

Abstract

A study of extramarital relationship proclivity tested predictions from Equity Theory and Investment Model was carried out. In addition, the conceptualization and definition of extramarital relationship among married Chinese were explored. It was found that extramarital relationship could be conceptualized as falling into two dimensions - emotional involvement and sexual involvement. In general, the married Hong Kong Chinese people adopted a loose definition of extramarital relationship and perceived behaviors ranged from flirting to having a sexual intimate relationship all relevant to extramarital affairs. It was found that the predictions from Equity Theory and Investment Model were basically supported. Both men and women who were more committed to their relationships have lower desire to involve in all kinds of extramarital relationships, which supported the predictions from the Investment Model. Female respondents who perceived their relationships as equitable had significantly lower desire to involve in all kinds of extramarital relationships than those who were deprived or overbenefited. For male respondents, the desire to involve in extramarital relationships which were low in sexual involvement was also significantly lower for those who were equitable treated in their relationships than the ones who were deprived or overbenefited. However, for the extramarital relationships with high sexual involvement the pattern disappeared. The desire to involve in high sexual involvement extramarital relationships for equitably treated, deprived and overbenefited male respondents did not differ significantly from each other.