

NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND

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A study into the difference in relationship satisfaction  
between people who met their partners online versus people  
who met in person.

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Thesis

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### **Abstract:**

This study was carried out to establish whether the use of online dating could affect one's relationship satisfaction or general happiness in a negative or positive way. It will also highlight the difference between those who met online vs in person. It will also establish a deeper understanding of how people perceive internet fidelity in relation to people who met online and in person.

An online survey was distributed through a National College of Ireland e-mail and then to online platforms, namely, Facebook and Reddit. The requirements in order to take part were that you had to be currently in a relationship, have either met online or in person and to be over the age of 18. A sample of 99 participants took part in this survey which included 77 females and 22 males, 46 met online and 53 met in person.

The data was non-parametric therefore a Mann Whitney U test was performed to find the differences between the two groups. Results were not statistically significant, as the P-value was not less than .05, but showed for example that people online scored higher in relationship satisfaction and online infidelity but people who met in person scored higher in general happiness.

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## **Glossary of Terms:**

e.g. For Example

**Pros and Cons** - An argument or consideration in favour of something; reasoning in support of a proposition, thesis, etc. Chiefly in pros and cons (also pros and contrast): reasons or arguments for and against something, advantages and disadvantages. Occas. also pro and contra (also pro and con): argument, debate.

**Vs** Versus

**N** Number Equals

**NCI** National College of Ireland

**SPSS** Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Statistics software package)

**Std** Standard

**SD** Standard Deviation

**RS** Relationship Satisfaction

**GH** General Happiness

**M** Mean

## **1. Introduction:**

Social media and online platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are ever increasing in popularity; these platforms can be seen as a means of self-expression and a place to explore one's interests in the comfort of one's own home. Social media can be used to keep in touch with a weaker tie (Ellison et al., 2007) such as friends or family members who have moved abroad. Over the last number of years social media has transformed itself as a medium to bring people together that have not physically met and is increasingly used to find a new love interest or partner; browsing online for potential candidates now being the norm across various age groups.

Studies show that adults with internet access in their homes are more likely to be in a partnership than those who don't and the way in which people find partners has changed in the past 15 years. Family, workplace and school have less of an influence in modern dating (Rosenfeld, 2012). Meeting online has fundamentally altered the process of romance for some people (James, J. L., 2015), for example, social cues are non-existent online, one may have to rely on emoji's to flirt.

Roughly one in 4 straight couples and two in four gay couple meet online (Rosenfeld, Reuben & Maja, 2015); therefore it is in one's interest to look at individuals who have met their partner online, to understand any potential differences in relationship satisfaction. When a new form of technology is introduced there is always a fear that it will replace the old ways or social norms and the negative possibilities are the first things people seem to think about. There hasn't been an overwhelming amount of statically significant results that say that people who met online are going to have much lower relationship satisfaction than people who met online (Rosenfeld, 2012), however examining if there is a difference between the two groups should be looked in to.

A satisfactory relationship should bring general happiness along with relationship satisfaction and commitment to an individual whether they have met online or in person (Kamp Dush, Amato, 2005). This study will look at the following constructs, general happiness, relationship satisfaction and internet infidelity in people who have met their partner online

(group 1) and people who have met in the more traditional way, in person (group 2) and how these three measures differ between the two respective groups.

More than one-third of marriages begin online (Cacioppo, 2013), some have even claimed to have fundamentally changed the dating landscape for the better (Finkel, 2012). This study is influenced by statements such as the above whilst factors such as the growth in internet dating will also influence this study. This study will examine whether meeting one's partner online can ultimately affect an individual's general happiness and relationship satisfaction compared to those who meet in the more traditional method.

Infidelity, the third factor mentioned above is a fact of life when online dating (Whitty, 2003). This study will analyse the responses of a survey, look at the general views of persons who have met their partner online e.g. dating sites, social media or forum's versus those that have met in person e.g. at a bar, school or work. The study will also look at how this affects them, specifically looking at each groups understanding of internet infidelity and whether one group is more likely to find internet infidelity as a legitimate act of betrayal more so than the other.

Furthermore, studies have shown that some individuals find certain perceived online infidelity more of a betrayal than others, for example, cybersex is seen to be a more severe act than downloading pornography (Whitty, 2003). This study will also look at other aspects of internet infidelity such as emotional and sexual infidelity which includes mental exclusivity which is an important component (Yarab & Rice, 1998). As there have only been a small number of studies to date on the topic of Internet infidelity it, therefore, warrants attention in this study.

### 1.1. General Happiness:

Happiness can be defined as a pleasant emotional state, euphoria, or joy. It may come from encountering a significant person or positive event (Cosmides, 2000). Many studies have looked into the importance of general happiness in relation to relationship satisfaction. Myers & Diener (1995) claimed that a supportive and intimate relationship is a source of self-reported happiness. Diener & Seligman (2002) found that a successful and fulfilling

relationship is one of the highest predictions of happiness and emotional well-being. In relation to these findings, it is unsurprising that researchers would want to examine different relationship types and the difference in general happiness that they produce.

A study by McKenna, Green and Gleason (2002) concluded that being comfortable and willingly being able to talk about your feelings in an anonymous environment aided the communication in the online relationships and explains how and why online relationships may become intimate or grow a strong bond at a faster pace compared to face to face relationships. Conversely, these relationships don't tend to stay online forever; the process normally involves a progression from chat or email to phone calls then eventually face to face (Whitty & Gavin, 2001).

From the literature reviewed, it is seen that subjective wellbeing is highly correlated with individuals who have partners (Brown, 2000), general happiness is one of the key components in wellbeing (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002). Continuing with this it is also seen that individuals who are not happy in their relationships seem to be more distressed than single or unmarried people (Ross, 1995).

Parks & Floyd (1996) found that time spent online participating in online social interactions such as social media and online dating might have a role in detracting from one's assessment of perceived social support. Research suggests that because online interactions involve a large amount of self-disclosure instead of face to face contact it might lead to challenging social interactions (Underwood & Findlay, 2004). This could lead to social isolation, according to previous research large amounts of time spent online is associated with depression and social isolation (Cummings, 2006), and therefore leads to low levels of general happiness.

### 1.2. Relationship satisfaction:

It was found that when a person uses dating sites they are expecting and anticipating a relationship to happen, thus increasing the depth of conversation which may lead to the formation of a romantic relationship (Walther, 1994). Studies into how people find their partners have shown that in the past 15 years, family, workplace and school have less of an influence in modern dating (Rosenfeld, 2012). There are positive and negative aspects to

internet dating, unfortunately, there is no compelling statistical evidence to prove that algorithms used in dating websites work but there are studies that show that online dating does work in certain situations and can produce a happy fulfilling relationship (Finkel, Eastwick, Karney, Reis, Sprecher, 2012).

In a recent study conducted it was found that marital relationships that started online have less of a tendency to end in separation or divorce. Out of the people who met online only 5.95% ended in separation and 7.67% in people who met in person, it was also found that people who met over e-mail were older than the average marital age and people who met through the more common way of dating websites, were younger (J. Cacioppo, S. Cacioppo, Gonzaga, Ogburn & VanderWeele, 2013). It has also been found that meeting your partner online may have a higher quality relationship and a lower breakup rate at the one year mark (Rosenfeld, 2012).

People who met their partners online had a higher rate of marital satisfaction which stayed statistically significant when accounting multiple covariates such as sex, employment status, ethnicity and educational background. Although within the category of meeting in person, certain scenarios in which people met had different effects on marital satisfaction such as meeting through a positive social gathering, school or place of worship had higher levels of satisfaction than meeting through work, in a pub or blind date had lower satisfaction levels (Cacioppo et al. 2013).

This may suggest that the ways in which people are meeting in person in modern day society are having a negative effect on marital satisfaction, as the majority of people still meet their partners in a traditional setting, compared to a meeting on multiple positive online forums.

In a recent study conducted by Rosenfeld (2012), it was shown that since the dramatic increase in the usage of online platforms to find a partner there has been a decrease in the more early traditional ways of meeting someone in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as in a secondary school or family. As you grow up and mature there is a natural decrease in the importance of these social scenes for finding a partner but the rise in online dating has sped up the decrease. Social situations that are used more as one grows older such as work or meeting in a pub have also decreased.

When the quality of the relationship satisfaction between participants who met online vs in person was examined, through this study, it was found that there was no significant difference; these findings contradict those of Cacioppo et al. (2013). In the same study, it was also found that younger people are the least likely to form a serious romantic relationship as a result of online dating. This may be because they already have a large circle of single people around them and face to face meeting is inevitable when socializing with friends and in colleges or on a night out.

By comparison, by having an extremely wide variety of potential partners online at ones' fingertips can lead to a poorer ability to select the right partner (Pai-Lu Wu & Wen-Bin Chiou 2009) which may lead to low relationship satisfaction in the future. People who have a smaller dating pool such as gay or middle-aged people are more likely to use online dating and be more successful at finding a partner (Rosenfeld, 2012).

Participants have been shown to view interpersonal communication higher than sex appeal across all ages and genders. However younger people would rate attraction of higher importance than middle-aged or older generations, companionship still wins overall when searching for a partner (Menkina, 2015). In contrast to this most online dating forum such as apps like Tinder or bumble are run on the basis of attraction.

It shows that much like meeting someone in person it takes time to form a meaningful bond with someone as the companion and common interest aspect has to be present to form a relationship. It also shows there are common features of the meeting patterns in person and online, in some ways these two different ways of finding a partner are not too dissimilar.

### 1.3. Internet Infidelity:

The definition of internet infidelity may change from person to person. For instance, one person may think that by constantly emailing a specific gender that their partner is attracted to, would be online infidelity, but to another person, this may be a harmless conversation.

According to the Indian Journal of psychiatry increased usage of the Internet has given rise to a new challenge to modern-day relationships. Online infidelity is perceived to be as distressing as actual infidelity (Mao & Raguram 2009). Internet infidelity is having an

emotional and sexual connection with someone online, there is no physical affair and as mentioned above is still perceived as infidelity when discovered by the partner (Smith, 2011). One of the common aspects of internet infidelity that many theorists tend to agree on is the secrecy involved in the action, it is an action that you are intentionally keeping from your partner and purposely make sure it stays hidden.

A study conducted by Parker and Wampler (2003) shows that internet infidelity is rated very highly in terms of severity. Different views on the severity of certain acts online could lead to jealousy in the relationship and lead to inappropriate behaviour from one of the partners which lead to an unsatisfactory relationship. In 2010 30% of married couples had at least one partner conducting inappropriate or untrustworthy behaviour such as secretly reading their partners emails or text messages at least once in the relationship (Helsper & Whitty 2010).

In a study conducted by Yarab et al. (1998) participants describe infidelity or 'cheating' as severe an action as having sexual intercourse with another person, to going out for lunch or flirting in an office space with a colleague. Literature researched to date has agreed that alternative types of infidelity must be taken into consideration and examined, such as internet infidelity. It is shown that mental exclusivity is just as important as physical exclusivity (Whitty, 2004).

Men are more likely to admit to having been involved in some kind of infidelity or extradyadic behaviour (a wide range of activities or behaviours that take part outside of a committed relationship) (Townsend, 1990; Hansen, 1987). Whitty (2003) has also characterised internet infidelity as having three separate behaviours, emotional infidelity, sexual infidelity and pornography use. It has also been found that men and women don't rate their own infidelity as being as unacceptable compared to a scenario where their partner was to commit infidelity (Yarab, 1998). It was found that 42% of people that use the internet compulsively have admitted to having an online affair (Greenfield, 1999).

This shows that when collecting data people may be more lenient in their responses to questions around what is or is not infidelity in the context of them committing it, but having the opposite effect and being more judgemental when responding to questions around a partner's infidelity (Whitty, 2003). In a later study, Whitty (2005) asked participants to

describe acts of online infidelity and results showed that the majority of acts showed emotional infidelity. This result is interesting as studies on face to face infidelity show that most people describe sexual acts (Kitzinger & Powell, 1995), this shows that emotional infidelity could be a main component of internet infidelity.

The internet infidelity scale involving self-infidelity and a partner infidelity was used in a study carried out by Docan-Morgan & Docan (2007) which evaluates the severity of infidelity each act that may be carried out on the internet. They concluded that when the participants were rating goal driven or oriented acts the ratings were more severe than if they were rating superficial or informal acts online. Also, self-infidelity was rated as more severe than partner infidelity which contradicts the earlier work of Whitty (2003).

## **2. Rational and Research Aims / Hypotheses:**

This study is being undertaken to determine if there is a difference in relationship satisfaction between people who met their partner's online versus people who met in person. From the literature reviewed in previous studies, it has been stated online dating had fundamentally changed the concept of romance and how people now date.

The study will look at general happiness as a key measure, as it has been seen in previous studies that people in a happy and satisfactory relationship are more likely to have higher levels of general happiness or subjective well-being (Kamp Dush, Amato, 2005). Also, it would be interesting if people who met online had a different outcome and contradicted this literature. Also as always with new technology, there are worries about possible negative outcomes such as a fear that it will overtake an important social value or norm.

As social media and the internet, in general, have taken on the dating scene by storm, looking at internet infidelity seemed to be an area of interest. Cheating will always be present but now it has different platforms to present itself, it is has been shown in previous studies that are just as distressing as cheating in person (Mao & Raguram 2009).

### **2.1. Hypothesis:**

From the literature reviewed, this study is based on the following hypothesis.

#### **Hypothesis 1:**

Relationship satisfaction levels will be higher in people who met online.

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

General happiness levels will be higher for people who met in person.

#### **Hypothesis 3:**

People who have met online will perceive internet infidelity as a more severe action than people who met in person.

## 2.2. Aims:

To establish if meeting one's partner online could affect the outcome of the relationship in a positive or negative way.

To gain a deeper understanding of how people perceive internet fidelity in relation to people who met online and in person.

To establish whether online relationships will be successful in the future or whether the use of online dating can be damaging to one's ultimate relationship satisfaction or general happiness.

### **3. Method:**

#### 3.1. Participants

In February 2018 a study was conducted among 99 participants of which females  $n=77$ . Out of this sample, 43 participants met their current partner online and 56 met their current partner in person. The aim for the sample size was 100 participants, 50 in each group (group 1, group 2). This is an ideal number due to the lack of funding and time restraints. The number is large enough to remove any bias or errors in the data.

The gender options available in the survey were male, female and other. Out of these options, 22 males, 77 females and 0 of other participated in the study. There were two age groups offered, 18-25 ( $n=52$ ) and 25 and over ( $n=47$ ).

Sampling was conducted using a survey created on Google Docs titled 'The difference in relationship satisfaction between people who met their partner's online vs in person'. This included 3 questionnaire scales to be completed if the correct criteria were met to allow them to take part in the survey. These criteria were, to currently be in a relationship, to have met their partner either online or in person and to be over the age of 18.

Having met on an online dating site was not made a requirement, to have met online in general whether it be on a social media site or dating site was accepted. Respondents were recruited by sharing the survey on online social media sites and through email. A random sample was obtained opposed to a convenience sample to relieve the study of certain bias college students may have on relationships (it may be more casual with relationships). The survey was completely voluntary and no reward or payment was given to participants after the completion of the survey.

#### 3.2. Design

This study is a quantitative, cross-sectional design. It is a between-subjects design, the independent variables being used in this study are online (group 1) and in-person (group2) relationship meeting statuses. The dependent variables are general happiness, relationship satisfaction and internet infidelity.

### 3.3. Measures

The following scales were administered in the form of questionnaire surveys. The Koo, Algoe, Wilson, & Gilbert's (2008) Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship scales questions have been derived from three separate scales, Hendrick's (1988) Relationship Assessment Scale which measures the general relationship satisfaction, Hatfield and Sprecher's (1986) Passionate Love Scale which measures the passion levels in the relationship and Rubin's (1970) Love Scale which measures the level of love in the relationship.

There are twelve questions presented, each question on the Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship Measure is rated on one of the following 7-point Likert scales, 1 = "not at all happy" to 7 = "extremely happy," 1 = "not at all true" to 7 = "definitely true," 1 = "almost no time" to 7 = "almost all of my time," and 1 = "mostly unpleasant thoughts" to 7 = "mostly pleasant thoughts". A score of 1-3 will indicate that there is low relationship satisfaction, a score of 4 is neutral and a score of 5-7 will indicate high relationship satisfaction. The scale had a high level of internal consistency as determined by the Cronbach's alpha of .716.

The Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999) Subjective Happiness scale. This is a 4 item scale that aims to measure subjective happiness levels. The four questions are measured on a 7 point Likert scale; the options given on the Likert scale are chosen to finish the sentence fragment started in the question. All four questions have different options for the answers, 1 = "not a very happy person", 7 = "a very happy person", 1 = "less happy", 7 = "more happy", 1 = "not at all", 7 = "a great deal" (see appendix for items). Question five "How many problems are there in your relationship?" will be reverse coded. A score of 1-3 will indicate that there are low general happiness levels, a score of 4 is neutral and a score of 5-7 will indicate general happiness levels. The scale had a medium level of internal consistency as determined by the Cronbach's alpha of .590 which is lower than the preferred number 0.7.

The Docan-Morgan, T., & Docan, C. A. (2007) Internet infidelity scale (self-version). The Self-Infidelity questionnaire contains 44 questions and employs the following 5point Likert scale: 1 = not infidelity, 2 = slight degree, 3 = considerable, 4 = strong degree, 5 = highest degree of infidelity. A score of 1-2 will indicate a low score of internet infidelity, a score of 3

is neutral and a score of 4-5 will indicate a high score of internet infidelity. Questions based on sexual infidelity, emotional infidelity and pornography will be included. The scale had a high level of internal consistency as determined by the Cronbach's alpha of .981.

#### 3.4. Procedures:

The medium for generating data for the research study was a web-based survey entitled 'the difference in relationship satisfaction between people who met their partner online vs in person'. The survey was created on Google docs and was designed to take approximately 15 minutes to complete. To represent the population as accurately as possible a randomised sample was selected opposed to a convenience sample. To achieve this, the survey was shared on social media sites namely Facebook and Reddit and shared via an NCI college e-mail.

A total of 99 participants were obtained by these methods during the period the 17<sup>th</sup> of January and the 19<sup>th</sup> of February. Within the survey, an information sheet was produced which described the aim of the survey, what it hopes to achieve, provided guidance on the user-friendly, easy to use multiple choice question layout, describing the nature of the questions. The information sheet noted also how the participant would be aiding in the study and the contact details for the NCI supervisor which provided the participants with a medium for further information if required.

After reading the information sheet, if the participant was willing to continue with the study they were directed to the second page which presents a consent form. The consent form informs the participant that the survey is completely voluntary and anonymous and allows them to agree to the terms and conditions and give their full consent. After agreeing to the terms and conditions, Participants are asked some demographic information, for example, age, gender, how they met their partner (online vs in person).

Three separate scales are then administrated in the form of questionnaires to answer within the best of the participant's abilities. The first scale presented is the Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship scale (Koo et al. 2008) which consists of 12 questions to complete. The second scale present is the Subjective Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky et al. 1999) which consisted of 4 questions about their general happiness.

The third scale is the Self Internet infidelity scale (Docan-Morgan et al. 2007), this consists of 44 questions. The participant is asked to imagine that their partner does not know that they are engaging in the behaviours described and to assume that the person they are interacting with is someone who they find romantically attractive and were asked to rate the scenarios on how severe the actions are in terms of infidelity.

When participants completed the questionnaires there was a debriefing form which gave possible helplines and websites to go to if any of the topics brought up in the survey were distressing. After the survey was submitted the data was collected and uploaded onto SPSS to be analysed. Respondents could stop the survey at any time throughout the survey before selecting the submit button without penalty and their data will be destroyed.

#### 4. Results:

##### 4.1. Frequencies for the current sample of people:

The following table 1 shows the results for from the survey for persons who took part in the survey (frequency) under gender, age and group, group 1 being online whilst group 2 being in person.

Table 1 - Frequencies for the current sample of people who met their partner online and in person on each demographic variable (N=99)

Variable	Frequency	Valid Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	22	22.2
Female	77	77.8
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	52	52.5
Over 25	47	47.5
<b>Groups</b>		
Online	43	43.4
In person	56	56.6

In regards to gender, the largest number of respondents were female at 77% (n=77), there were no respondents who chose the option of 'other'. Out of the 43 respondents who met online, 72% of these were female (n=31) and 28% were male (n=12).

The majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of 18-25 (n=52), this consisted of 75% females (n=39) and 25% males (n=13). Overall more women responded to the survey, the distribution of the age ranges for females are practically equal, 51% of females were 18-25 and 49% were over 25.

#### 4.2. Descriptive statistics of all continuous variables:

The following table 2 shows the Descriptive statistics.

Table 2 - Descriptive statistics of all continuous variables.

	Mean (95% Confidence Intervals)	Std. Error Mean	Median	SD	Range
General happiness	17.64 (16.97-18.30)	.34	18	3.36	9-28
Relationship satisfaction	49.54 (47.42-51.65)	1.07	46	10.62	38-81
Internet infidelity	144.74 (135.63-153.32)	4.46	154	44.37	44-217

The lowest and highest possible score that can be achieved on each scale questionnaire was calculated, the median of these scores was then calculated therefore whatever score fell below the median was equal to a high score and whatever score equal to or above the median equated to a high score. On average participants scored high on general happiness (mean = 17.64), high on relationship satisfaction (mean = 49.54) and high on internet infidelity scores (mean=144.74).

4.3. Mean scores for internet infidelity for both online and in person groups:

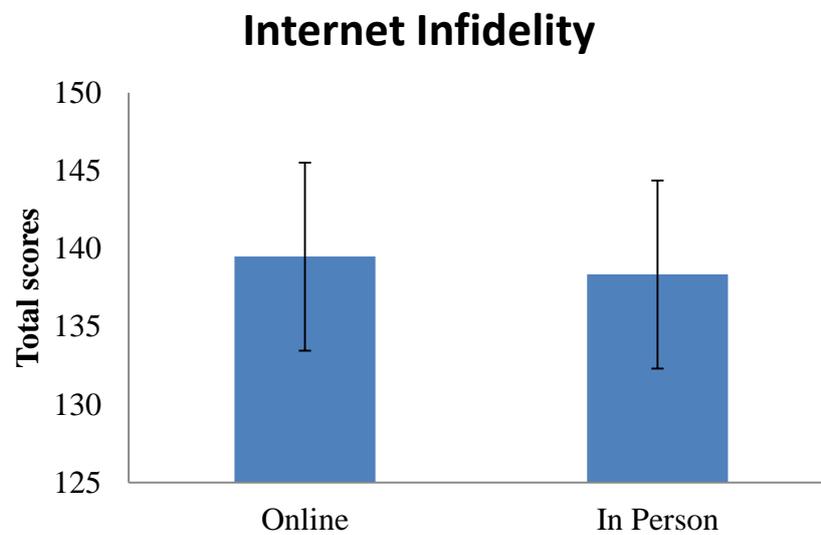


Figure 1 - Mean scores for internet infidelity for both online and in person groups

The above figure 1 graph shows the Mean scores for both online and in person groups for the internet infidelity scale, the error bars denote one standard error around the mean. On average people who met online scored higher (152.47) than those who met in person (138.34).

4.4. Mean scores for Relationship Satisfaction (RS) & General Happiness (GH) for both online and in person groups:

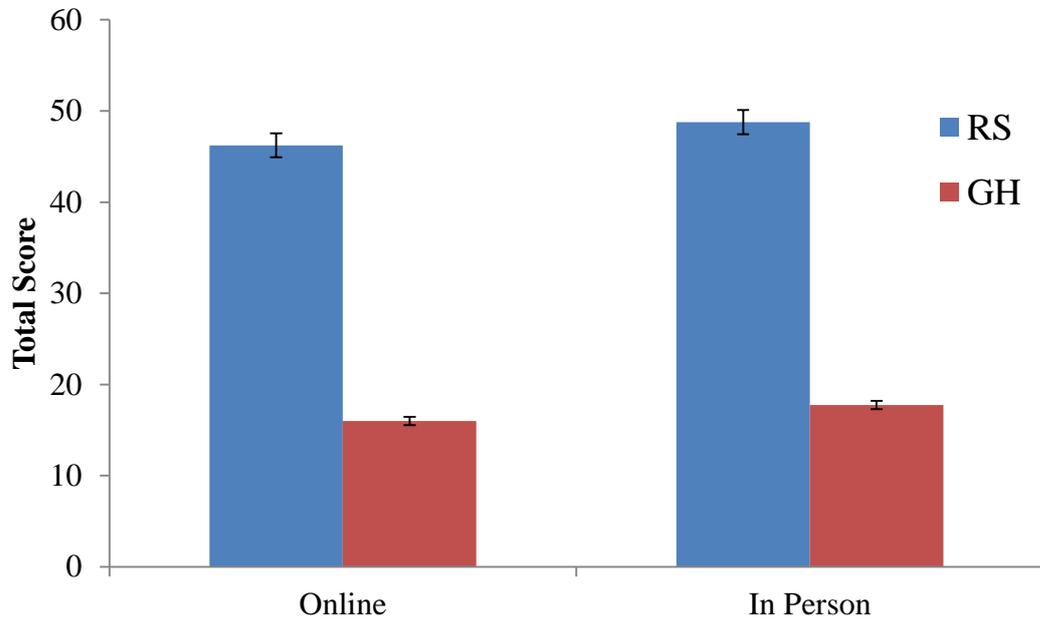


Figure 2 - Mean scores for Relationship Satisfaction (RS) & General Happiness (GH) for both online and in person groups

The above figure 2 graph shows the Mean scores for both online and in person groups for the Relationship satisfaction scale and the General happiness scale, group 1 – online, group 2 – in person. The error bars denote one standard error around the mean. On average people who met online scored higher (50.53) in relationship satisfaction whilst those who met in person scored (48.77). People who met in person scored higher in general happiness (17.75) whilst those who met online scored (17.49).

4.5. Sample responses from Self-internet infidelity scale:

Table 3 - Sample responses from Self-internet infidelity scale

Survey question	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Q5:</b> Telling a person you met in the chat room that you love them while chatting online.	4.40	1.12
<b>Q30:</b> Looking at pornography on the internet.	2.31	1.49
<b>Q31:</b> Playing a game such as checkers with a person you met online.	1.75	1.72
<b>Q34:</b> Using the internet to meet needs not being met in your relationship.	4.03	1.33
<b>Q44:</b> Having cybersex with a person you met in a chatroom.	4.48	1.15

The above table 3 shows a sample of results from the survey from the Self-internet infidelity scale. When examining the mean scores of the 5-point Likert scale on the self-internet infidelity questionnaire in figure 3, it is seen in table 4 that the highest rated scores (Q5, Q34, Q44) involve what it perceived to be high levels of emotional betrayal (telling a person who isn't your partner that you love them). Results also showed two of the lowest rated scores involved playing an online game with some you met in a chat room (Q31) and watching pornography (Q30).

4.6. Sample responses from Relationship Satisfaction scale:

Table 4 - Sample responses from Relationship Satisfaction scale

Survey responses	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>Q6:</b> I would rather be with my partner than anyone else.	2.67	2.34
<b>Q7:</b> I want my partner physical, emotionally and mentally.	2.66	2.27
<b>Q8:</b> I have endless appetite and affection from my partner.	2.90	2.19

The above table 4 shows a sample of results from the survey from the Relationship Satisfaction scale. When examining individuals item scores on the relationship satisfaction scale a few items stood out as being scored low as the individual mean score for this scale was ( $M = 3.90$ ), on average participants rated question RS7, RS8 and RS9 very low. These questions were derived from the Passionate love scale (Hatfield & Sprecher's, 1986).

A test for homogeneity was run and found that the data was non-parametric. A Mann-Whitney U test was run to determine if there were differences in General happiness (GH), relationship satisfaction (RS) and Internet infidelity (Infidelity) scores between people who met their partners online and people who met their partners in person. Distributions of all three scores for online and in person were dissimilar, as assessed by visual inspection of graphs.

It indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in GH, RS and Infidelity scores between online and in-person groups. General happiness,  $U = 1145.5$ ,  $z = -.415$ ,  $p = .678$  (online mean rank = 48.64, in person mean rank = 51.04), relationship satisfaction  $U = 1092.5$ ,  $z = -.778$ ,  $p = .430$  (online mean rank = 52.59, in person mean rank = 48.01), internet

infidelity  $U = 990.5$ ,  $z = -1.507$ ,  $p = .136$  (online mean rank = 54.57, in person mean rank = 46.19).

On average people who met in person (group 2) scored higher in general happiness, people who met online (group 1) scored higher in relationship satisfaction and people who met online scored higher in the internet infidelity scale. However, the results on the distribution and mean ranks were found to be not significant as none of the p-value were  $p < .05$ , the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore the following hypotheses cannot be supported;

- Hypothesis 1: Relationship satisfaction levels will be higher in people who met online.
- Hypothesis 2: General happiness levels will be higher for people who met in person.
- Hypothesis 3: People who have met online will perceive internet infidelity as a more severe action than people who met in person.

## 5. Discussion:

The primary objective of this study was to determine if there was a difference in relationship satisfaction between people who met their partner's online versus people who met in person. It would be interesting if people who met online had a different outcome and contradicted this literature. If we refer to figure 1 it can be seen that people who met online scored higher than people who met in person. However, the results of the Mann Whitney U that was performed stated that these results were not statistically significant. The aim derived from the literature reviewed stated that online dating had fundamentally changed the concept of romance and how people now date. Ultimately the aim was to see if meeting one's partner online could affect the outcome of the relationship in a positive or negative way.

To explore the objective mentioned above, three hypotheses were presented. Collectively these hypotheses were looking at general happiness, relationship satisfaction as mentioned above and a deeper understanding of how people perceive internet infidelity in relation to people who met online and in person. The second hypothesis, see figure 1, general happiness was a key measure being examined as it has been seen in previous studies that people in a happy and satisfactory relationship are more likely to have higher levels of general happiness or subjective well-being (Kamp Dush, Amato, 2005).

Regarding the third hypothesis as seen in figure 2, as social media and the internet, in general, have taken on the dating scene by storm, looking at internet infidelity seemed to be an area of interest. Cheating will always be present but now it has different platforms to present itself, it has been shown in literature reviewed that internet infidelity is just as distressing as cheating in person (Mao & Raguram 2009).

The research is beneficial as it will make a contribution to the body of knowledge by aiming to establish whether meeting online will be just as or more successful than meeting in person. Another aspect of the discussion is whether the use of online dating can be damaging to one's ultimate relationship satisfaction or general happiness. As seen in the results in figure 2, the scores suggest it will not be damaging.

The results in table 4 also add information to existing data on the perception of internet infidelity and how an individual doesn't necessarily need to see an act of physical contact to be considered as a betrayal, as the highest rating scores on the internet infidelity scale show emotional betrayal not physical betrayal. However, this study does not claim to have the final definitions of what is or is not internet infidelity it does reveal gaps in the literature reviewed, such as, the people who find this type of betrayal more severe, the online group 1, and that there are certain acts online that are scored at a harsher level, see table 4.

### 5.1. Results discussed:

In regards to gender, the largest number of respondents from the sample obtained from the survey was female which makes the distribution of male and females appear to be very unequal. This is an interesting result as past studies have shown that men use online dating sites, such as tinder, more than women (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007), although results may differ if a larger sample of males is collected. If this study was to be replicated a convenience sample may be taken into consideration to obtain an equal division of gender.

It was shown in table 1 that the majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of 18-25. This result was unexpected as the survey had been sent around to students of the National College of Ireland before being shared on online platforms such as Facebook and Reddit, it was predicted that the majority of the respondents would be younger college students. However, it has been shown in previous studies that older individuals, such as middle-aged people, tend to use online dating more than younger individuals (Hogan et al., 2011).

According to table 2, on average the respondents scored highly on all three scales. In regards to relationship satisfaction scale, people who met online scored slightly higher than people who met in person. This finding supports several previous studies that show that relationships that started online have higher marital satisfaction than those who met in person (Cacioppo et al. 2013). It also supports the work of Rosenfeld (2012) that the act of meeting online results in higher relationship quality and are less likely to break up before the one year mark which is a major milestone in a relationship. Results in table 3 show three of the lowest scored questions on the relationship satisfaction scale. The scale was derived from three separate scales, the three particular questions shown were taken from the Passionate love scale

(Hatfield & Sprecher's, 1986). The findings may indicate low levels of passionate love in the relationship, although, love can have many different definitions e.g. romantic love, motherly love, therefore this may not indicate low levels of relationship satisfaction in general, merely a component of relationship satisfaction.

When examining the results for general happiness it is seen that people who met in person scored slightly higher than those who met online. This result is supported by the majority of the literature reviewed as most literature states that involvement with online social scenes such as a dating websites by default may lead to low levels of general happiness (Underwood & Findlay, 2004; Cummings, 2006). However there is a large amount of literature stating that high levels of relationship satisfaction results in high levels of general happiness (Kamp Dush, Amato, 2005) this could be a factor which lead to the majority of participants having high levels of general happiness.

When examining results for internet infidelity, on average all respondents scored highly on this scale. This result supports the findings of previous literature stating that infidelity does not have to be physical to be seen as an act of betrayal it can mostly be emotional (Smith, 2011; Whitty, 2005) as the majority of the participants scored highly for emotional infidelity and online sexual infidelity which implies they found the acts as very severe in terms of betrayal. It also supports the research conducted by Mao and Raguram (2009) stating online infidelity can be just as distressing as face to face physical infidelity.

The average score for question 30 'Looking at pornography on the internet' was very low, this may be because you are not interacting with an actual individual, even though it is possible some people would describe it as sexual infidelity there is little emotional infidelity involved. This also supports Whitty (2005) as most participants concentrated on the emotional infidelity not sexual when discussing online infidelity.

It is seen in the literature reviewed that there have been studies rating the severity of internet infidelity (Parker & Wampler, 2003), however, there is a lack of studies comparing the two groups online and in person. When looking at the two separate groups (online and in person) results showed that people who met online scored higher overall. Although the results were

shown as not significant, this is still an interesting finding in relation to what hypothesis 3 had predicted.

The results of the Mann Whitney U test that was performed to examine any possible differences between the groups shows that the results were not significant. These findings mean that the results of this study have to be taken with caution as no  $P < .05$ . There is no difference in the mean values which brings us to the conclusion that a significant difference does not exist in the data.

## 5.2. Limitations:

One of the main limitations seen in this study is the unequal distribution of male and female participants. As a substantially large amount of women took part in this study the results showing males scores might not display an accurate representation of the population. Further studies should aim to have an equal distribution of gender and even consider various other gender types.

It has been found in the literature above that men and women don't rate their own infidelity as being as unacceptable as if their partner was to commit infidelity, this may cause problems in the self-internet infidelity scale as the participants are asked to imagine themselves taking part in these actions. The researcher has to presume the participant is answering the questions as accurately as possible, however, if the participant is thinking about their partner taking part in these actions the data may be skewed as when thinking of their partner individuals tend to rate the action as harsher. To examine this topic more closely and produce more accurate data in future studies the self-internet infidelity scale and the partner infidelity scale should both be presented to participants.

Different views on the severity of certain acts online could lead to jealousy in the relationship and lead to inappropriate behaviour from one of the partners which in turn would lead to an unsatisfactory relationship. In 2010 30% of married couples had at least one partner conducting inappropriate or untrustworthy behaviour, such as secretly reading their partners emails or text messages at least once in the relationship (Helsper & Whitty 2010). These

views may skew the results of the internet infidelity but could still give a general presumption on who is more likely to pursue internet infidelity.

### 5.3. Implications:

As seen from the above discussion points, the results of the study did not show a statistically significant difference between people who met online and in person, although, the study does provide a novice analysis for the possibility that meeting your partner online has no major impact or change on relationship satisfaction and general happiness. These results may alter beliefs that online dating is taboo or creates a toxic dating environment when it may not have any significant negative percussion in relation to the success of the relationships produced.

The first aim was to examine whether meeting someone online can benefit relationship satisfaction for couples. No negative results regarding participants who met online came out of this study. This could be a topic of interest for dating sites as if results were found that met who met online didn't online have a successful relationship but have higher relationship satisfaction overall it could positively affect their business.

The second aim was to gain a deeper understanding of how people perceive internet fidelity in relation to people who met online and in person. It was shown that people who met online perceived internet infidelity as more severe than in person. A potential implication of this would be that is less compromise in the relationship as they are more in tuned to how online relationships evolve.

To establish whether online relationships will be successful in the future or whether the use of online dating can be damaging to one's ultimate relationship satisfaction or general happiness. Based on the results from the study there is a potential for online dating to grow as from this study as the results shows no significant additional risk to the relationship.

## **6. Conclusion:**

Even though the end results of this study are not statistically significant, it has highlighted that there is an equal number of people who have met online and in person who are having successful relationships. As the population becomes increasingly more dependent on the internet it is important for studies like this to be replicated on a larger scale as it would be very beneficial from a perspective of government policy, demographics and the internet dating industry to name a few.

A suggestion for further study would be a larger sample involved in a convenience where an equal amount of males and females was guaranteed. This would guarantee a more accurate representation of the population. This study contributes to the body of knowledge that is available under this research area and provides an up to date perspective from potential people seeking a partner.

The findings of this study have shown from the three hypotheses the following:

Hypothesis 1, Relationship satisfaction will be higher in people who met online, the results of this study supports the existing literature available on this topic.

Hypothesis 2, General Happiness will be higher in people who met in person, the results of this study does not support the literature available and reviewed.

Hypothesis 3, Internet Fidelity will be higher in those who met online, the results of this study support the literature reviewed.

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## **8. Appendices:**

### 8.1. Appendices No.1 – Information Sheet:

Researcher: Megan Connolly

#### INVITATION

You are being asked to take part in a research study on the difference in relationship satisfaction between a couple who met online vs couples who met in person.

I am an undergraduate student at the School of Business, National College of Ireland. The aims of this research study are to quantify and understand the relationship satisfaction levels in modern-day couples who have met in two contrasting ways, namely meeting online and in person, to highlight the statistical success rates from each relationship group and to compare who is more likely to commit internet infidelity between the two related groups. A lecturer from the National College of Ireland will be supervising this research study.

#### WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to complete three separate questionnaires based on relationship satisfaction, all questionnaires are displayed in a multiple choice question layout. The first questionnaire presented will be Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship Measure (Koo, Algoe, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2008) this will measure relationship satisfaction levels. The second questionnaire is a subjective happiness scale (Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. 1999) this will measure general happiness. The third questionnaire will be an internet infidelity scale (Docan-Morgan, T., & Docan, C. A. 2007) this will measure the likelihood of whether the participant is likely to commit internet infidelity (talking, having an emotional connection with someone other than your partner online). This contains 44 questions which you will be asked answer truthfully and to the best of your ability.

#### TIME COMMITMENT

The study typically takes 15 minutes in total.

## PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time before pressing the submit button without explanation. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/destroyed without penalty up until you submit the questionnaire, as after it is completed the data will be anonymised and have no way to be linked back to the participant. You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you.

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered by emailing the research conductor. If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

## BENEFITS AND RISKS

There are no known benefits or risks for you in this study.

Participation in this study involves completion of the three standardised questionnaires. These are routinely used as simple measures of relationship satisfaction, subjective happiness and internet infidelity. Although it is not possible to provide feedback of individual scores to participants as the data will be anonymised after completion. There will be helplines at the end of the debrief forms after the questionnaires are completed if any form of distress arises throughout completing the questionnaires.

## COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

## CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect does not contain any personal information about you except your age, gender and whether you met your partner online or in person. No one will link the data you provided to the identifying information you supplied.

The information collected will be used in a thesis and will be presented to a board at the NCI research conference.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The supervisor Dr. April Hargreaves will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time at [april.hargreaves@ncirl.ie](mailto:april.hargreaves@ncirl.ie) or myself at [15556537@student.ncirl.ie](mailto:15556537@student.ncirl.ie)

## 8.2. Appendices No.2 – Informed consent sheet

In agreeing to participate in this research I understand the following:

This research is being conducted by Megan Connolly, an undergraduate student at the School of Business, National College of Ireland.

The method proposed for this research project has been approved in principle by the Departmental Ethics Committee, which means that the Committee does not have concerns about the procedure itself as detailed by the student. It is, however, the above-named student's responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines in their dealings with participants and the collection and handling of data.

If I have any concerns about participation I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any stage.

I have been informed as to the general nature of the study and agree voluntarily to participate.

There are no known expected discomforts or risks associated with participation.

All data from the study will be treated confidentially. The data from all participants will be compiled, analysed, and submitted in a report to the Psychology Department in the School of Business. No participant's data will be identified by name at any stage of the data analysis or in the final report. At the conclusion of my participation, any questions or concerns I have will be fully addressed.

⋮

By checking this box you will be agreeing to all of the terms and conditions above, that you have been given the opportunity to ask questions and understand this process is voluntary.

I agree

### 8.3. Appendices No.3 – Survey (Demographic questions)

Did you meet your partner online or in person? \*

Online

In person

Your gender \*

Male

Female

Other

Age? \*

18-30

Over 30

# Happiness and satisfaction with relationship scale.

The Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship Measure (Koo et al., 2008) consists of 12 questions assessing romantic couples' happiness and satisfaction with their relationship. Each item on the Happiness and Satisfaction with Relationship Measure is rated on one of the following 7-point scales: 1 = 'not at all happy' to 7 = 'extremely happy,' 1 = 'not at all true' to 7 = 'definitely true,' 1 = 'almost no time' to 7 = 'almost all of my time,' and 1 = 'mostly unpleasant thoughts' to 7 = 'mostly pleasant thoughts.'

⋮

1. How happy do you feel? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not happy at all	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely happy						

2. In general, how satisfied are you with the relationship? \*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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3. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not happy at all	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely happy						

4. How much do you love your partner? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not happy at all	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely happy						

⋮

5. How many problems are there in your relationship? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Mostly unpleasant thoughts	<input type="radio"/>	Mostly pleasant thoughts						

6. I would rather be with my partner than with anyone else. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely true	<input type="radio"/>	Not true at all						

7. I want my partner - physically, emotional and mentally. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely true	<input type="radio"/>	Not true at all						

8. I have an endless appetite for affection from my partner. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely true	<input type="radio"/>	Not true at all						

9. One of my main concerns is my partners welfare. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely true	<input type="radio"/>	Not true at all						

10. It would be hard for me to get long without my partner. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely true	<input type="radio"/>	Not true at all						

11. To what extent have you thought about your partner in the last 24 hours? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Almost no time at all	<input type="radio"/>	Almost all of my time						

12. Have those thoughts been primarily positive or negative? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Mostly pleasant thoughts	<input type="radio"/>	Mostly unpleasant thoughts						

# Subjective happiness scale

The purpose of the scale is to measure global subjective happiness (Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. 1999).

⋮

1. In general I consider myself: \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not a very happy person	<input type="radio"/>	A happy person						

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself: \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Less happy	<input type="radio"/>	More happy						

3. Some people are generally very happy, they enjoy life regardless what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	A great deal						

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	A great deal						

# Internet Infidelity Scale Version: Self Infidelity (i.e., Your Own Actions)

Assume that your partner DOES NOT KNOW you are engaging in these behaviors.

Assume that the person you are interacting with online is someone to whom you could be romantically attracted.

Rank the scenario on how severe your actions are from 1-5.

1= not infidelity

2=slight degree

3=considerable

4=strong degree

5=highest degree

1. Using flirtatious language with a person you met on an internet chat room \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

2. Chatting with a person you met in an Internet chat room about how your day went. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

3. Having a conversation about your sex life in an Internet chat room with a person you met on-line. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

...

4. Having emotional feelings for a person you met in a chat room after a few months of chatting with them. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

5. Telling a person you met in a chat room that you love them while chatting online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

6. Chatting about meeting someone in person whom you met in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

7. Giving your e-mail address to a person you met in a chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

8. Chatting about your favorite sports team with a person you met in a chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

9. Having friendly conversations with people in a chat room titled "Married and Looking." \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

10. Seeking relationship advice online from a person you met on-line in a chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

11. Sending e-mails/messages to a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

12. Talking about your problems with a person you met in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

13. Sending e-mails/messages to a person you met online that discuss issues you don't like about your partner. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

14. Sending an E-card to a person you met on-line that involves flirtatious comments. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

15. E-mailing a person you met online everyday about your life. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

16. Having intellectual e-mail conversations with a person you met on the Internet. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

17. E-mailing/messaging secrets that you do not tell your partner to a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

18. Keeping in touch with an ex partner over e-mail/messenger. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

19. Sending a friendly e-mail/message to someone you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

20. Using Instant Messenger to tell a person you met online that you care for them. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

21. E-mailing a picture of yourself to a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

22. Joking around with a person you met online in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

23. Having an ongoing philosophical conversation about love through email/messenger with a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

24. E-mailing/messaging a person you met online for relationship advice. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

25. Developing a friendship with a person you met in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

26. Creating a pet name for a person you met in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

27. Having a serious conversation with someone in an Internet chat room whom you met on-line. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

28. Complimenting someone you meet in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

29. Having an intimate relationship with a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

30. Looking at pornography on the Internet. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

31. Playing a game such as checkers on the Internet with a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

32. Posting your own personal ad on the Internet seeking other partners. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

33. Making plans to meet someone in person that you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

34. Using the Internet to meet needs not being met in your relationship \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

35. Instant messaging with a person you met in an Internet chat room. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

36. Having friendly conversations on Instant Messenger with your ex-partner. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

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37. Using Instant messenger to communicate with a person you met online about relational problems with your partner. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

38. Communicating with a person you met on-line in a flirtatious manner through Instant Messenger. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

39. Viewing personal ads on the Internet. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

40. Using Instant Messenger with a person you met on-line to talk about current events and the news. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

⋮

41. Joking around on Instant Messenger with a person you met online. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

42. Asking for someone you met on the Internet to do a favor for you. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

43. Instant Messaging with someone you met online before you go to bed every night. \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

44. Having cybersex with a person you met in a chat room. (Cybersex involves an interchange of text that includes sexual role playing, and usually is done in a chat room or through Instant Messenger; similar to phone sex, but on the Internet.) \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not infidelity	<input type="radio"/>	Highest degree of infidelity				

#### 8.4. Appendices No.4 – Mann-Whitney Test:

The tables show the results of a Mann Whitney U test, this is used to compare differences between two independent groups (online and in person). Results show Asymp. sig 2 tailed (p-value) show that all scores were greater than .05, results were non-significant.

### Mann-Whitney Test

		Ranks		
	groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
TotalGH	online	43	48.64	2091.50
	in person	56	51.04	2858.50
	Total	99		
TotalInfidelity	online	43	54.97	2363.50
	in person	56	46.19	2586.50
	Total	99		
TotalRS	online	43	52.59	2261.50
	in person	56	48.01	2688.50
	Total	99		

### Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	TotalGH	TotalInfidelity	TotalRS
Mann-Whitney U	1145.500	990.500	1092.500
Wilcoxon W	2091.500	2586.500	2688.500
Z	-.415	-1.507	-.788
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.678	.132	.430

a. Grouping Variable: groups