017).

Types of Infidelity

Over the years, there have been many definitions used for infidelity, which in turn contributes to a wide range of reported infidelity rates from, 2% to 85.5% (Moller & Vossler, 2015). The average statistic reports a 25% infidelity rate among married couples.

The definition is usually grouped into three different categories: (a) sexual intercourse, (b) extradyadic sexual activities, and (c) emotional disloyalty (Moller & Bossler, 2015). Even sexual intercourse has variations as couples who are swingers or are in polyamorous relationships do not consider intercourse as a form of infidelity. These include oral sex, kissing, flirtation, strip clubs, lap dances, and watching pornography (Moller & Vossler, 2015). Another type of infidelity that is becoming more popular is online sexual interactions. Such infidelity occurs as cybersex, sexting, online dating, and online pornography (Schmidt et al., 2016).

It is these factors and others that have made infidelity one of the most common reasons for divorce and one of the most challenging issues for counselors to treat (Schmidt et al., 2016). Whether the infidelity is sexual or emotional, trust has been broken. EI allows couples to prevent and even navigate through instances of infidelity. Nonetheless, regardless of the type of infidelity that has occurred, sexual or emotional, the trust has been broken as well (Schmidt et al., 2016).

EI Tests

Although several tools exist to measure a person's level of EI the more common ones are: (a) Bar-On's EQ-I, (b) Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (MSCEIT), (c) Boyatzis and Goleman (ECI), and (d) Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) (Wolfe, 2019) and Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), (Zeidner et al., 2013). The SSEIT consists of 33 questions. The test is similar to the Bar-On's EQ-1 test which consists of 133 questions (Austin et al., 2004) as well as Mayer and Salovey's model (Gong & Paulson, 2016). The SSEIT test includes the ability to access the

expression of oneself as well as that of other people, the ability to regulate our emotions, and the utilization of our emotions effectively (Gong & Paulson, 2016).

Although there are similarities in the various EI tests, each one assesses a different characteristic of EI (Wolfe, 2019). Of the various tests, only the MSCEIT takes all four branches of EI into account: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Schlegel & Mortillaro, 2019). However, even that test evaluates answers based on society's perceived "norm" of answers, however, not necessarily the best of the answers. Other new tests have been introduced such as the Geneva Emotional Competence Test (Schlegel & Mortillaro, 2019). The Infidelity Experience Scale, Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale, and the Susceptibility to Infidelity Instrument measure the level of infidelity and one's proclivity to partake in it.

A major concern of EI tests, specifically the MSCEIT is validity. The second part of the test which examines a person's self-reported ability and offers no conclusive "correct" answer causes concerns to some (Keele & Bell, 2009). However, research has demonstrated that the correct answer is based on a consensus of what the experts believe should be the correct response and score it accordingly (Keele & Bell, 2009). The same concern occurs in the validity of the responses and scoring of the TEIQue test. This test was developed because of the concern of the two types of EI, trait and ability (O'Connor et al., 2016).

Additionally, research has demonstrated that certain self-reporting tests have the potential for being more gender biased than others (Lopez-Zafra & Gartzia, 2014). Two of these more common tests are the Trait Meta Mood Scale and the Wong and Law

Emotional Intelligence Scale. The Trait Meta Mood Scale comprises one of the original

tests developed by Salovey and Mayer (Salovey et al., 1995) and measures awareness to

emotion, emotional lucidity, and emotional healing (Lopez-Zafra & Gartzia, 2014).

Although both tests are self-report measures, the Trait Meta Mood Scale evaluates one's

emotional ability and aptitude towards themselves whereas the Wong and Law Emotional

Intelligence Scale examines the assessment, empathy, and supervision of other people's

emotions (Lopez-Zatra & Gartzia, 2014).

Summary

Overall, the literature discusses the benefits of a person having a higher EI and

how it affects their communication process, both verbally and non-verbally. For example,

the ability for a couple to effectively deal with their own emotions and how effectively

they can distinguish and control their own and their partner's emotions is an essential

quality for relationship satisfaction (Cikes et al., 2018). In contrast, a lower EI prevents

individuals from listening accurately, demonstrating empathy to another person's

struggle, staying calm, and amicably resolving conflict. In addition, studies revealed that

those with higher EI scores could take their partner's perspective and cooperate, which

allows for greater marital satisfaction by either agreeing, resolving, or eliminating

obstacles in their relationships (Zarch et al., 2014). These traits create positive interaction

amongst couples reducing the frequency of infidelity. The study's goal is to hopefully

demonstrate the connection between EI, which affects their level of relationship

satisfaction, and reducing infidelity. Chapter 3 will discuss the design, methodology,

validity and justification for utilizing this method and participants to examine the

likelihood that their age, ethnicity, gender, or EI impacted their choice of committing

infidelity.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to investigate whether EI, gender, age, and ethnicity adequately predict, individually or in combination, infidelity among individuals, both men and women, in a committed monogamous, heterosexual relationship for at least 3 years. Current studies have revealed that a person's EI affects their relationship both personally as well as professionally (Costa & Faria, 2020). Unlike an individual's IQ, a person's EI can increase (Grant, 2007). Despite the current research that has been conducted on each of the subjects, relationships, infidelity, and EI, the correlation between infidelity and EI remains unexplored in existing research. Current research has provided evidence to suggest that EI explains the level of a person's accomplishments in their interpersonal relationships in the context of school and career (Costa & Farua, 2020). Additionally, research has indicated the correlation between EI and committed satisfaction due to the ability that individuals with a higher EI have to convert negative emotions, assumptions, or acts into positive ones, increasing the ability to both feel and think about potential emotional difficult situations (Anhange et al., 2017). Milani et al. (2020) found that raising a person's EI increased sexual, marital, and psychological satisfaction in married women and discussed that those women in married relationships that were able to effectively control their emotions during stressful situations reduced unnecessary and unproductive resistance in their relationship. However, to date, no study has been published that shows the connection between EI and whether people commit infidelity in monogamous relationships.

Research Design

and Rationale

In this quantitative, nonexperimental study, I used an online survey to collect data from the participants. This method was chosen over a qualitative method because it offers a closer understanding of the nature of the relationship among variables. In comparison to the qualitative methodology, quantitative survey designs are more efficient and can accommodate larger numbers of participants, which is a critical feature to increase the accuracy and generalizability of the study's results (McLeod, 2019). Online survey administration is cost effective and efficient in that the survey can be administered remotely via computers or mobile devices across many geographic locations (Wright, 2005). Unlike qualitative research methods, surveys have a stronger capability of describing the characteristics and behaviors of a population (via statistical inference), which allows for stronger conclusions to be made (Jones et al., 2013). Lastly, quantitative studies allow for increased anonymity compared to qualitative studies, which was of specific benefit to the current study due to the sensitivity of the subject matter of infidelity. Anonymous survey methodology can increase the likelihood that participants respond to survey items more candidly and validly, which are important factors in ensuring accurate data (Ong & Weiss, 2000).

The independent variables examined in this research study were EI, gender, age, and ethnicity. The dependent variable was whether participants had engaged in infidelity within their relationship (i.e., their infidelity status), answered as yes or no. I also

collected and measured demographic variables for the purpose of providing a description of the study sample.

Methodology

Population

The population of interest consisted of heterosexual, married or cohabiting couples in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2019), there are 61.4 million married or cohabiting, heterosexual couples, of which, 35% are White, 24% are Black, 21% are Hispanic, and 17% are other races and ethnicities. Of these figures, the percentage of couples who are in a completely monogamous relationship is 29.6% of White couples, 14% of Black couples, 25% of Hispanic couples, and 28.6% of couples of other races and ethnicities (Ballard, 2020).

Sample

For this study, I surveyed adult, self-identified men and women who were currently in or had been in an agreed-upon, monogamous, heterosexual relationship for at least 3 years. All participants were at least 23 years old and varied in their level of education, ethnicity, and age.

I used G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) to determine the necessary sample size for this study, indicating that a minimum of 169 participants were needed to detect a small-medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.08$) using multiple logistic regression techniques with a statistical power of 0.80 and an alpha level of 0.05. The minimum power level accepted in research is 0.80 (Norton & Strube, 2001). A significant level of 0.05 or less is typically

used in the social sciences as the criterion for establishing statistical significance because it ensures a greater chance of avoiding Type I errors (Norton & Strube, 2001).

I used Qualtrics, an online tool incorporating software and survey studies from panels, to recruit all necessary subjects meeting the inclusion criteria as members of a convenient sample of adults interested in participating in research studies. Qualtrics is a survey company that ensured me the desired number of responses from qualified individuals who met the abovementioned requirement. Qualtrics has a minimum charge and guarantees complete responses from 200 qualified subjects. I provided them with the qualifying questions, demographic information, approved survey, informed consent letter, and EI test. In turn, they provided me with the raw data used in this study.

Screener Questions

Potential participants responded to four questions that assessed their eligibility for participation. Specifically, I developed the questions to ask the potential participants to disclose the following:

1. Are you 23 years of age or older?

2. Do you identify as either a woman or a man?

3. Are you currently in a monogamous, heterosexual relationship?

4. Have you been in this relationship for 3 years or longer?

A respondent had to answer *yes* to all four questions to participate in this study. A *no* response to any one of these questions disqualified a person from participating, and the survey was terminated.

EI

I used the SSEIT to assess the participants' EI (see Schutte et al., 1998). The

SSEIT is a 33-item, self-report measure of typical EI (see Appendix A). The SSEIT

contains four subscales: (a) perception of emotion, (b) managing own emotions, (c)

managing others' emotions, and (d) utilization of emotion. In the test, respondents are

asked to rate their level of agreement with each survey item on a Likert-type scale with

response options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The scale

usually takes 5 to 10 minutes to complete. The total scale scores are calculated by reverse

coding Items 5, 28, and 33 (see Appendix) and then summing all items to create a

composite EI score that can range from 33 to 165. Higher scores indicate stronger EI.

The instrument has been used across diverse samples of adults and in different

countries with different age groups and professions. As reported by Schutte et al. (1998),

the internal consistency reliability for the 33-item scale is high (i.e., the Cronbach alpha

is 0.90). Schutte et al. (2009) stated that the internal consistency reliabilities (i.e.,

Cronbach alphas) across those various studies have ranged from 0.79 to 0.95, yielding an

average of 0.87. The test-retest reliability for the SSEIT is also strong ($r = 0.73$; Schutte

et al., 1998). Schutte et al. (1998) also provided strong evidence of convergence validity,

showing strong correlations between the SSEIT and other measures of emotional

functioning (e.g., attention to emotions, clarity of emotions). The SSEIT has also been

shown to be distinct from major personality constructs (i.e., Big Five Dimensions), which

is evidence for strong discriminant validity (Schutte et al., 1998).

Infidelity Status

Participants indicated whether they committed infidelity or not during the course of their current, monogamous, heterosexual relationship by responding to the following survey question:

Moller & Bossler (2015); described infidelity as any action or behavior either emotional and /or sexual that would be considered an act of betrayal and unfaithfulness to their spouse or significant other that undermines the agreed upon exclusivity of the couple (Moller & Vossler, 2015). Have you ever committed infidelity at any point during the course of your current relationship?

The response options were yes or no.

Demographic Characteristics

Eligible participants responded to questions to assess the following demographic characteristics: age, ethnicity, level of education, income level, and current relationship status. I assessed gender, which is one of the independent variables in the study, by having participants indicate whether they identify as a woman or a man. Appendix A displays the survey questions used to assess the other demographic characteristics.

Procedure

Before data collection activities started, the research protocol was reviewed and approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) because human subjects were used in the study. No data collection or analysis took place until after IRB approval had been received, approval number 09-02-21-0489192.

Participants were sent a recruitment invitation via Qualtrics that included a link to the online survey to participate in the study. Upon accepting the invitation and clicking on the survey link, participants were asked to read IRB-approved consent language that was included in the introduction of the online survey. The consent language included details on the purpose of the study, assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, and information regarding their rights to withdraw from the study at any time without any recourse. In the consent information, I also explained the intended benefits and potential costs (albeit minimal) for taking part in the study. Participants were required to acknowledge their understanding of the purpose of the research study and actively affirm or decline participation in the study by clicking a check box on the survey page. If participants did not provide active consent, they were routed to the end of the survey and were thanked for their time. Once participants provided active consent, they were routed to the screener questions. Participants had to answer *yes* to all four screener questions to advance to the survey questions. Next, participants completed the EI survey. The question assessing their infidelity status followed. Lastly, participants responded to several demographic questions, which included a question about their gender identity (i.e., one of the independent variables). The survey then concluded with a thank you message and my contact information was provided.

Once the data collection ended, I exported the raw data collected by Qualtrics and imported the data file into SPSS, Version 26. Qualtrics only provided information from the qualified subjects who completed the survey. From there, data cleaning and data analysis procedures were conducted.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Given the research problem and purpose, multiple logistic regression was the appropriate statistical analysis to investigate the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1: Is gender a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$1: Gender is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A1: Gender is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ2: Is EI a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$2: EI is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A2: EI is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ3: Is age a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$3: Age is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A3: Age is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ4: Is ethnicity a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$4: Ethnicity is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

H_A4: Ethnicity is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

RQ5: Is gender, EI, ethnicity, and age combined a predictor of infidelity among

monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0$5: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age combined are not a predictor of

infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A5: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age combined are a predictor of infidelity

among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

I used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 26, to perform

statistical analyses. Due to the Qualtrics software protocols, all results provided to me

were complete and without missing data. I examined the data for statistical outliers using

Mahala Nobis distance scores (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) and found 17 such

responses that were removed from subsequent inferential statistical analysis and replaced.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the gender breakdown, proportion of

people committing infidelity among the sample, and participants' overall level of EI, as

well as relevant demographic variables. Descriptive statistics utilized will be in keeping

with the specific variable's level of measurement.

Multiple logistic regression was used to determine whether participants' gender,

level of EI, ethnicity, and age, were significant predictors of infidelity in their

heterosexual relationships. Multiple logistic regression is the appropriate statistical test to

use when assessing predictors of a dichotomous outcome variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). One advantage of logistic regression was that it was able to mix different types of predictors (e.g., scaled and categorical) simultaneously, which was applicable to the current study that examined categorical (gender and race) and scaled (age and EI) predictors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The one major threat to logistic regression is multicollinearity. Zero-order correlations which was used to assess whether multicollinearity exists. Multicollinearity exists when the correlation among the predictors in the regression model are too high and can weaken the analysis by inflating the size of the error terms in the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). When the correlation between gender and EI exceeds 0.80, it signaled a multicollinearity threat (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Since a multicollinearity threat occurred, the relationship between each independent variable and dependent variable was analyzed separately and thus, logistic regression was not used.

Logistic regression is like multiple regression in that it used a prediction equation that included principles of a linear relationship among variables as shown in the equation below.

$$\widehat{Y_i} = \frac{e^{A+B_{gender}X_{gender}+B_{EI}X_{EI}}}{1 + e^{A+B_{gender}X_{gender}+B_{EI}X_{EI}}}$$

The linear part of the logistic regression equation is referred to as a logit (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), which was then used to find the odds ratio (i.e., the odds of experiencing infidelity or not). Binary logistic regression was selected as the statistical test in SPSS Version 26. Infidelity status (yes or no) was added as the dependent variable,

and gender (dummy coded as 1 for female and 0 for male), and EI was added as the independent variables. Outliers were identified as having residuals that are three standard deviations from the average residual. Classification plots were run to determine the accuracy of the prediction model by comparing the percent of accurate classification of individuals who fell in each of the two infidelity categories based on model predictions. The higher the classification rate, the stronger the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The classification table provided the percentage of cases that were accurately predicted to fall in the no infidelity group (i.e., sensitivity) and accurately predicted to fall in the yes infidelity group (i.e., specificity).

All independent variables were entered into the logistic regression model to assess whether they were significant predictors of someone having committed infidelity. First, the constant only model (model with no predictors) was compared to the full model (which contained gender, EI, ethnicity, and age) to determine whether there was an improvement in prediction when gender, EI, ethnicity, and age were added (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). A statistically significant statistic ($p < 05$) for the omnibus test of model fit provided statistical evidence to support Hypothesis1.

Additional statistical support for Hypothesis 1 was statistically significant in demonstrating individual contributions of gender and EI to the predictions of infidelity status. The logistic coefficients (B) are the natural logs of the odds ratio (e^B). SPSS provides the EXP(B) results for each predictor which indicated how a change in the predictor (gender or EI) by one unit multiplied the odds of an individual committing infidelity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The Wald test is the squared logistic coefficient

(B) divided by the squared standard errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). It was used to determine whether the individual contributions of gender and EI on the prediction of infidelity status were statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level. Statistically significant Wald statistics for gender and EI provided additional statistical support for Hypothesis 1. Lastly, a statistically significant Nagelkerke R^2 of 0.25 or higher indicated a strong amount of variance in the prediction of infidelity status as was explained by a model that contained gender and level of EI as predictors.

Validity Considerations

Potential risks to internal validity included that at times situations may occur that were different from the protocol or actions that had been set and that may have created unexpected adjustments in the outcome of the results (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). A common way to address this threat was to ensure that a true randomization of people were represented in the study. However, given that convenience sampling was used in this study, the research relied on other techniques to address this threat. First, the study included a well-established and psychometrically sound instrument that had a high rate of internal consistency, reliability, and strong convergent and discriminant validity. These psychometric strengths suggested that the results of one individual whose test was administered only once would result in a similar result when the same test was administered to another or in this instance to another group of individuals (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Second, all participants received the same standardized protocol (i.e., online survey administration), thus reducing the risk of procedural variance that could have impacted the results. Recognizing that the research study was not able to control all

external factors that could impact responding, it was able to control for order effects as all items were presented in the same order for all participants. Furthermore, the participants were tested only once, which further minimized the threat to internal validity that carryover effects could have had.

Furthermore, there was a potential risk to the research studies external validity from having used convenience sampling. With convenience sampling, participants are self-selecting, and this heightens the risk the sample is biased, since the participants were more likely individuals who were motivated to take part in the research study for whatever reasons. The lack of random sampling increased the risk that the sample lacked adequate representation of the target population. The study sample included variability in measuring the criterion and predictor variables that differed significantly from what might have resulted from a random, probability sample. As a result, this could have threatened the present study's ability to generalize the results to the target population and, furthermore, restrict generalizations beyond the sample to informed speculation.

Additionally, there was a concern that a shortcoming and drawback of the survey methodology would have had respondents not feeling comfortable providing answers that may have presented themselves in an unfavorable manner. This limitation had a high likelihood given the subject-matter of the research, infidelity, a highly sensitive one that evoked a great deal of social desirability concerns. An additional limitation in today's social climate was the increase in people willing to report or define their gender. Lastly, other non-reported factors could have contributed to the results such as economic status, culture, or education.

Summary

In summary, an online survey was administered to 200 participants asking questions regarding their demographic characteristics (including gender, EI, ethnicity, and age), level of EI, and their experience with infidelity in their committed relationship. Logistic regression was used to assess whether gender, EI, ethnicity and age are significant predictors of infidelity. These findings will potentially contribute to the body of research that examined the role of EI in monogamous heterosexual couples.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to investigate whether gender, EI, ethnicity, and age could adequately predict, individually or in combination, infidelity among men and women in committed, monogamous, heterosexual couples who self-report infidelity. Despite the current existing research on infidelity and EI independently, the relationship between the two remains unclear.

Given the research problem and purpose, the following research questions and hypotheses guided this study:

RQ1: Is gender a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples?

$H_0 1$: Gender is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

$H_A 1$: Gender is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ2: EI is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

$H_0 2$: EI is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

$H_A 2$: EI is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

RQ3: Is age a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

$H_0 3$: Age is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A3: Age is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual

couples.

RQ4: Is ethnicity a predictor of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual

couples.

H_04: Ethnicity is not a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

H_A4: Ethnicity is a predictor of infidelity among monogamous,

heterosexual couples.

RQ5: Are gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together a predictor of infidelity among

monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_05: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together are not a predictor of

infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

H_A5: Gender, EI, ethnicity, and age together are a predictor of infidelity

among monogamous, heterosexual couples.

In this chapter, I provide the data collection methods that were used in the study

and the demographic characteristics of the study participants. Descriptive statistics

related to the EI measure are presented. The chapter also includes a discussion of

unpredicted demographic variables (e.g., marital status) as possible covariates to include

in the prediction model. Then comes an analysis of implementing a multivariate binary

logistic regression model that includes results from the tests of assumptions as well as

discussion of the statistically significant predictors and the overall accuracy of the

prediction model as shown in the classification table. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results and a transition to Chapter 5.

Data Collection

Having hired Qualtrics to gather the data for this study, the initial results were supplied on September 18, 2021. After reviewing the test sample conducted by Qualtrics to determine that the questions and responses were understandable and in the anticipated time frame, the raw data and responses from the necessary 200 qualified and completed responses were provided on September 29, 2021. From these responses, I determined that 3.5% of the results were found to be invalid. All responses were the same including the three specific questions that Dr. Schutte reversed the scored response to ensure validity and reduce response style bias (Suarez-Alvarez et al., 2018). As of October 10, 2021, eight additional surveys completed by qualified subjects were submitted, ensuring 200 completed, valid electronic survey responses for a 100% response rate.

Participant Demographic Characteristics

The study included 200 participants comprising male (31.0%) and female (69.0%) adults who reported being in heterosexual, monogamous, romantic relationships for at least 3 years. Nearly 70% of the participants reported being married. However, of the 200 participants, approximately 26.5% of them, which breaks down to 21 men (i.e., eight married and 13 cohabitating) and 32 women (i.e., 11 married and 21 cohabitating), reported committing infidelity at least once in their current relationship. This percentage is comparable to the findings of Wang (2018) who reported that infidelity occurs in about

35% of men and 28% of women in a monogamous heterosexual relationship and Moller and Bossler (2015) who reported an average of 25% infidelity among married couples.

In terms of race and ethnicity, the vast majority of the participants identified as not Hispanic (90%) and White (83.5%). This finding is comparable but slightly below the U.S. Census Bureau (2019) finding that 76% of monogamous cohabitating or married couples were not Hispanic but higher than reporting that 35% of monogamous cohabitating or married couples were White (Ballard, 2020). The highest level of education that most of the participants attained was less than college (57.5%). As shown in Table 1, socioeconomic status as measured by annual income was varied, with the highest frequencies reported in the $25k–$50k range (30%). The age ranged from 23 to 84 years of age, with the average age being 51.6 years ($SD = 15.8$). Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Characteristics

Variable	f	%
Infidelity Experience		
No	147	73.5
Yes	53	26.5
Total	200	100.0
Gender		
Male	62	31.0
Female	138	69.0
Total	200	100.0
Hispanic		
No	180	90.0
Yes	20	10.0
Total	200	100.0
White		
Non-White	25	12.5

White	167	83.5
Prefer not to say	8	4.0
Total	200	100.0
College education		
Less than college	115	57.5
College or beyond	85	42.5
Total	200	100.0
Annual income		
Less than $25,000	33	16.5
$25,000–$50,000	62	31.0
$51,000 $75,000	39	19.5
$76,000–$100,000	38	19.0
More than $100,000	28	14.0
Total	200	100.0
Marital status		
Not married	63	31.5
Married	137	68.5
Total	200	100.0

Descriptive Statistics

I used the SSEIT to assess EI in this study. As expected, the interrater reliability was strong, yielding a Cronbach's a of 0.89. Participants' scores ranged from 2.64 to 4.69 with a mean of 3.75 ($SD = 0.40$). Given that the scale range for EI is from 1 to 5, these statistics would suggest that, on average, participants in this study tended to self-report high levels of EI in comparison to both the anticipated results and the average EI scores for this test. The skewness (0.07) and the kurtosis (0.62) fell within the normal ranges, suggesting that the distribution of EI scores was normal.

There were no statistically significant demographic differences in EI. Specifically, EI did not differ as a function of gender [$t(198) = 0.84$, $p = .40$] ethnicity [$t(198) = 0.73$, $p = .47$], race [$t(198) = 0.79$, $p = .43$], education level [$t(198) = 0.02$, $p = .99$], socio-economic status [$F(4, 195) = 0.83$, $p = .51$], or marital status [$t(198) = 1.10$, $p = .27$].

Marital Status as a Significant Covariate

Marital status was an additional demographic variable that was measured but not hypothesized as a predictor of infidelity status. I conducted a chi-square test of contingency analysis to explore whether marital status was associated with infidelity status, thereby making it a possible covariate. The results of the chi-square test of contingency showed a statistically significant relationship between marital status and infidelity experience, c^2 (1, $N = 200$) = 12.63, $p < .001$, $\varphi = 0.25$. As shown in Figure 1, there was about an equal number of married and nonmarried participants who reported committing infidelity; however, married participants made up the majority of individuals who did not commit infidelity. Given this statistically significant relationship, I added marital status as a covariate to the logistic regression model along with the other hypothesized predictor variables.

Figure 1

Association Between Infidelity and Marital Status
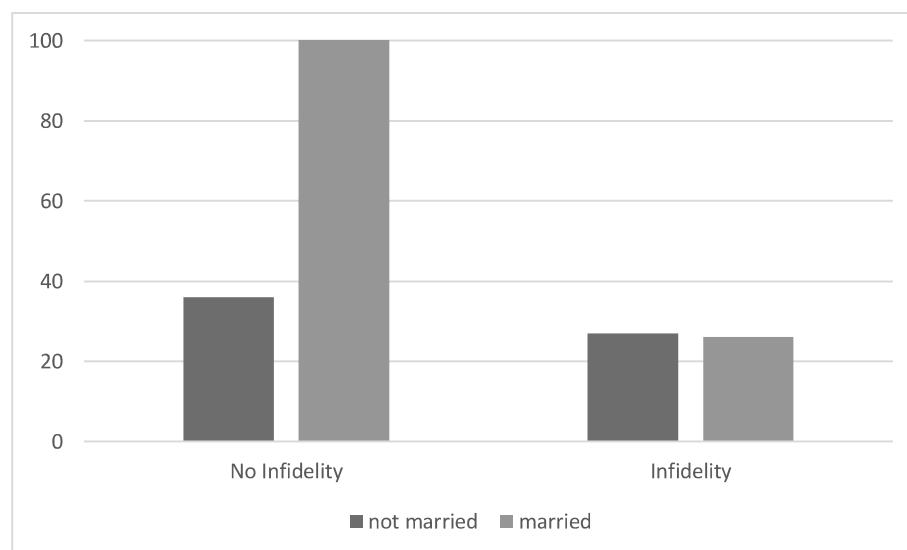
Tests of Hypotheses

Overview. I used multivariate binary logistic regression as the analytic approach to test all hypotheses. Specifically, gender, race, ethnicity, EI, age, and the covariate of marital status were entered into a logistic regression model as predictors of infidelity among monogamous, heterosexual couples using the all-in (i.e., enter) approach.

Test of Assumptions. One advantage of logistic regression is that it is able to assess a mix of different types of predictors (e.g., scaled and categorical) simultaneously, which was applicable to the current study that examined multiple predictors (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). While there are minimal assumptions of the logistic regression, I used correlations to assess whether there was a multicollinearity threat to logistic regression. Multicollinearity exists when the correlation among the predictors in the regression model are too high ($r = 0.80$) and can weaken the analysis by inflating the size of the error terms in the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). As shown in Table 2, there was no threat of multicollinearity because none of the correlations among the predictor variables exceeded 0.80. Outliers are identified as having residuals that are three standard deviations from the average residual (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). There were no outliers identified in this study.

Table 2

Intercorrelations Among Predictors

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Infidelity		0.112	0.102	0.083	0.071	.245[**]	.251[**]
2. Gender			0.007	0.120	0.026	0.090	0.012

3. Ethnicity	.176*	0.064	.221**	0.061
4. Race		0.025	.298**	.240**
5. EI			0.114	0.007
6. Age				.202**
7. Marital Status				

Note. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

Results

I entered data for the gender, ethnicity, race, EI, age, and marital status variable into the bivariate logistic regression model using the "enter" method in SPSS, Version 26 to assess whether they are significant predictors of whether someone in the target population committed infidelity in their monogamous relationship. The statistically significant result, c^2 (6) =23.25, p <.01, for the omnibus test of model fit shows that the combined effect of all six predictors significantly predicts whether a person committed infidelity. The model explained about 17% (Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.17) of the variance of whether an individual in a monogamous relationship committed infidelity, which was a statistically significant amount, p < .01. Thus, with Hypothesis 5 the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Furthermore, Table 3 shows the relative contribution of each of the independent variables in their ability to determine whether a person committed infidelity or not, which is a direct test of Hypotheses 1–4. The logistic coefficients are the natural logs of the odds ratio. SPSS provides the Exp(B) results for each predictor that indicates how a change in each predictor (e.g., age) by 1 unit multiplies the odds of an individual committing infidelity in their monogamous relationships (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The Wald test is the squared logistic coefficient divided by the squared standard errors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). I used this test to determine whether the individual contributions of each independent variable on the prediction of whether a person committed infidelity are statistically significant or not at the 0.05 significance level.

As shown in Table 3, gender is a marginally significant predictor of infidelity status such that women are less likely to report infidelity than men (B = -0.71, $Wald$ = 3.65, p = .06). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not statistically supported therefore we are retaining the null hypothesis and rejecting the alternative hypothesis. EI was not a statistically significant predictor of infidelity status; thus Hypothesis 2 is not supported so we are retaining the null hypothesis and rejecting the alternative hypothesis (B = -0.48, $Wald$ = 1.84, p = .18). Table 3 shows that age is a statistically significant predictor of infidelity status such that older participants were less likely to commit infidelity than their younger counterparts, (B = -0.03, $Wald$ = 7.39, p < .05). Specifically, individuals are 0.97 times less likely to commit infidelity for every 1 year they increase in age. Thus, Hypothesis 3 is statistically supported, therefore we are rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative. Neither race (B = 0.14, $Wald$ = 0.07, p = .80) nor ethnicity (B = 0.35, $Wald$ = 0.34, p = .56) were statistically significant predictors of infidelity status. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported, and the null hypothesis was accepted, and the alternative hypothesis was rejected. Finally, an unexpected significant result emerged, specifically, that marital status is a significant predictor of infidelity status such that married participants were less likely to report infidelity than their nonmarried counterparts (B = -0.97, $Wald$ = 6.94, p < .05). Married individuals are 0.38 times less likely to commit infidelity than their nonmarried counterparts.

Table 3

*Logistic Regression Results (*N *= 200)*

	B	SE	Wald	*df*	*p*	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Gender	-0.71	0.37	3.65	1.00	0.06	0.49	0.24	1.02
Ethnicity	0.35	0.60	0.34	1.00	0.56	1.42	0.44	4.58
Race	0.14	0.53	0.07	1.00	0.80	1.15	0.41	3.23
EI	-0.48	0.36	1.84	1.00	0.18	0.62	0.31	1.24
Age	-0.03	0.01	7.39	1.00	0.01	0.97	0.94	0.99
Marital status	-0.97	0.37	6.94	1.00	0.01	0.38	0.19	0.78
Constant	1.78	0.78	5.20	1.00	0.02	5.95		

I ran a classification plot which was run to determine the accuracy of the prediction model by comparing the percent of accurate classification of individuals who fall in each of the two infidelity categories based on model predictions. The higher the classification rate, the stronger the model (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The classification table results shown in Table 4 provided the percentage of cases that were accurately predicted to fall in the committed infidelity category (i.e., sensitivity) and those that were accurately predicted to fall in the did not commit infidelity category (i.e., specificity). The prediction model yielded a sensitivity rate of 23.5%, a specificity rate of 95.0%, and an overall prediction accuracy of 76.0%. This compares to a sensitivity rate of 0%, a specificity rate of 100%, and an overall prediction accuracy of 73.4% that was yielded by the constant (i.e., no predictors) model.

Table 4

Classification Table

		Infidelity Status Predicted		Percentage Correct
		No	Yes	
Infidelity status	No	134	7	95.0
Observed	Yes	39	12	23.5
Overall percentage				76.0

Summary

These findings suggest that a model that combines EI and demographics variables (i.e., age, marital status, race, ethnicity, and gender) is important to identify those at a higher risk. In determining the likelihood that heterosexuals in a monogamous relationship will commit infidelity, and to assist in working to prevent it. Chief among the variables are marital status and age, which emerged as the most significant predictors of infidelity status. In Chapter 5, I will discuss the implications of these results as it pertains to literature on EI.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

According to Zuckerman (2020), although divorce rates are lower than they have been in decades, primarily due to the fact that fewer people are choosing to get married instead of cohabitating (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019), they are still too high and continue to have a negative impact on all family members. The number one reason given for the dissolution of relationships continues to be infidelity (Zuckerman 2020). Even though more than 90% of people in the United States feel that infidelity is morally wrong, almost 40% of these same people cheat on their partners (Zuckerman, 2020). Additionally, according to Jackman (2015), 68% of women and 74% of men stated that they would be willing to commit infidelity if they were assured they would never get caught.

The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to investigate whether gender, EI, ethnicity, and age could adequately predict, individually or in combination, infidelity among men and women in committed, monogamous, heterosexual couples who self-report infidelity. The results of this study did not support the overall anticipated results of the hypothesis. The findings did indicate that although a person's EI or ethnicity were not significant factors, age and gender are and even more so, the perceived level of commitment such that married people were less likely to commit infidelity than those who were cohabitating.

The hope was to potentially have a greater understanding of what factors affect these high numbers to be best able to reduce such occurrences. Therapists continue to state that infidelity is amongst the most challenging issues to help a couple heal from,

with a very low success rate (Hall & Fincham, 2006). The long-term adverse effects of infidelity impact individuals' self-esteem, financial stability, health, and well-being (Schmidt et al., 2016). These long-term consequences affect the children as well, resulting in fewer successful personal relationships, increased stress and anxiety, a higher rate of addiction, and an increased rate of infidelity (Schmidt et al., 2016).

Interpretation of the Findings

A person's EI level not being a significant predictor whether they would commit infidelity was surprising because Killian (2012) discussed that fundamental elements of a healthy interpersonal relationship, such as a monogamous relationship, to be a person's level of EI, their level of empathy, and their ability to offer forgiveness. More so, higher rates of EI ensure a stronger positive bond between couples because it creates increased feelings of love and respect, leading to more vital communication and heightened connection, which eliminates infidelity (Cikes et al., 2018). In addition, an individual with a higher rate of EI has a higher rate of empathy that increases positive communication, which is a necessary requirement for successful couples (Gutierrez & Mullen, 2016). Lastly, a higher rate of EI also ensures the ability to resolve the effects of conflict in a positive manner (Gutierrez & Mullen, 2016).

This study supported the third hypothesis, whether age would be a predictor. Therefore, rejecting the null and accepting the alternative hypothesis. Wang (2018) demonstrated that the disparity in gender and infidelity increased with age. Women between the ages of 18 to 29 were found to commit infidelity at a slightly higher rate than women above 60. This age bracket continued at an increasing gap between men and

women. Men commit infidelity at a rate of up to 4 times that of women above 80 (Wang, 2018). Cabello et al. (2007) found that the EI theory demonstrates that as people age and experience more of life, their EI ability increases.

Nevertheless, their study of 12,198 adults showed that age and EI formed an inverted U shape result. Both younger and older adults have a lower EI and middle-aged adults' EI scores increase (Cabello et al., 2007). Additionally, their results supported the theory that women score higher on ability EI skills than men, regardless of age.

In contrast to Cabello et al.'s (2007) findings, the results of this study indicated that the older the person, the less likely they were to have committed infidelity, which is, potentially, a cohort effect of other life's circumstances. Explicitly, the results showed that there were 0.97 times reduced probability of a participant committing infidelity for each year of increased age. In contrast, the fourth hypothesis was not supported. It demonstrated that neither race nor ethnicity was a significant predictor of infidelity, and therefore we accepted the null hypothesis and rejected the alternative.

Despite previous research that showed a correlation between rates of marriage amongst White couples in contrast to an increased rate of cohabitation amongst non-White couples (Ellison et al., 2010) and the potentially higher rate of infidelity amongst non-Whites due to cultural perceptions of Latinx and societal discrimination of Blacks, the results of this study demonstrated no significant predictors of infidelity due to race or ethnicity (see Parker & Campbell, 2017).

What emerged unexpectedly from the findings of the survey was that marriage versus cohabitation became a predictor of its own. The results indicated that there was a

higher rate of infidelity amongst couples that were cohabitating in an agreed-upon, monogamous, relationship over married couples in the same type of relationship. Wilcox et al. (2019) reported a 12 and 26 point difference between the level of relationship satisfaction of married people and cohabitating couples predominantly due to the level of commitment. According to a survey conducted by the Wheatley Institution, 54% of married women and 49% of married men reported being very happy in comparison to 40% of women and 35% of cohabitating men (Wilcox et al., 2019). Additionally, 54% of married individuals versus 28% of cohabitating individuals reported higher levels of relationship stability. However, it still accounted for satisfaction in relationship status as a potential predictor for infidelity (Wilcox et al., 2019). Unfortunately, further information in connection with this point was not supplied or evaluated.

Limitations of the Study

As previously mentioned, there were a few different limitations of the study. The first was in the validity of the self-reporting survey responses of those who had committed infidelity. Fear of someone finding out what they had done, along with people not wanting to define themselves as an adulterer, decreased the potential of the subjects' answering honestly. A second limitation of the study was the method of data collecting. I used a nonrandom sampling method for this study, a voluntary sampling method through Qualtrics, where collecting the necessary number of subjects was completed in a relatively expedited manner, yet there is not much prevention of sample composition, increasing subject bias (see Moss et al., n.d.). In contrast, use of quota sampling may

have ensured an equal number of men and women from all races, ethnicities, educational levels, and socioeconomic levels (Moss et al., n.d.).

Lastly, there was also a limitation with the instrument being a self-report EI test. People often view themselves or report themselves as more understanding and compassionate than their true selves (Gong & Paulson, 2018). This was demonstrated when Hypothesis 2 was found not to be supported, thus accepting the null and rejecting the alternative hypothesis. In addition, there was a higher-than-expected rate of people with higher levels of EI. Therefore, I recommend future researchers use different test, such as the MSCEIT. The test is more in-depth with its 141questions that combine a variety of types of questions and responses for a potentially more accurate assessment of a person's EI; however, each test is individually more costly. It requires between a half-hour to an hour of the subject's time, which makes it harder to get individuals to participate.

Recommendations

After reviewing the results of this study and seeing the high results of people's EI scores, I recommend that this study be conducted again using a different measure of EI, specifically a non-self-reported test, such as the MSCEIT. Mayer et al. (2004) created a test covering all four branches that allow for an accurate EI score. Nonetheless, I would still allow individuals to answer the question of infidelity online with added anonymity and suggest not having an individual complete a survey in person to allow for increased honesty because it reduced any assumption of judgment or bias. The last recommendation

would be to include a variance of a quota sample to have a more balanced sample of men and women.

While this study was conducted only including heterosexual couples, the study could be conducted again including homosexual couples as well. Research has demonstrated that there is a difference in bias about infidelity amongst homosexuals and heterosexuals. Frederick and Fales (2016) confirmed the findings of previous research studies that demonstrated that men have a more difficult time with physical infidelities and women with emotional infidelity. In contrast, amongst homosexual couples, regardless of gender, there was no significant difference in the type of infidelity. Running this same study would add more data and understanding to the perception of the type of infidelity. The negative results of infidelity on individuals, families, children, and society are the same regardless of sexual orientation.

Implications

In a time in society where infidelity is on the rise and the long-term negative results affect the entire family socially, economically, physically, and emotionally, helping to reduce potential incidents will positively impact social change and increase the longevity of committed relationships and the family unit. Previous research has already demonstrated that infidelity is the number one reason for the dissolution of relationships (McNulty & Widman, 2013). While divorce is less prevalent due to fewer couples choosing to marry versus cohabitating, the negative impact on the family unit continues to be present.

With this study, I aimed to understand the motivation or cognitive dissonance better to explain, rationalize, and justify the choice one makes to commit infidelity. My goal is to attempt to prevent infidelity amongst adults in committed relationships. In 2009, only 60% of children lived in a two-parent home, and that number dropped to 29% among Black families and 58% of Latinx families (Anderson, 2014). These same studies showed that 50% of Black children live in a single-parent home and 25% of Latinx children live in a single-parent home (Anderson, 2014). Additionally, divorce rates are lower since more couples choose to cohabitate, with 4 times as many couples dissolving their cohabitation relationship compared to couples who marry (Anderson, 2014). Despite the discrepancy in the extent of harm divorce causes on children, specific facts remain evident. According to the 2011 Census, divorced women are more likely to need government assistance and, even after 5 years, still do not reach the same level of income as they do prior to their divorce (Anderson, 2014). In addition, children of divorced parents have poorer social relations, higher levels of anxiety, lower grade point averages, higher rates of stress, increased rates of suicide, and an increased rate of abuse and neglect (Anderson, 2014).

Conclusion

The negative impacts of infidelity affect the families involved and society as a whole. In the United States, divorce and its financial consequences cost approximately $33.3 billion a year (Anderson, 2014). Divorce impacts each member of the family. While 34% of men and 24% of women have admitted to infidelity, those numbers go up to 74% and 68%, respectively, of people who would commit infidelity if they were

ensured they would not get caught (Jackman, 2015). Those figures translate to about one in every three committed relationships being impacted by infidelity, and the problem is perpetuating with each generation.

The goal of this quantitative, nonexperimental study was to examine whether gender, EI, ethnicity, or age could accurately predict infidelity in a monogamous, heterosexual, committed relationship. Despite the results of the current study being partially different than anticipated, previous studies still demonstrated that effective communication, including understanding and meeting the needs of one's partner, increases the likelihood of a happy and successful relationship (see Zeidner et al., 2013). Despite the results of this study potentially indicating that a person's EI does not predict their rate of infidelity, infidelity still has an adverse effect, and it is necessary to continue determining how best to prevent such occurrences. Part of the results demonstrated that a person's perception and level of commitment impact their decisions because married couples were less likely to commit infidelity than couples cohabitating without marriage.

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Appendix A: Letter of Consent for Approval of SSEIT

Nicola Schutte <XXXXXXXX>

Wed 4/28/2021 9:56 PM

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To:

- Dina Schulsinger

Thank you for your message regarding the Emotional Intelligence scale.

You are welcome to use the scale. Please use this response as the formal approval letter.

Please see below a link to the manuscript copy of a published chapter that provides more

information, including the scale and scoring instructions.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/216626162_The_Assessing_Emotions_Scale

 Kind regards,

Nicola Schutte

Appendix B: Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?

- Man

- Woman

- Prefer Not to State

2. Do you identify as Hispanic or Latinx?

- Yes

- No

3. Which racial group describes you the best?

- American Indian or Alaska Native

- Asian or Asian American

- Black or African American

- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

- Two or more races

- White

- I prefer to self-describe as _____

- I prefer not to say

4. What is the highest level of education you attained?

- Less than high school

- High School Diploma/ GED

- Professional Certification

- Associates Degree

- Bachelor's Degree

- Master's Degree

- Doctorate (PhD, EdD) or Professional Degree (e.g., JD, MD)

5. Please indicate your annual income.

- Less than 25k

- 25, 000- 50,000

- 51,000 -75,000

- 76,000 -100,000

- More than 100k

6. What is your occupation?

- Construction and Extraction Occupations.

- Protective Service Occupations.

- Healthcare Support Occupations.

- Business and Financial Operations Occupations.

- Personal Care and Service Occupations.

- Computer and Mathematical Occupations.

- Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations.

7. How old are you? _____

8. What is your current relationship status?

- Not married, but living together (cohabitating)

- Not married, in a relationship, living separately

- Married and living together

- Married and living separately

- Other