Factors Affecting Online Infidelity: A Review

Çevrimiçi Aldatmayı Etkileyen Faktörler: Bir Gözden Geçirme

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ABSTRACT

Online infidelity has been a topic of discussion for the past two decades. Hence, while it is on the agenda of current researches, the associated factors of online infidelity have not yet been sufficiently clarified. The current review examines factors affecting online infidelity in line with Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis guidelines. In the review the studies were included considering the criteria of (i) being an empirical study, (ii) being written in Turkish or English, (iii) being published in peer-reviewed journals (iv), evaluating at least one factor that may affect online infidelity. Eight studies which include factors affecting online infidelity were examined and the findings of these studies were evaluated. More positive attitudes towards infidelity, lower relationship commitment, higher quality of alternative partners, lower marital quality, higher loneliness, lower relationship satisfaction, higher relationship uncertainty, anxious and avoidant attachment, and being in a strong position were found significantly associated with online infidelity.
Keywords: Online infidelity, online infidelity factors, online betrayal

ÖZ

Çevrimiçi aldatma son yirmi yılda insanların gündemine girmiş bir problemdir. Bu sebeple güncel çalışmaların da gündemine dahil olmakla beraber faktörleri henüz yeteri düzeyde netleştirilememiştir. Mevcut tarama çalışması çevrimiçi aldatmayı etkileyen faktörleri Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis yönergeleri doğrultusunda incelemektedir. İncelen araştırmalar (i) ampirik bir çalışma olması, (ii) Türkçe ve İngilizce dillerinde yazılmış olması, (iii) akran denetimine tabi dergilerde yayınlanmış olması (iv), çevrimiçi aldatmaya etki edebilecek en az bir faktörü değerlendirmiş olması kriterleri gözetilerek tarama çalışmasına dahil edilmiştir. Çevrimiçi aldatmaya etki eden faktörleri inceleyen sekiz çalışma incelenmiş ve bu araştırmaların bulguları değerlendirilmiştir. Aldatmaya dair daha olumlu tutum, daha düşük ilişki bağlılığı, daha yüksek kalitede alternatif partnerler, düşük evlilik kalitesi, yüksek yalnızlık, daha düşük ilişki tatmini, daha yüksek ilişki belirsizliği, kaygılı ve kaçıngan bağlanma ve güçlü konumda olma çevrimiçi aldatmayla anlamlı düzeyde ilişkili bulunmuştur.
Anahtar sözcükler: Çevrimiçi aldatma, çevrimiçi aldatma faktörleri, çevrimiçi sadakatsizlik

Introduction

Online infidelity is a problem that has become a current issue in the last twenty years and researchers could not come to an agreement about its dimensions yet. Considering the prevalence, the rate of people who have a romantic relationship and use online dating applications at the same time has been found between 15-40% in various studies (Orosz et al. 2016, Shapiro et al. 2017, Botnen et al. 2018, Alexopoulos et al. 2020). Although, the assumptions about online infidelity may vary depending on the evaluations of the people, from nothing that happens online is considered infidelity to following a celebrity on social media considered online infidelity (Cravens and Whiting 2015, Thompson and O'Sullivan 2015, Negy et al. 2018) it is possible to draw a general framework about what is online infidelity in the literature. In Whitty's 2003 study, one of the pioneering studies on online infidelity, participants evaluated online infidelity in three basic categories. These were online sexual infidelity, online emotional infidelity and consumption of pornography. In this study, participants described online sexual infidelity as having sexual activities on the internet, sharing private and intimate information with third parties as online emotional infidelity and reaching and watching pornographic materials as pornography consumption. In later studies, online infidelity was described similarly to Whitty's description. In one study, participants described online infidelity as having online sex, having an emotional closeness with an online connection, having an online date and having other sexual activities (Henline et al. 2007). In another study, romantic or sexual interaction on the internet, which at least one of the couples does not accept or considers against the rules of the committed relationship, is defined as online infidelity (Hertlein and Piercy 2008). In summary, online infidelity has been defined in the literature under the subheadings of online sex, exchanging sexual photos, online dating, and the consumption of pornography (Whitty 2003, Henline et al. 2007, Hertlein

and Piercy 2008, Hertlein and Webster 2008). Online infidelity is a common occurrence today, with its broad outlines but no consensus on its exact definitions. It is considered a relationship problem that is expected to be discussed in the future.

Even if infidelity occurs online, it causes various problems in couples' relationships. Since individuals engaging in online infidelity spend time with their online partners, they may spend less time with their primary partners and they can spend less time on daily household chores, and accordingly, the sexuality with the primary partner may be negatively affected. In addition, they may show less intimacy with their primary partners because they seek intimacy with someone else online, apart from their current relationship. They can conceal their online activities from their partners, which can cause problems in their relationships (Underwood and Findlay 2004). There are other problems that arise with online infidelity. Jealousy in online infidelity may occur in the relationship (Groothof et al. 2009). Moreover, when people's partners commit online infidelity, it is more difficult to determine whether the betrayer ends the betrayal or not, so those who have been betrayed may be more inclined to end the relationship than those who have been betrayed face-to-face (Beltrán-Morillas et al. 2019). Furthermore, as with face-to-face infidelity, the victim of online sexual infidelity may feel betrayed and angry. More specifically, in online emotional infidelity, the deceived partner may feel him/herself and also his/her relationship under threat due to the fact that the partner has established an emotional bond with another person, even if not sexually (Dijkstra et al. 2013). In one research, betrayed partners experienced high emotional stress after the discovery of infidelity. 55.9% of the betrayed ones stated that they were traumatized after the infidelity. In addition to these negative impacts, individuals whose partners engaged in online sexual infidelity may feel insecure and fearful about reattachment because of the infidelity-related lies and ambiguity (Schneider et al. 2012). In another qualitative study conducted with people who experienced online infidelity and then ended their relationship, a common eight-step process was identified. The process starts with intuition, individuals can feel some changes in their partners' behaviors and may become more curious and suspicious about what their partners do online. In the second stage, betrayed ones begin to check and investigate their partners' phones to make sense of the changes in their partners. After the investigation, betrayed partners discover online infidelity mostly via social media apps and smartphones and texting and sent or received pictures. Following the discovery, the confrontation stage takes place where individuals often present electronic evidence of online infidelity to their partners. Then, in the response stage, the betrayer usually reacts to the situation by denying or accepting it. While deniers often react to the non-consensual use of their phone in ways such as anger, those who accept either blame their partners or show remorse. Forgiveness or indecisiveness follows the response stage. Betrayed ones decide to forgive their partner or end the relationship at this stage. If the betrayers could not assure that they ended the online infidelity behaviors, it may cause the termination of the relationship. Lastly, it was found that betrayed ones set new rules about online behaviors for their future relations (Hertlein et al. 2022). As mentioned, online infidelity has a wide range of consequences for couples. In response to online infidelity, people go through a variety of problematic processes. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors affecting online infidelity.

When the factors that influence online infidelity are examined, the internet is clearly a factor in and of itself, and its effect on online infidelity is explained by seven different aspects in general. Firstly, the difficulty of revealing people's true identities, as well as anonymity on the internet, can be a facilitating factor for online infidelity. The accessibility of the Internet is also a factor, as it allows people to engage in online infidelity without making their partners, friends, or colleagues aware of their online activities, almost everywhere and in all areas of life. Another factor is the low cost of committing infidelity via the internet. Attitudes toward online infidelity also play a role. Individuals may view online infidelity as a fantasy with no real-world consequences. Another factor is that online access to sexual matters, which are frowned upon by society in real life, is deemed more acceptable. Couples' uncertainty and differing perspectives on online infidelity are also factors. Finally, due to the obligations of real life and social roles, people behave appropriately but do not feel genuine, so the online world may offer people a place for self-actualization, and people see the Internet as a location to experience their secret identities (Young et al. 2000, Hertlein and Stevenson 2010, Mileham 2007). While the factors affecting the internet's effect on infidelity have been theorized as mentioned above, a review study investigating the factors affecting online infidelity is not readily available to the researcher's knowledge. Previous review studies on online infidelity state that the factors influencing online infidelity had not yet been empirically detected (Hertlein and Piercy 2006, Vossler 2016). Based on this information, in this review, it is considered that a review study that will address new empirical findings on the factors affecting online infidelity in recent years may contribute to the literature. Thus, this review was carried out in accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis) guidelines (Page et al. 2021).

Method

In this review, the factors affecting online infidelity are discussed. Inclusion criteria to the study are; (i) being an empirical study, (ii) being written in Turkish and English, (iii) being published in peer-reviewed journals (iv), evaluating at least one factor that may affect online infidelity. This review excludes studies that are (I) case studies, (ii) unpublished dissertations or studies, (iii) not published in a peer-reviewed journal. In the current review, the search was conducted using the EBSCO (including Academic ASearch Complete, PsycARTICLES, and PsycINFO), PubMed, and ScienceDirect databases, and was conducted in December 2021. The "online infidelity" search term was used in the study. A total of 953 studies (EBSCO = 168; PubMed = 39; ScienceDirect =593) were retrieved during the initial search process. Based on the titles and abstracts, 922 of the studies were not included in the survey because they did not meet the target of the survey to include the factors affecting online infidelity. Out of the remaining 31 studies, one was excluded from the review because it was an unpublished thesis, 9 were the same studies, and 13 did not cover online infidelity and face-to-face infidelity separately. Studies investigating only face-to-face infidelity were not included, however, studies that addressed online infidelity and face-to-face infidelity together were included in this review. At the end of these processes, 8 studies were included in the current review. The general characteristics of the studies discussed in Table 1 are available.

Results

The first study examines the relationship between power and online sexual infidelity in people who are currently in a committed relationship. In the study, power was defined as a person's job position, perceived power and feeling of power. Online infidelity, on the other hand, was examined through the online sexual behaviors of individuals outside of their primary relationships. According to the study's findings, people in higher positions of power commit online sexual infidelity more frequently than those in lower positions of power. Power also predicted online sexual infidelity significantly. In this relationship, attitudes toward online ifidelity were also found to act as a mediator (Wen and Zheng 2019).

The second study investigates the relationship between social media addiction and online infidelity, as well as the impact of age on this relationship. According to the study's findings, social media addiction predicts infidelity-related behaviors on social media. Age was also found to play a moderating role in this prediction. Social media addiction and infidelity-related behaviors on social media decrease with age (Abbasi 2019). In that study, infidelity-related behaviors on social media were classified as online infidelity. Infidelity-related social media behaviors include hiding messages from partners, forming emotional bonds with others online, and sending messages to significant figures in the person's past.

The third study explores the mediating role of pornography use and online infidelity on personality, attachment, couple satisfaction, and sexual satisfaction. According to the findings of the study, pornography consumption and online infidelity were found to be sequential mediators between personality and attachment on the one hand, and couple and sexual satisfaction on the other. It has also been discovered that the consumption of pornography indirectly affects couple satisfaction through online infidelity. Moreover, pornography consumption was found positively related to online infidelity, while online infidelity was found negatively related to couple satisfaction. A second mediator relationship between anxious attachment, avoidant attachment, and online infidelity was found. Furthermore, anxious and avoidant attachment styles were found to be positively related to online infidelity. Moreover, it was discovered that online infidelity predicts both couple satisfaction and sexual satisfaction. In terms of personality traits, neuroticism was associated with online infidelity indirectly through its negative relationship with pornography use in the Five Factor Personality Model (Ferron et al. 2017). In the research, online infidelity was defined as visiting pornographic websites and engaging in online emotional and sexual behaviors with someone other than one's primary partner.

The fourth study looked into the reasons why women engage in online infidelity on social media. According to the findings, satisfaction and uncertainty in the couple's relationship influence online infidelity and sexual satisfaction via social media as a mediator. Again, as a mediator, satisfaction and uncertainty regulate online infidelity behaviors and emotional intimacy. Women who are involved in more online infidelity-related behaviors on social media have lower relationship satisfaction, lower emotional intimacy, lower sexual satisfaction, and higher relationship uncertainty. (González-Rivera et al. 2019). Hiding information or keeping secrets from their primary partner, and developing online emotional bonds with others were all identified as behaviors associated with online infidelity in the study.

The fifth study investigates the relationship between marital satisfaction and online infidelity through loneliness. According to the findings, there was a negative relationship between loneliness and online infidelity

and marital quality, while loneliness was positively associated with online infidelity. Furthermore, a significant negative relationship was found between the quality of marriage and the online infidelity tendencies of couples. Additionally, a significant positive relationship between loneliness and the tendency for online infidelity was discovered (Isanejad and Bagheri 2018). In the study, online infidelity comprises online emotional infidelity, online sexual infidelity and pornography consumption.

Table 1: General features of studies

Study	Sample size and gender distribution	Mean age and age range	Sample characteristics	Assessment tools for online infidelity	Other assessment tools used in the studies
Abbasi (2019)	In total:365 242 women (66%) 123 men (%34)	Mean 27.94 Age range 18–73	People who married or in a committed relationship	Social Media Infidelity-Related Behaviors (SMIRB)	Modified Facebook Intrusion Questionnaire (FIQ)
Ferron et al. (2017)	In total:779 524 women (67%) 255 men (33%)	Mean 29.9 Age range 18-65	People who currently in a relationship	Cyber Infidelity Scale	Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)
González-Rivera et al. (2019)	In total:341 341 women (100%)	Mean 33.95 -	Above 21, heterosexual Cohabited or married women	Infidelity-Related Behaviors on Social Networks Inventory	Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) Subjective Sexual Satisfaction Scale Emotional Intimacy in Couple Relationships Scale Relationship Ambivalence Scale
Isanejad and Bagheri (2018)	In total:406 190 women (46%) 216 men (54%)	Mean 34.6 -	At least married for 2 years, active in social media	Internet Infidelity Questionnaire (IIQ)	Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA-S)
Li and Zheng (2017)	In total:344 166 women (48%) 178 men (52%)	Mean 26.51 Age range 18-48	People who married or in a committed relationship	Online Sexual Activities Scale	Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) Communication Patterns Questionnaire Experiences in Close Relationship Questionnaire-Revised (ECR-R)
Martins et al. (2015)	In total:783 561 women (71%) 222 men (29%)	Mean 23.41 Age range 18-51	People who currently in a relationship	Extradyadic Behaviors Inventory	Attitudes toward Infidelity Scale (ATIS) Investment Model Scale (IMS)
McDaniel et al. (2017)	338 173 women (51%) 165 Men (49%)	Mean (women) 31.59 Age range 20-42 Mean (men) 33.26 Age range 22-52	Married and with children under 6 years old individuals	Social Media Infidelity-Related Behaviors (SMIRB)	Quality of Marriage Index (QMI) Relationship Ambivalence Experiences in Close Relationship Scale-Short Form (ECR-S)
Wen and Zheng (2019)	425 216 women (50,8%) 209 men (49.2%)	Mean 28.66 Age range 18-53	People who currently in a relationship	Online Sexual Behavior Scale	Power Scale The Attitudes Toward Infidelity Scale

Table 2 Study findings			
Study	**Form of Online Infidelity**	**Key Findings**	**Limitations**
Abbasi (2019)	Infidelity-related social media behaviors	It was found that social media addiction predicts online infidelity through social media and age moderates it, age is negatively related to social media addiction and online infidelity via social media, and males perform significantly more online infidelity via social media.	Because this is a cross-sectional study, it is unclear the direction of the relationship between social media addiction and online infidelity via social media. It is also based on self-report scales.
Ferron et al. (2017)	Visiting pornographic materials online, online emotional and online sexual infidelity	Consumption of pornography and online infidelity were identified to be sequential mediators between personality and attachment on the one hand and couple and sexual satisfaction on the other.	Because this is a cross-sectional study, it is unclear the direction of the relationship between variables, it is also based on self-report scales.
González-Rivera et al. (2019)	Infidelity-related social media behaviors	As a mediator, satisfaction and uncertainty in the couple relationship influence online infidelity and sexual satisfaction. Women who engage in more infidelity-related social media behaviors have lower relationship satisfaction, lower emotional intimacy, lower sexual satisfaction, and higher relationship uncertainty.	Because this is a cross-sectional study, the direction of the relationship between variables is unknown. Because only women participated, generalizability was limited.
Isanejad and Bagheri (2018)	Online emotional and sexual infidelity pornography consumption	Loneliness was negatively associated with online infidelity and marital quality, whereas loneliness was positively associated with online infidelity. It was found that there is a significant positive relationship between loneliness and the tendency for online infidelity.	It is based on self-report scales. the direction of the relationship between variables is unknown because this is a cross-sectional study.
Li and Zheng (2017)	Accessing online sexual material, seeking sexual partners online, online sex and online emotional infidelity	People with poor relationship quality were found to engage in more online sexual activity.	It is based on self-report scales.
Martins et al. (2015)	Online sexual infidelity and online emotional infidelity via the Internet and telephone	Men were found to be more engaged in online infidelity and online sexual infidelity. Women with higher education were 2.77 percent more likely to engage in online sexual infidelity. Women with a history of infidelity, a more favorable attitude toward infidelity, lower satisfaction in their current relationship, and higher quality alternative partners were found to be more likely to engage in online emotional infidelity.	Because this is a cross-sectional study, it is unclear the direction of the relationship between variables, it is also based on self-report scales. Another limitation is that the majority of the sample consists of university students.
McDaniel et al. (2017)	Infidelity-related social media behaviors	Engaging in online infidelity behaviors on social media was significantly associated with low relationship satisfaction, high relationship uncertainty, and high avoidant attachment. Attachment anxiety and gender were discovered to have a moderator effect on online infidelity behaviors on social media and relationship satisfaction. Low attachment anxiety and high relationship satisfaction predict lower online infidelity behaviors on social media for men, while women with high relationship anxiety show the same pattern.	It is based on self-report scales. The sample only includes married or cohabiting couples.
Wen and Zheng (2019)	Online sexual infidelity	It was discovered that as people's positions of power grow, they engage in more online infidelity.	It is based on self-report scales.

In the sixth study, the effects of relationship satisfaction on online sexual activity behaviors and factors that increase online sexual activity were investigated in couples. It was found that approximately 89% of the participants engaged in online sexual activity in the previous year. Men were also found to engage in more online sexual activity. People with poor relationship quality were also found to engage in more online sexual activity.

Furthermore, the frequency of online sexual activity was positively and significantly associated with low relationship satisfaction, insecure adult attachment, and negative communication patterns. Finally, among women, anxious attachment style was found to be significantly associated with online sexual activity (Li and Zheng 2017). Seeking online sexual partners, cybersex, online dating, and maintaining online sexual relationships were all defined as online infidelity in the study.

The seventh study investigates the relationship between face-to-face or online infidelity and gender in committed couples. More positive attitudes toward infidelity, lower relationship commitment, higher quality alternative partners, and lower relationship satisfaction were found to be significantly associated with infidelity behavior regardless of gender. According to the findings, both women and men are more likely to engage in infidelity if they have a history of engaging in infidelity. Women who have been betrayed by former partners are more likely to engage in emotional infidelity, both in person and online. Higher-educated women were nearly three times more likely to engage in online sexual infidelity. Men are more likely to be involved in emotional and sexual infidelity than women. Furthermore, while men engage in more face-to-face and online infidelity, there is no gender difference was found in overall infidelity. In terms of alternative partner quality, it was found that only for women, face-to-face and online emotional infidelity increased as alternative partner quality increased. Furthermore, low relationship satisfaction among men was found to be significantly associated with online emotional infidelity. (Martins et al. 2015). Online infidelity was defined in this study as online sexual behaviors, online emotional behaviors, and holding an online partner in reserve.

In the last study, it is examined whether married or cohabiting couples use social media sites for online infidelity-related behaviors in relation to relationship satisfaction, relationship uncertainty, and relational attachment styles. The study's findings revealed that lower relationship satisfaction, higher relationship uncertainty, and anxious and avoidant attachment were associated with significantly more online infidelity-related behaviors in both men and women. Attachment anxiety and gender were discovered to have a moderator effect on online infidelity behaviors on social media and relationship satisfaction. Low attachment anxiety and high relationship satisfaction predict lower online infidelity behaviors on social media for men, while women with high relationship anxiety show the same pattern (McDaniel et al. 2017). Feeling uncomfortable around the primary partner, hiding information from the primary partner, suspicious behaviors, establishing emotional bonds with others, sending messages to past relationships, and acting defensively to the primary partner were all described as online infidelity in this study. Table 2 summarizes the findings of the studies.

Discussion

According to the findings obtained from this study, when the factors affecting online infidelity are evaluated, it is seen that there are common findings in the studies. The first of these is relationship satisfaction. In one study, low relationship satisfaction was found to be significantly and positively related to the frequency of online sexual activity with someone other than the primary partner (Li and Zheng 2017). In parallel with this study, lower relationship satisfaction was found to be associated with significantly more online infidelity-related behaviors (McDaniel et al. 2017). In another study, relationship satisfaction, along with relationship uncertainty, plays a mediator role between online infidelity-related behaviors and sexual satisfaction on social media. In addition, it has been found that women who engage more online infidelity-related behaviors on social media have less relationship satisfaction (González-Rivera et al. 2019). In another study examining the sub-dimensions of online infidelity, low relationship satisfaction in men was found to be significantly associated with online emotional infidelity (Martins et al. 2015).

In this review, sexual satisfaction with the current partner was found as another factor affecting online infidelity. In one study, online infidelity predicted sexual satisfaction (Ferron et al. 2017), while in another study, it was found that women who experienced less sexual satisfaction engaged behaviors related to online infidelity more on social media (González-Rivera et al. 2019).

Relationship uncertainty has been found in studies as another common factor affecting online infidelity. In one study, regardless of gender, higher relationship uncertainty is associated with engaging significantly more online infidelity-related behaviors (McDaniel et al. 2017). In another study, although no difference was found for men, it was found that women with higher relationship uncertainty engaged more online infidelity-related behaviors on social media (González-Rivera et al. 2019).

Another common factor affecting online infidelity in the studies is the attachment styles of individuals. In one study examining online infidelity and attachment styles, attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were found to be positively related to online infidelity (Ferron et al. 2017). Similar to these findings, in another study,

the frequency of engaging in online sexual activity with other than the primary partner was found to be positively and significantly related to anxious and avoidant attachment styles, the anxious attachment style was found to be associated with significantly more engagement in online sexual activity in women (Li and Zheng 2017). In addition to these two studies, it was found that anxious and avoidant attachment styles were significantly more associated with engaging behaviors related to online infidelity, regardless of gender (McDaniel et al. 2017).

Apart from these common findings, there are studies that examine other factors affecting online infidelity. Considering the factors positively related to online infidelity; more positive attitudes towards infidelity, lower relationship commitment and higher quality of potential alternatives in women and higher education (Martins et al. 2015), loneliness (Isanejad and Bagheri 2018), social media addiction (Abbasi 2019), pornography use, emotional stability, lower couple satisfaction (Ferron et al. 2017), previous online sex experience (Wysocki and Childers 2011), lower relationship quality (Li and Zheng 2017), lower marriage quality (Isanejad and Bagheri 2018), less emotional partner proximity (González-Rivera et al. 2019) and power (Wen and Zheng 2019) are found.

Given the limitations of the studies reviewed, it is seen that all of the studies were based on self-report scales (Wysocki and Childers 2011, Martins et al. 2015, Ferron et al. 2017, Li and Zheng 2017, McDaniel et al. 2017, Isanejad and Bagheri 2018, Abbasi, 2019, González-Rivera et al. 2019, Wen and Zheng 2019). (Martins et al. 2015, Ferron et al. 2017, Li and Zheng 2017, Isanejad and Bagheri 2018, Abbasi 2019, González-Rivera et al. 2019). Also, being a cross-sectional study, the inability to determine the direction of the relationships between the variables is another limitation seen in the studies (Martins et al. 2015, Ferron et al. 2017, Li and Zheng 2017, Isanejad and Bagheri 2018, Abbasi 2019, González-Rivera et al. 2019). When the studies with sample limitations are examined, one study has limitations because the majority of the participants were university students (Martins et al. 2015), another study because only cohabiting couples participated (McDaniel et al. 2017), and another study because all participants were female (González- Rivera et al. 2019).

Although there is no previous review that just covers factors affecting only online infidelity within the knowledge of the researcher, there are two reviews that cover online infidelity (Hertlein and Piercy 2006, Vossler 2016). In 2006, a review by Hertlein and Piercy, suggested factors that may affect online infidelity as self-differentiation, lack of intimacy with the partner, inability to discuss problems with the partner, midlife crisis, internet addiction, fear of loneliness, and preparation for next emotional relationship. However, it was stated that these suggestions were not based on empirical findings. According to Vossler's 2016 review, emotional and sexual disconnection from the partner, low relationship satisfaction, disconnection from a committed partner by relating to an online partner, and high social media usage could all be factors influencing online infidelity. However, the factors in this review also lack empirical findings. Furthermore, online infidelity and face-to-face infidelity were not distinguished precisely in both reviews. In this more recent review compared to two others, the factors affecting only online infidelity were also found. Lack of intimacy with the partner (González-Rivera et al. 2019) and internet addiction (Abbasi, 2019) suggested by Hertlein and Piercy in 2006 were found to be associated with online infidelity. Low relationship satisfaction (Martins et al. 2015, Li and Zheng 2017, McDaniel et al. 2017, González-Rivera et al. 2019) suggested by Vossler's 2016 review was also found as a factor for online infidelity.

In summary, more positive attitude toward infidelity, lower relationship commitment, higher quality alternative partners, lower marital quality, higher loneliness, lower relationship satisfaction, higher relationship uncertainty, anxious and avoidant attachment, and being in a strong position were found significantly associated with online infidelity.

Conclusion

When the entire study is taken into account, it is clear that the factors affecting online infidelity are multifaceted. The internet, which has become an indispensable part of modern life, is becoming more prevalent by the day. As a result, online infidelity, which cannot be considered apart from the internet, is not expected to be off the agenda of people. Online infidelity, which has been on our agenda for the last 20 years with the internet, is expected to remain one of the current issues faced in human life and committed relationships in parallel with current developments such as virtual reality on the internet. Since online infidelity, like face-to-face infidelity, brings many challenges in committed relationships, it is predicted that understanding the factors that contribute to it will also be useful for researchers and clinicians.

To conclude, while more studies on the factors influencing online infidelity have been conducted in recent years, particularly in the last five years, it is clear that these studies are not yet at a sufficient level. For instance, Except

for one study, the effect of personality on online infidelity has not been studied comprehensively (Ferron et al. 2017). Furthermore, none of the studies are experimental. Although conducting experimental studies on this subject will be difficult, it will also help to better understand the factors influencing online infidelity..

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