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Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale

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negative correlations were found between the scale and a scale for anticipated sexual jealousy (Buunk, 1982). Also, in the sample of persons who had been involved in extramarital relationships, a positive correlation was found between the Extramarital Behavioral Intentions Scale and a scale for Psychosexual Stimulation developed by Frenken (1976), $r(250) = .21, p < .001$. This last scale measures the tendency to allow sexual perceptions and fantasizing about sexuality versus the tendency to suppress such perceptions and fantasies.

Final evidence for the validity of the Extramarital Behavioral Intentions Scale comes from the open marriage study. Here, among women, a high correlation was found between the scale and their extramarital intentions as perceived by their husbands, $r(50) = .53, p < .001$. The same correlation among men was somewhat lower, but also significant, $r(50) = .42, p < .001$.

### References


### Exhibit

#### Extramarital Behavioral Intentions Scale

Would you engage in the following behavior with another man/woman if the opportunity were to present itself?

1. flirting
   a. certainly not  
   b. probably not  
   c. maybe not  
   d. uncertain  
   e. maybe yes  
   f. probably yes  
   g. certainly yes

2. sexual intercourse
3. light petting
4. a long-term sexual relationship
5. falling in love

*The seven response options are repeated for each item

### Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale

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Infidelity is one of the leading causes of divorce and relationship dissolution (Daly, Wilson, & Weghorst, 1982). Thus, being able to predict who will be unfaithful in the future would be critical to assessing relationship longevity and fidelity. We created the Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale (ITIS) in order

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to predict who is likely to stay faithful to a romantic partner.

**Description**

Infidelity causes emotional pain and turmoil in addition to concerns of exposing, or actually exposing, a current partner to a sexually transmitted infection. Attitudes towards infidelity only provide some evidence for who will be unfaithful in the future, because attitudes do not always directly translate into behavior as well as behavioral intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Certain individual differences, such as personality, also can predict infidelity. However, such scales are long and measure global dispositions towards negative interpersonal behavior rather than specifically targeting infidelity (Hall & Fincham, 2005). As a result, we created a brief scale that measures behavioral intentions in order to assess the likelihood of engaging in infidelity behaviors (e.g., intentions to hide the relationship from an attractive other or be unfaithful in the future).

**Response Mode and Timing**

The ITIS is a self-report questionnaire with responses ranging from −3, Not at all Likely, to +3, Extremely Likely. The ITIS takes less than a minute to complete.

**Scoring and Reliability**

The ITIS consists of seven items. Once the third item is reverse scored, the items should then be averaged to create a single score. The ITIS has one common factor, on which all items consistently load. The Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability is also consistently good across samples (Jones, 2009; Olderbak, 2008; Olderbak & Figueredo, 2009), ranging from .70 to .81. To date, there is no test-retest reliability information available on the scale.

**Validity**

**Convergent and Discriminant Validity**

The ITIS is a new scale, which demonstrates good validity in preliminary samples (Jones, 2009; Olderbak, 2008; Olderbak & Figueredo, 2009). At present, the only validity data available are on college-aged samples, although we argue that the scale is appropriate for anyone who is in a committed romantic relationship.

The ITIS shows strong overall correlations with previous and current self-reports of frequency of infidelity behavior with the average correlation of all the studies ranging from .50 to .60 (Jones, 2009). In addition, Jones (2009) also conducted several studies correlating the ITIS with a number of variables related to sexual and romantic relationships. All effect size terminology is based on Cohen’s (1988) taxonomy of effect sizes. Results indicate that the ITIS correlates moderately and positively with overall insecure attachment, as well as avoidant attachment, but does not correlate with anxious attachment. The ITIS correlates moderately and positively with unrestricted sociosexual attitudes and sexual behavior, and correlates strongly and positively with mating effort. The ITIS also correlates moderately and negatively with long-term mating orientation and relationship satisfaction.

The ITIS has small to moderate correlations with the Big Five personality traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness. The ITIS is also positively and moderately correlated with openness to experience. In addition, the ITIS has a small positive correlation with impulsive sensation seeking (ISS) and a moderate positive correlation with aggression/hostility (AH), personality traits of the “Alternative Five” personality scale (Zuckerman, Kulhman, Joireman, Teta, & Kraft, 1993). The ITIS also fully mediates the relationship between every aforementioned variable and overall number of infidelities a person has committed.

**Criterion Validity: Prediction of Relationship Outcomes Over Time**

In a recent longitudinal study (Olderbak, 2008), the ITIS was administered at baseline and compared to various relationship outcomes over time. The follow-up contacts were conducted 3, 6, 9, and 12 months after the initial data collection. A relationship satisfaction questionnaire was administered at intake and at every follow-up.

The ITIS correlated negatively and significantly with a validated relationship satisfaction questionnaire at baseline, 3 months after, and 6 months after baseline. However, this correlation decreased to nonsignificance 9 months and 12 months after baseline. This change is perhaps due to changes in the status of the relationship, including infidelity intentions and behavior. Thus, the ITIS was a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction up to 6 months after its administration.

Mean scores on the ITIS were also compared when disaggregated with respect to two dichotomous variables: (a) whether the participant had actually committed any acts of infidelity during the study period, and (b) whether the participant had broken up with his/her romantic partner during the study period. Mean ITIS scores were significantly higher for those who reported actually having been unfaithful and for those who reported experiencing relationship dissolution during the study period. In sum, the ITIS predicts infidelity, relationship satisfaction, and relationship dissolution longitudinally (Olderbak, 2008), as well as in one-time self-report studies (Jones, 2009).

**References**


**Exhibit**

**Intentions Towards Infidelity Scale**

Please indicate how likely or unlikely you would be to do the following things. Use the scale below to answer the following questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all Likely</th>
<th>−3</th>
<th>−2</th>
<th>−1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+3</th>
<th>Extremely Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. How likely are you to be unfaithful to a partner if you knew you wouldn’t get caught?
2. How likely would you be to lie to a partner about being unfaithful to them?
3. How likely would you be to tell a partner if you were unfaithful to them? [R]
4. How likely do you think you would be to get away with being unfaithful to a partner?
5. How likely would you be to hide your relationship from an attractive person you just met?
6. How likely do you think you are to be unfaithful to future partners?
7. How likely do you think you are to be unfaithful to your present or future husband or wife?

**Reiss Extramarital Sexual Permissiveness Scale**

**IRA L. REISS,**† *University of Minnesota*

This scale was designed to measure whether people would accept extramarital coitus for themselves under any of four culturally relevant situations.

**Description**

The four questions combine two important aspects of an extramarital relationship: One aspect focuses on whether the extramarital relation is pleasure-centered or love-centered, and the other aspect focuses on whether one’s mate accepts or rejects their partner having that sort of extramarital relationship. Together these aspects produce a way of classifying four types of extramarital relationships and measuring the degree of extramarital sexual permissiveness. One can then check responses by gender and other demographic variables.

The scale can be answered by those in a marital relationship or by those not married. The unmarried people can answer in terms of how they think they would respond if they were married. I suggest that all respondents be asked to answer the same four questions in two formats—one assuming the marriage they are in is unhappy and the other assuming that the marriage is happy. The differences in these responses would be a measure of the importance of marital happiness.

In research I carried out on four national samples, I found that three factors had a direct impact on what is accepted or rejected in extramarital attitudes: educational level, attitude toward premarital sexuality, and level of marital happiness (Reiss, 2006; Reiss, Anderson, & Sponaugle, 1980). I would suggest that any research into extramarital sexuality probe these three powerful predictors of extramarital sexual permissiveness as well as other predictors that can be tested (Buunk & Bakker, 1995; Hansen, 1987; Reiss & Miller, 1979; Weis & Jurich, 1985; Weis & Slosnerick, 1981).

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