

Personality Trait and Cyber Affair in Young Adults' Romantic Relationship: Relationship Satisfaction as Moderator

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Abstract

Cyber affair is an affair in the form of emotional or sexual, carried out through virtual contacts. The cyber affair has various factors, including personality traits and relationship satisfaction. This study aims to determine the role of relationship satisfaction as a moderator of the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair in young adult dating individuals. There are three measurements used in this study, Social Media Infidelity-Related Behavior, IPIP-BFM-25 dimensions of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and Relationship Assessment Scale. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling, with 734 participants obtained. Statistical analysis includes descriptive statistics, correlations, covariates, and moderation to answer the research questions. As a result, the conscientiousness personality trait has a significant negative correlation with cyber affair. Moderation analysis indicates no moderating effect of relationship satisfaction on the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair. It is thought to be caused by a reduced correlation between personality traits and cyber affair due to the influence of relationship satisfaction.

Keywords: cyber affair, trait, relationship satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

The use of social media provides benefits and facilitates activities but has various positive and negative impacts on interpersonal relationships. The problem of interpersonal relationships caused by the use of social media also occurs in romantic relationships. Based on studies of young adult dating couples in Indonesia, social media can communicate between couples as a marker of commitment and publication of a relationship (Sa'adatina & Manalu, 2017). Using social media also can trigger misunderstandings and jealousy, which can result at the end of relationships or

revenge (Sa'adatina & Manalu, 2017). However, the intensity of communication is very necessary to maintain a commitment to the couple and maintain romantic relationships (Liana & Herdiyanto, 2017). A person who experiences social media addiction is easier to share details with others and establish closeness emotionally (Abbasi, 2019; Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2018). It is certainly a concern for individuals who are in romantic relationships. The use of social media is related to cheating behavior on social media (cyber affair) moderated by young age (Abbasi, 2019). According to McDaniel et al. (2017), forms of the cyber affair are feelings of discomfort, hiding information or being confidential, establishing emotional relationships with others instead of their partners, sending messages to ex-partners, and behaving defensively.

The following studies discuss the causes of a person doing cyber affair. McDaniel et al. (2017) study estimate that 5-12% of cyber affair actors have low levels of relationship satisfaction, ambivalence towards relationships, and insecure attachment to their partners. The results of research by González-Rivera et al. (2019) explain that low sexual satisfaction and emotional intimacy negatively affect satisfaction and ambivalence, then significantly increase behaviors related to infidelity on social media. Another study said individuals with mental health problems are prone to social media addiction and open up sexually or emotionally to others online (Abbasi & Dibble, 2019). Iskandar (2017) conducted a study on dating student couples and found that relationship satisfaction has a negative relationship with the intention of having an affair. In addition to some of the factors already mentioned, personality trait is often a predictor of perpetrators of infidelity in person and online (cyber affairs). Of the five personality factors, research has consistently found that the characteristics of perpetrators of infidelity in person and online are having high extraversion scores accompanied by low agreeableness and conscientiousness (Altgelt et al., 2018; Isma, 2017; Jia et al., 2016; van Zyl, 2021). Most of these studies have only explained the relationship or role of personality traits to online infidelity behavior (cyber affair) and taken populations outside Indonesia who are culturally different in their view of infidelity (Wenno et al., 2021).

Based on these studies, it is known that the results of the research show a correlation between cyber affairs and personality traits (Altgelt et al., 2018; Isma, 2017; Jia et al., 2016; van Zyl, 2021), cyber affair with relationship satisfaction (Abbasi & Dibble, 2019; González-Rivera et al., 2019; Iskandar, 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017), and trait personality with relationship satisfaction (Leikas et al., 2018; Schaffhuser et al., 2014; Weidmann et al., 2017). Most of these studies were conducted in populations outside Indonesia, and explained the relationship or role of personality traits or relationship satisfaction in cyber affair but have not used a model to explain the dynamics between variables. From literature studies, researchers rarely find research on infidelity behavior on social media/online (cyber affair) in the Indonesian population as one of the world's largest internet users (Kemp, 2022). The research discussing cyber affairs in Indonesia has only focused on its behavioral form and was carried out with a limited sample in one of the cities, such as the research of Octaviana & Abraham (2018) and Wenno et al. (2021). A literature review of infidelity by Shaleha & Kurniasih (2021) suggests exploring cyber affair issues.

From the explanation of various studies, researchers make allegations of relationship satisfaction can moderate the relationship between personality traits and cyber affairs. The researchers' assumptions are based on various studies that trait extraversion is positively related while trait agreeableness, conscientiousness, and satisfying relationships are negatively related to cyber affairs. The three traits were

chosen as independent variables because they were by the requirements of moderation analysis requiring that independent variables play a direct role in the dependent variables (Memon et al., 2019). Meanwhile, relationship satisfaction is one of the most important predictors of infidelity, according to research by Vowels et al. (2022), so it has the potential to become a moderator variable. According to Hayes (2022), when researchers seek to determine whether a variable affects or is related to the measure of the influence of one variable on another, moderation analysis is an appropriate analytical strategy.

Relationship satisfaction has been used as a moderator variable in research on personality traits by South et al., (2016) and Liu et al. (2022). The study's results by South et al. (2016) show that relationship satisfaction can moderate the etiology of an individual's personality as an adult who relies on the personality trait. Research by Liu et al. (2022) found that relationship satisfaction and commitment moderate the similarity of assumptions in the Trait Honesty-Humility and Openness to Experience. However, researchers have yet to find research that specifically examines relationship satisfaction as a moderator on the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair, so testing moderation models is important to explain the dynamics of these three variables.

Research on infidelity behavior on social media is important to take preventive steps to reduce the impact of the cyber affair on romantic relationships, especially in young adults dating. This study aims to determine the role of relationship satisfaction as a moderator on the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair. The benefits of this study are expected to provide additional information in determining and designing interventions to deal with cyber affair problems in romantic relationships.

METHOD

Desain Penelitian

This research uses a quantitative approach because the data obtained from variables measured in numbers are then carried out with statistical tests (Creswell, 2017). The research design is cross-sectional because the data is collected once (Kumar, 2011). Researchers used questionnaires to obtain data for each variable. The data obtained by researchers are classified as primary and factual data (Azwar, 2017).

Partisipan

Researchers determined the characteristics of participants, namely Indonesians, domiciled in Indonesia, aged 18-40 years, and willing to participate in this study, being in romantic relationships (dating), and using social media. The number of research samples was determined using G*Power: Statistical Power Analysis v3.1.9.6 for Mac OS. Based on the calculation results, the total number of minimum samples needed was 129 participants. From the data collection, 744 participants were obtained, and the total number of participants who could be processed after the screening data process was 734. The data collection technique in this study is non-probability sampling in the form of a sample in the form of convenience sampling (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018). Data is collected using google forms.

Instrumen Penelitian

The research instruments used consisted of informed consent, personality traits, relationship satisfaction, and cyber affair questionnaires. The personality trait questionnaires, namely IPIP-BFM-25 adaptation Akhtar & Azwar, (2018) dimensions of

extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, each of which consists of 5 items, having a score range of 5-25. Relationship Assessment Scale adaptation Vivian (2020) to measure relationship satisfaction with seven items having a score range of 7-35. Social Media Infidelity-Related Behavior from McDaniel et al. (2017) to measure cyber affair in general, consisting of 7 items with score range of 7-42, which was adapted by the researcher through the back translation of two fellow researchers who graduated as masters and lecturers and expert judgment by the supervisor. The researcher conducted *try out* to 32 dating participants on August 2022 prior data collection.

Prosedur Penelitian

The stages of the procedure carried out in this research consist of three stages. The first stage is the preparation stage. Where researchers conducted interviews with counseling teachers and determined the subjects used. Here the researcher uses two classes that will get goal setting treatment. The two classes will be used as treatment groups, where each class gets different treatments, namely one treatment group and one control group. Then the bk teacher gives directions to all students who are subjects that there will be a series of tests that will be given by the experimenter. Each subject in each group is given a self efficacy scale as a pretest activity.

Furthermore, the second stage is the implementation stage. At this stage the experimenter provides goal setting training to the treatment group. The experimenter gives nine statements to students to be filled in according to each individual, the experimenter gives verbal instructions regarding the goal setting stimulus in the answers of each individual. Furthermore, the experimenter provides goal setting material to make your smart goal, strengthen your belief, and get you success.

And the third stage is the closing stage. Where each subject in each group is given a self efficacy scale as a posttest activity. Then analyze the results of pretest and posttest activities that have been carried out by research subjects. The following is the schedule for conducting the experiment:

Analisis Data

Researchers processed data from 744 participants collected during data collection on September 23, 2022 – October 3, 2022, via google form. After the researchers examined the suitability of the data against the research criteria and eliminated incomplete, double, or outlier data (using the Mahalanobis distance criteria), 734 participants were obtained. This study used IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25, JASP 0.13.1, and PROCESS v3.5 Mac OS for data analysis. Some of the statistical analyses carried out by researchers include descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and moderation analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Resu

Based on the results of data collection, researchers obtained 744 participants, and 734 participant data were processed. In general, participants were women, totaling 633 people (86.24%), then men 78 people (10.63%), and 23 people chose not to declare their gender (3.13%). The average participant was 25 years old (13.62%) and domiciled in Java, 608 people (82.83%). Most participants are students or private employees with an educational range between high school/equivalent – master degree. A total of 436

participants (59.40%) were bachelor graduates. The average monthly expenditure is in the range of Rp. 1,000,000,- - Rp. 1,999,999,-.

Participants used social media for various purposes, and 610 aimed at communication. The average number of active social media is between 3-5. The three most frequently used social media are WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter. Participants generally spend 3-4 hours using social media daily. The average duration of participants in a dating relationship was 28.03 months when filling out the questionnaire. The proportion of those in long-distance (45.50%) and close-range (54.50%) relationships is similar. At the time of dating, 368 participants dated 1-3 times/week, and 653 participants communicated daily.

This study used three measuring instruments to determine personality trait variables, relationship satisfaction, and cyber affair. Here is an overview table of each research variable.

Table 1. Overview of Research Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Personality Trait				
Extraversion	14,91	3,89	5	25
Agreeableness	19,95	2,85	11	25
Conscientiousness	18,66	3,29	9	25
Relationship Satisfaction	26,49	4,19	12	35
Cyber Affair	18,19	5,69	7	37

From the calculation results, in general, participants have a personality trait score and relationship satisfaction that tends to be high, accompanied by cyber affairs tends to be low. The determination of the score category is based on the average score of the participants and compared to the maximum number of scores of each measuring instrument (Akhtar & Azwar, 2018; McDaniel et al., 2017; Vivian, 2020).

The following is a table of Pearson correlation test calculation results to determine the relationship between research variables:

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Test Results of Research Variables

Variables	EXTRA	AGREE	CONSCI	Relationship Satisfaction	Cyber Affair
Personality Traits					
Extraversion	-	0,216**	- 0,053	0,020	0,044
Agreeableness	0,216**	-	0,306**	0,069	-0,051
Conscientiousness	-0,053	0,306**	-	0,170**	-0,121**
Relationship Satisfaction	0,020	0,069	0,170**	-	-0,442**
Cyber Affair	0,044	-0,051	-0,121**	-0,442**	-

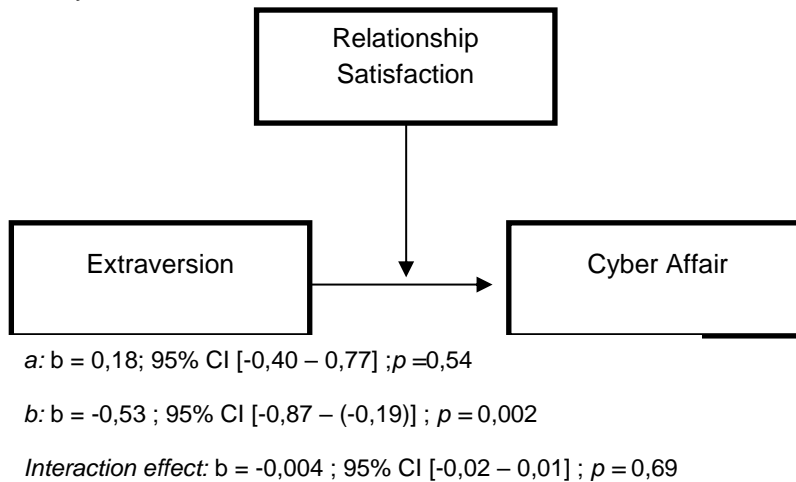
** . $p < 0,01$ (2-tailed).

From the results of the calculations above, only conscientiousness trait that have a significant correlation with relationship satisfaction ($r = 0.170$; $p < 0.01$) and cyber affair ($r = -0.121$; $p < 0.01$). The result indicates that the higher the conscientiousness, the lower a person engages in online infidelity behavior (cyber affair). Specifically, relationship satisfaction had a significant negative correlation to the cyber affair ($r = -0.442$; $p < 0.01$).

This suggests that the higher the relationship satisfaction, the lower the individual's involvement in cyber affairs while dating.

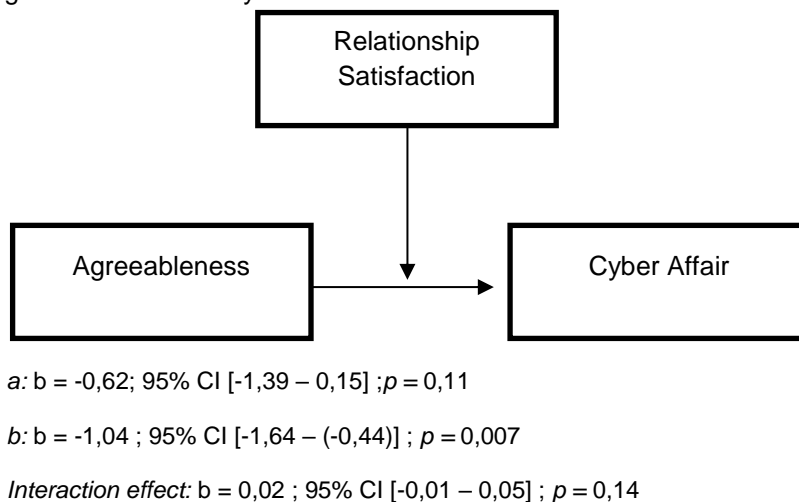
Researchers used model 1 moderation by Hayes (2022) and PROCESS software v3.5 for IBM SPSS 25 Mac OS in a moderation analysis process. The personality trait as an independent variable is included alternately in moderation analysis. In each moderation model, personality traits that were not counted, and all demographic data were also analyzed as a covariate. Here is a chart of the results of the moderation analysis:

Figure 1. Relationship Satisfaction Moderation Analysis On Extraversion Personality Trait and Cyber Affair



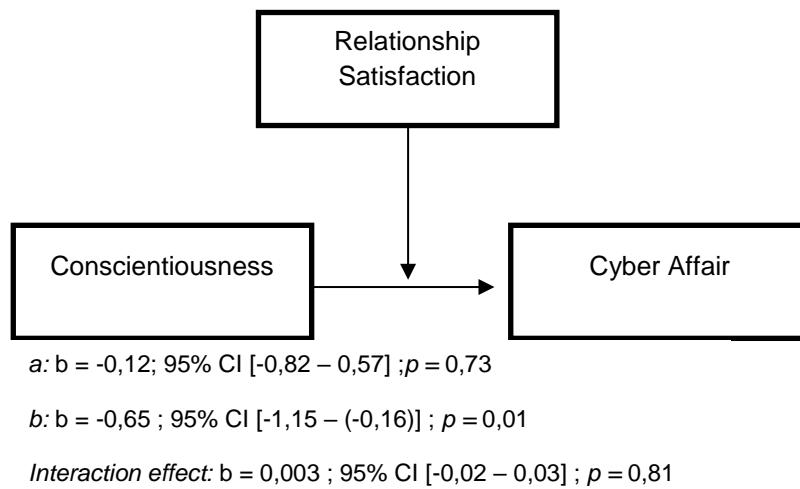
Based on the chart above, a significant moderation model predicts cyber affair, $F(17,716) = 11.55$; $p < 0.001$. 21.53% of the variance of the cyber affair was taken into account by the model. No interaction effect was found between extraversion and relationship satisfaction. This indicates no relationship satisfaction moderation effect on the extraversion and cyber affair relationship ($b = -0.004$; 95% CI [-0.02 – 0.01] ; $p = 0.69$).

Figure 2. Relationship Satisfaction Moderation Analysis On Personality Trait Agreeableness and Cyber Affair



Based on the chart above, a significant moderation model predicts cyber affair, $F(17,716) = 11.70$; $p < 0.001$. The model accounted for 21.75% of the variance of the cyber affair. No interaction effect was found between agreeableness and relationship satisfaction; this indicates no effect of relationship satisfaction moderation on agreeableness and cyber affair relationships ($b = 0.02$; 95% CI [-0.01 – 0.05] ; $p = 0.14$).

Figure 3. Relationship Satisfaction Moderation Analysis On Trait Personality Conscientiousness and Cyber Affair



Based on the chart above, a significant moderation model predicts cyber affair, $F(17,716) = 11.54$; $p < 0.001$. 21.51% of the variance of the cyber affair was taken into account by the model. No interaction effect was found between conscientiousness and relationship satisfaction; this indicates no relationship satisfaction moderation effect on the conscientiousness and cyber affair relationship ($b = 0.003$; 95% CI [-0.02 – 0.03] ; $p = 0.81$).

In the Pearson correlation test, it was found that conscientiousness significantly correlates to cyber affairs. However, the small correlation value of personality conscientiousness to cyber affair versus relationship satisfaction has an insignificant interaction effect, so there is no moderation effect. It indicates the presence of suppressor effects of relationship satisfaction on personality trait conscientiousness (Watson et al., 2013).

Researchers collected demographic data and selected some of these data to be used as covariate variables in the cyber affair. All data were analyzed using multiple regression with the stepwise method to see their effect on cyber affair.

Table 3. Covariate Analysis

Model Summary	R	Adjusted R ²	F	p
	0,094	0,007	6,449	0,011
Variables		β	t	p
Age		-0,013	-0,285	0,776
Sex		0,020	0,548	0,584

Domicile	0,048	1,292	0,197
Occupation	0,024	0,606	0,544
Education	-0,094	-2,539	0,011*
Monthly expenses	-0,030	-0,750	0,453
Social media	-0,001	-0,032	0,974
Media social intensity	0,060	1,625	0,105
Length of dating	-0,041	-1,112	0,267
Long/not long distance	0,042	1,147	0,252
Dating frequency	-0,011	-0,308	0,758
Frequency of communicating	-0,061	-1,649	0,100

* p<0,05

Based on the table above, it is known that educational variables have a significant effect on cyber affairs ($\beta = -0.094$; $p = 0.01$). Education predicts a 0.7% cyber affair variance (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.007$; $F(1,731) = 6.45$). The following is a comparison table of the average scores of each research variable by education level:

Table 4. Comparison of Average Scores of Research Variables By Education

Education		Cyber Affair	Relationship Satisfaction	EXTRA	AGREE	CONSCI
	F	6,526	1,856	0,086	0,297	9,162
	p	0,011**	0,173	0,770	0,586	0,003**
High School	Mean	18,97	26,23	15,00	20,08	18,18
	N	210	210	210	210	210
	SD	5,94	4,69	4,08	3,05	3,31
Diploma	Mean	17,82	26,18	14,50	19,45	18,50
	N	44	44	44	44	44
	SD	5,22	3,87	3,02	2,42	2,93
Bachelor Degree	Mean	18,00	26,57	14,92	19,96	18,80
	N	436	436	436	436	436
	SD	5,50	4,00	3,79	2,77	3,34
Master Degree	Mean	16,68	27,14	14,75	19,75	19,80
	N	44	44	44	44	44
	SD	6,32	3,75	4,69	3,04	2,93

The table shows that cyber affair scores are higher at lower education levels, while relationship satisfaction scores and personality traits improve at higher education levels. This table also shows that high conscientiousness is related to the level of higher education, i.e., master degree. Participants who graduated from high school had a higher tendency to engage in online infidelity (cyber affair).

Discussion

This study was conducted to determine whether relationship satisfaction moderates the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair. Based on the results, relationship satisfaction is insignificant in moderating the relationship between personality traits and cyber affair, both on trait extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. However, referring to the correlation test results, there is a relationship between trait conscientiousness and relationship satisfaction and cyber affair. The correlation analysis

results support the researcher's initial assumptions regarding relationship satisfaction as a moderation variable. However, the small influence of personality trait variables on cyber affair compared to relationship satisfaction has an insignificant interaction effect, so there is no moderation effect.

Based on the theory, personality trait is part of the relationship satisfaction factor. A personality trait is included in aspects of relationship problems, in addition to love and expectations as determinants of relationship satisfaction (Hendrick, 1988). Character/trait differences can explain as one of the relationship problems that make it difficult for individuals to maintain romantic relationships (Apostolou & Wang, 2021). Because the trait is part of relationship satisfaction, the trait's role as a predictor of the cyber affair becomes invisible when moderation analysis is performed.

In general, participants in this study had high extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, high relationship satisfaction, and low cyber affair. This indicates that participants are individuals who are open, willing to cooperate with their partners, and responsible for dating relationships. Participants rated their relationships satisfactory, and were less likely to engage in cyber affairs. It should be noted that the study participants were predominantly female, with the results of the three traits tending to be high as the results of the study of Schmitt et al. (2009) in 55 countries (west and east) that found scores of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness in women were higher than in men. Moreover, high relationship satisfaction can be influenced by the duration of dating participants who have been more than 1 year because relationship satisfaction problems generally occur in the first year (Bühler et al., 2021). Participants also often communicate with their partners and date every week, this is in accordance with the research of Liana & Herdiyanto (2017) which states that the intensity of communication in dating is important to maintain commitment. Thus, the tendency of research participants to conduct cyber affairs is low.

The results of the correlational analysis show that relationship satisfaction is correlated with personality trait conscientiousness and cyber affairs, according to previous research (Abbasi & Dibble, 2019; González-Rivera et al., 2019; Iskandar, 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017; Schaffhuser et al., 2014). It can be interpreted that the responsible individual has a commitment to the partner and is careful in considering the consequences of infidelity so as not to engage in cyber affairs. Based on theory, individuals who have high conscientiousness are wise, orderly, and disciplined (McCrae & Costa in Feist et al., 2018). This research also follows previous studies' results that low conscientiousness is a predictor of infidelity (Isma, 2017; Jia et al., 2016; van Zyl, 2021). From various studies, researchers concluded that individuals with high conscientiousness are wiser and have self-discipline, so they will avoid cyber affair behavior in dating.

This study also uses demographic data as a covariate in conducting moderation analysis. Before the moderation analysis, all of these demographic data were tested using multiple regressions to determine whether the data correlated with the cyber affair. The result is only education is a negatively significant predictor of the cyber affair by 0.7%. Education is one factor that shapes personality traits that will then determine individual behavior (McCrae & Costa in Feist et al., 2018). According to this study, the lower the level of education, the higher the cyber affair in young Indonesian adult individuals who are dating. The participants who graduated from high school obtained the highest cyber affair score, then bachelor, diploma, and masters. It is in line with the literature review of Choy & Li (2021), which states that education can predict infidelity, but the results vary; some find higher or lower education as a predictor.

This study has some limitations. The age of young adult participants is dominated by the age group of 25 years, and the age group of >30 years is only represented by approximately 1-2 people per age group. In the study, female participants were dominant. As in the study of Toplu-Demirtaş & Fincham (2018), women are more involved in relationship-related research because they tend to be relationship-oriented. Most participants live on Java Island, with a sociocultural background different from people outside Java. Most research participants had bachelor degree, higher than the average Indonesian society (Pramana, 2022). It disregards the cyber affair variance in individuals with education below high school.

The use of only self-report inventory in Indonesian participants who tend to be collectivist can cause bias. It is possible that participants conducted cyber affairs but did not report them. Toplu-Demirtaş & Fincham (2018) state, research that relies solely on self-report inventory and monomethod data is prone to social desirability bias. Research by Arifin & Milla (2020) found a moderate correlation between the trait of the Big Five personality and the scale of social desirability when adapting the scale of self-control in the Indonesian population.

There are limitations in the measuring instruments used. When tested on the *try out* population, one of the conscientiousness trait items had a low validity value, but the item was still included in the data intake. The basis of this decision is that the measuring instrument adaptation item has a high validity coefficient value (Akhtar & Azwar, 2018) and a small number of trial participants allows bias to occur. The cyber affair measuring instrument used only measures behavior related to infidelity on social media in general, not yet specific to the form of emotional or sexual cyber affair (McDaniel et al., 2017). It can be an input for subsequent researchers to use more specific cyber affair measuring instruments to get an in-depth picture. In addition, relationship satisfaction has been shown to not moderate personality traits and cyber affair relationships despite having relationships when viewed from Pearson correlation tests.

CONCLUSION

Relationship satisfaction does not moderate the relationship between trait personality and cyber affair in young adult dating. It is likely due to the reduced correlation between personality traits and cyber affair due to the influence of relationship satisfaction variables.

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