

**INFIDELITY IN ALICE MUNRO'S SELECTED
SHORT STORIES**



THESIS

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirement to obtain Undergraduate Degree
in English*

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THESIS
INFIDELITY IN ALICE MUNRO'S SELECTED SHORT STORIES

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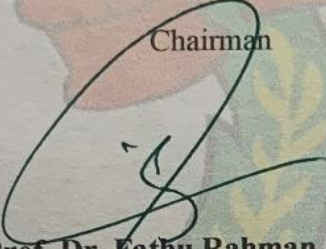
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On Friday, December 2nd 2022, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Saskia Aulia Sahputri (F041181042) entitled **“INFIDELITY IN ALICE MUNRO’S SELECTED SHORT STORIES”** submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S) Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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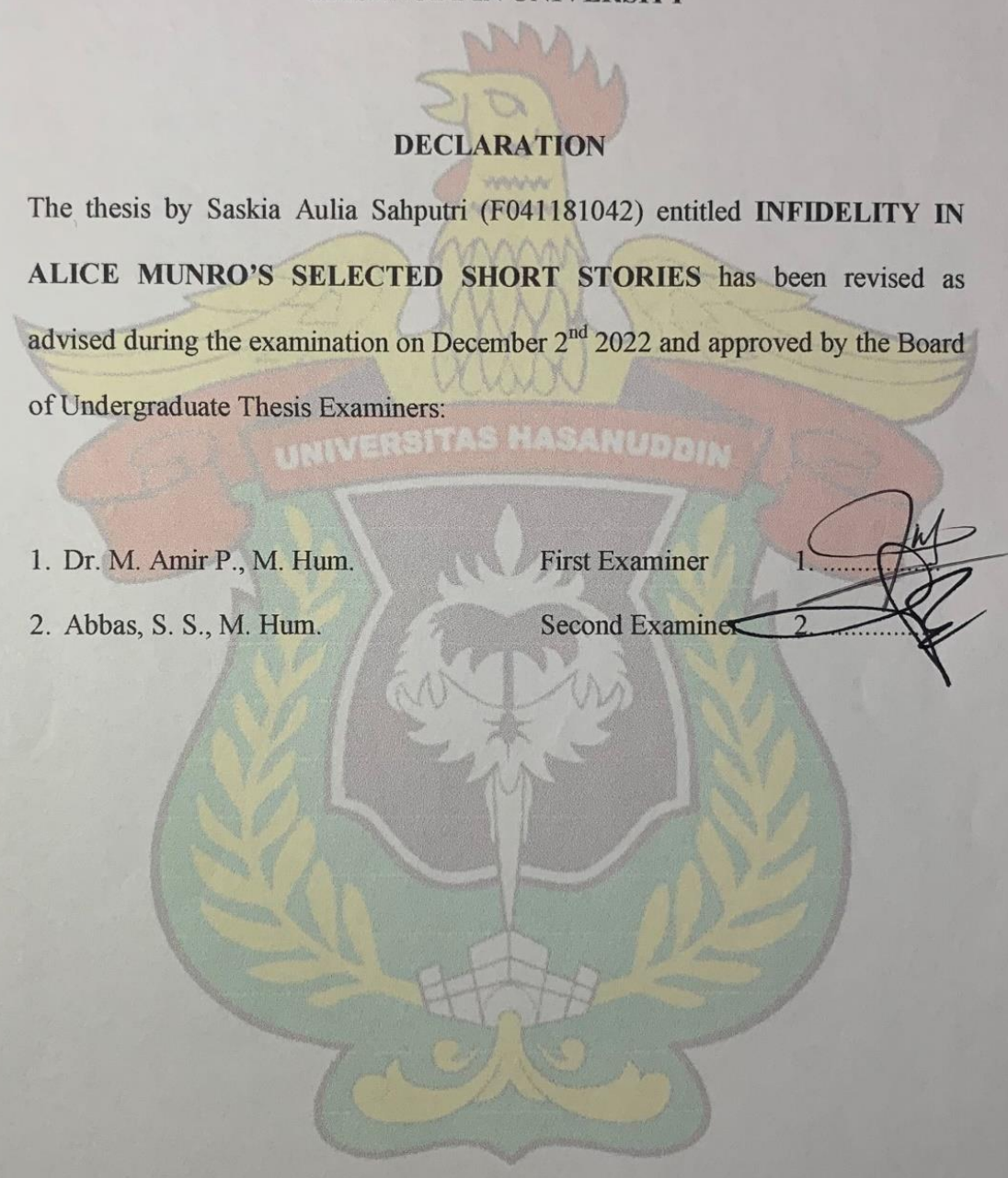
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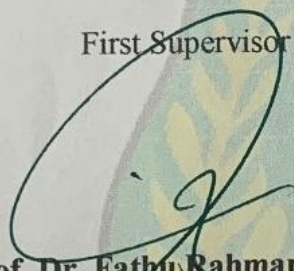
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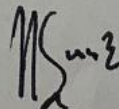
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Saskia Aulia Sahputri

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This thesis is still far from being perfect. Therefore, I hopes some suggestions and guidance for making this thesis will useful for readers.

Makassar, November 17th 2022

Saskia Aulia Sahputri

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ABSTRAK

SASKIA AULIA SAHPUTRI. 2022. *Infidelity in Alice Munro selected short stories.* (Dibimbing oleh **Fathu Rahman** dan **Herawaty**)

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan isu perselingkuhan yang dilakukan oleh tokoh utama perempuan dalam cerita pendek yang berjudul *to Reach Japan* dan *Leaving Maverley* karya Alice Munro. Penulis juga menganalisis faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan para tokoh utama perempuan melakukan perselingkuhan.

Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan strukturalisme dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dalam menggambarkan isu atau fenomena yang ditemukan di dalam cerita pendek. Untuk mendukung penelitian ini, penulis mengumpulkan data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer diambil dari objek kajian penelitian yaitu cerita pendek terpilih karya Alice Munro yang berjudul *to Reach Japan* dan *Leaving Maverley*. Sedangkan data sekunder diambil dari buku, tesis, jurnal dan artikel yang relevan dengan penelitian.

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, penulis menemukan bahwa bentuk perselingkuhan yang dilakukan oleh para tokoh utama perempuan dalam kedua cerita pendek adalah perselingkuhan seksual dan emosional. Sementara faktor yang mempengaruhinya adalah 1). Faktor keadaan seperti para tokoh utama perempuan bekerja diluar rumah, pasangan mereka yang sibuk sehingga menjalani hubungan jarak jauh 2). Kurangnya nilai-nilai agama seperti ketidakpercayaan terhadap Tuhan.

Kata kunci: *Perselingkuhan, Karakter Utama Perempuan, faktor keadaan, kurangnya nilai-nilai agama*

ABSTRACT

SASKIA AULIA SAHPUTRI. 2022. *Infidelity in Alice Munro selected short stories* (Supervised by **Fathu Rahman** and **Herawaty**)

This study aims to describe the issue of infidelity by female main characters in short stories *to Reach Japan* and *Leaving Maverley* by Alice Munro. The writer also analyzes the factor that causes female main character to be unfaithful.

The approach used in this thesis is a structuralism approach by applying descriptive qualitative methods to describe issue or phenomena observed in short stories. To support this study, the writer obtained both primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from the *to Reach Japan* and *Leaving Maverley* written by Alice Munro. While secondary data were obtained from books, theses, journal and articles relevant to the study.

The results show that types of infidelity which is conducted by female main characters in both of short stories are sexual and emotional infidelity. Meanwhile the factors that cause are 1). Situational factor such as the female main characters work in public area, their partners are busy, so they have long-distance relationship 2). Lack of religious value such as disbelief in God.

Keywords: *Infidelity, Female main characters, Situational factor, Lack of religious value*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Infidelity is still a widespread case in society today. Laumann (1994) said this behavior can cause damage in a relationship, and it also occurs widely every year in married life. This means that it has become a real phenomenon that can damage relationships with spouses or households for those who are married. It is dominated not only by men, but also women, regardless of age, rank, level of education and social status.

The occurrence of infidelity is due to problems in life, especially problems in relationships. As Plato (1996) said that literary work is the reflection of what is happening in the society. Therefore, problem on infidelity is also reflected in Literary works. One of them is sort stories. Although not as complicated as a novel. But the elements in the short stories have similarities to the novels. Abrams stated that "Short story is a brief work a prose fiction, and most of the terms for analyzing the component elements, the type, and the various narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well" (1999: 286).

One of the famous Canadian writers dubbed the Master of Contemporary short stories is Alice Munro. She won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2013 for her beautiful narrative. Some of her works explore various issues such as, women's movement towards liberation, gender relations, mother-daughter relationship and infidelity.

Dear Life is the last collection of Alice Munro, published in 2012 by

McClelland and Stewart. The book was to have been promoted in part by a reading at Toronto's International Festival of Authors, although the appearance was cancelled due to health concerns. Several collections of short stories in this novel take the issue of infidelity. Among them are "To Reach Japan " and " Leaving Maverley". Munro (In CBC Radio 2016) said "It's so dramatic. The wickedness of it, the secrecy, the complications, the finding that you thought you were one person but you're also this other person. The innocent life and the guilty life. My God, it's just full of stuff for a writer".

To Reach Japan was first published in Narrative Magazine and then it was included in Munro's collection *Dear Life*, published in 2012. It tells about a woman who is a poet. She committed infidelity while she already had a husband and children. Her affair occurred because of her activities outside the home. Her husband was stiff and busy. At the end of the story, she realized that what she did was a form of betrayal towards her husband and child. While *Leaving in Maverley* tells the story of a ticket guard girl named Leah. She was an innocent girl, and one day she disappeared, leaving Maverley. After she returned, her status changed as the wife of a saxophonist. From her married, she had 2 children and her appearance changed to be more fashionable. Leah and her children live separately from her husband. Until one day, she was reportedly involved in a scandalous affair with a priest. At the end of the story, Leah was expelled and lost her children.

The two short stories above have similar cases. It is infidelity, committed by a wife due to various factors such as work outside the home, which makes her interact a lot with men other than her husband, her husband is busy or various other

reasons.

From the explanation above, the writer choose infidelity as the topic of this research because the effects infidelity to the family such as violence domestic, argue even divorce are becoming a trend in society. Brian (2022) from the journal of *Marriage and Divorce* said a mind blowing 70% of married Americans cheat at least once in their marriage. So, the two short stories also show about infidelity, which is a phenomenon that often occurs in real life.

The writer also chooses this research object. first, because the two short stories above are about infidelity, which is phenomenon that often occurs in real life. Second, the author of short stories is Canadian author who was crowned master of the short story, with 14 recognized collections and the Nobel Prize to prove it, but her works is not particularly popular with English Literature students at Hasanuddin University. Third, the writer has never found any thesis or journals in the library that discussed the two short stories. So, the writer hopes that the study can be a reference to others who will finish their studies in the English Literature Study Program and also to introduce work who are less popular and less exposed too.

To analyze these short stories, the writer uses Structuralism approach to sees issue of Infidelity that occur in the story. Because this approach pays attention to intrinsic elements of literary works. Therefore, by applying structuralism approach, the writer wants to do this research entitled *Infidelity in Alice Munro's selected short stories*.

12 Identification of Problem

Based on the selected short stories written by Alice Munro, the writer has identified some problems according to mentioned below:

1. The infidelity of female main character in *Alice Munro Selected Short Stories*.
2. The factor that causes female main character to be unfaithful in *Alice Munro Selected Short Stories*.

13 Research Question

The writer arranges questions of this research in the fictional stories as follows:

1. How is infidelity of female main character in *Alice Munro Selected Short Stories* presented?
2. What are the factors that cause female main character to be unfaithful in *Alice Munro Selected Short Stories*?

14 Objective of Writing

Based on the research question, the writer determines the objective of this study, namely:

1. To explain the way infidelity of female main character is presented in *Alice Munro selected short stories*.
2. To describe the factors that cause the female main character to be unfaithful in *Alice Munro Selected Short Stories*.

1.5 Sequence of Writing

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter One is an introduction, which consists of background of study, identification of the problem, the questions of research, objective of the writing, and sequence of writing. Chapter Two is literature review, which consist of some previous studies that have been conducted related to current study. Chapter Three is research methodology, which explains about the method of research, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data. Chapter Four consists of analysis. And Chapter Five presents conclusion and suggestion from this study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Study

There have been some researches done related to this current study. These researches have been done by Nuryani (2017), Sari (2021) and Lisyowati & Hanna (2020).

Nuryani (2017) wrote her research entitled *Women's Intimacy in a Collection of Dear Life Short Stories by Alice Munro*. Focused on Alice Munro's three short stories, namely *To Reach Japan*, *Leaving Maverley* and *Gravel* in a short story collection entitled *Dear Life*, Nuryani used the theory of intimacy by Anthony Giddens, in his book *The Transformation of Intimacy* (1992). The result shows that the women intimacy relationship in the novel tends to be more fluid, but pure relationship offered by Giddens cannot be achieved by female characters in these three short stories.

Sari (2021) analyzed her research entitled *Infidelity in Munro's "What is Remembered" and Lahiri's "Sexy": A Comparative Study*. This study focused on factors that cause of infidelity in both short stories. She applied a new criticism theory to study character and characterization in order to describe the character who cheats in both short stories. It applied sociological approach with a theory that cover the reasons for the occurrence of infidelity. The writer also applied a comparative approach to find the similarities and the differences of infidelity in both short stories. The results show the factors that cause the occurrence of infidelity in both

short stories are due to circumstances.

Listyowati & Hanna (2020) wrote their thesis entitled *an Analysis on Adultery in Hawthorne's the Scarlet Letter*. This study discussed about the factors that causes adultery committed by two main characters and the impact on perpetrator by using a psychological approach that focuses on psychological condition of the adulterer. The result of study found that adultery was caused by several things, such as need of safety, need of affection, need of love and belongingness and need of sex while the impact makes the perpetrators experience certain psychological conditions such as need for esteem, psychotic anxiety, security needs, developing superego, neurotic anxiety, mental disorders and psychosomatic diseases.

Based on the previous studies above the writer found both similarities and differences. The similarity is from Nuryani focused on the same object *to Reach Japan* and *Leaving Maverley*, Meanwhile the differences is from Sary focused on comparative study which she compares works' of Munro and Lahiri. From Listyowati and Hanna focused on the factor that causes adultery committed by two main characters.

The advantages of the writer from previous studies is the writer discusses about infidelity which the problems related to phenomenon often occur in human life and this work is also still rarely studied. As far the writer's exploration, So the writer has got an idea to conduct a study entitled *Infidelity in Alice Munro's Selected Short Stories*. and used a Structuralism approach. Focusing the analysis on intrinsic elements, especially by looking infidelity at female main characters and other elements that build the story from inside.

2.2 Theoretical Background

2.2.1 Structuralism Approach

Structuralism Approach is known since 1950s in France. It is first performed by Ferdinand de Saussure. This approach focused on element that build story from the inside which is commonly called the intrinsic element. Abrams (1981:68) explain “the structure of a literary work can be regarded as an arrangement, firmness, and depiction of all elements and materials which shaping a unity”. It means that element in the story cannot stand alone without the other elements. An element needs the other elements to produce a whole story.

Wellek and Warren said “Structural approach, which consists of material and structure of the text of literary work. The material includes elements that are called formal. While structure is a concept including both content and form so far as they are organized for aesthetic purpose” (1956:140-141).

Based on the explanations above, the writer can conclude that structuralism approach is an approach to see that literary works are built from things literary work itself or intrinsic element such as characters, setting, plot, theme.

2.3 Intrinsic Element

2.3.1 Character and Characterization

Character is a person who plays part of human activity or function in a work of fiction. In literary work, Character is the most important elements. In the fictional story, a character may be defined as a verbal representation of a human being. Through action, speech, description, and commentary, authors portray character

that are worth caring about, rooting for, and even loving, although there are also characters you may laugh at, dislike, or even hate (Robert, 1983:41).

Elizabeth's (2013) stated there are two types of characters; 1). Main or Major character, which is important character in the story. The character who can contribute to a story in several ways. Sometimes called the protagonist. 2). Minor characters, which the characters to support main character.

Characterization is defined as how the narrator describes and portrays the characters in the story. Thrall and Hibbar said that characterization is the depiction of characters' traits or psychology in a story. Characterization can be by direct description which the characters' traits are described by the narrator, another character or the character her or himself. It can also be by indirectly description revealing a character's qualities through action, thoughts or dialogue (1960:79).

2.3.2 Setting

Setting refers to the basis of the story that shows the place, time, social environment, and events that occur. According to Abrams (1999), there are several kinds of setting:

1. Setting of Place, direct to the location where the event happened in a story.
General locate refers to the place of scene.
2. Setting of Time is related to the problem of when the event happens in a story. The problem of when is usually connected with factual time, that has connection with Historical events.

3. Setting of circumstance, is includes to the behaviour of social life in certain place and certain time in literary work. Circumstance setting has connection with the system of social life such as cultural, economic, habits, and religion, religious issues raised in the story.

So, it means setting will make readers feel all of the events, situation and the atmosphere which conducted by stories. The element of setting can be differentiated into three elements such as setting of place, setting of time and setting of circumstance.

2.3.3 Plot

A plot is an element that deals directly with the conflict of a story. According to Klarer (1998:15), plot is the logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which leads to a change of the original situation as presented at the outset of the narrative.

Based on Charter (1987: 1366-1367) divides plot into five parts:

1. Exposition is the part in which the author introduces the characters, setting, the event that starts the journey of the story
2. Rising action is the dramatization of event that complicated the situation and gradually intensifies the conflict.
3. Climax is where the rising action (complication and conflict) come to further development and to a moment crisis.
4. Falling action is show how the problem or conflict fall.
5. Resolution is the last part, show how the problems are resolved.

The writer can conclude a plot is storyline that makes it easier for readers to follow beginning to end of the story. Began with an exposure of a situation that was interrupted by a conflict that produced tension and eventually led to a climax, followed by a compilation resolution.

2.3.4 Theme

Kenney said theme is the meaning of the story (1966:88). Theme is a central story idea that guides a literary work. Usually stated implicitly or explicitly in the story. Themes can be the author's thoughts about the environment, personal stories, history and others.

Bikerts adds that theme is the characters, plot, and setting of a work of fiction can be said the body but the theme by analogy is the heart, or the soul of the story (1993:67). Based on the above ideas, theme is the dominant of ideas and what the work is about, and it is central to story.

2.4. Infidelity

Infidelity can be defined with many words such as cheating, adultery, unfaithful, extramarital or stepping out. Blow & Hartnett state that, infidelity is defined in a myriad of ways and can comprise a number of activities including: "having an affair," "extramarital relationship," "cheating," "sexual intercourse," "oral sex," "kissing," "fondling," "emotional connections that are beyond friendships," "friendships," "Internet relationships," "pornography use," and others (2005: 186).

Drigotas and Barta (2001: 177) define infidelity as a partner's violation of norms regulating the level of emotional or physical intimacy with people outside the relationship. Infidelity, or cheating, is the act of being unfaithful to a spouse or other partner. Meyer (2021) states infidelity means engaging in sexual or romantic relations with a person other than one's significant other, breaking a commitment or promise in the act.

Based on explanation above, the writer can conclude that infidelity is a relationship between individuals, both married and unmarried men and women, with other people who are not partners, followed by sexual relations or only emotional relationships.

2.4.1 Types of Infidelity

Many people assume that infidelity or cheating means engaging in sexual or physical acts with someone other than their partner, but that is not always the case.

Thornton and Nagurney (2011:51) stated that there are two types of infidelity:

- Sexual infidelity is having sexual intercourse with someone with someone other than one's partner. Such as kissing, fondling, oral sex and vaginal.
- Emotional infidelity is considered to be "falling in love" or sharing a deep emotional bond for someone outside marriage or relationship. Such as sharing your deepest thoughts with another, trusting another, falling in love in another, being vulnerable with another, being more committed to another, spending more money on another.

2.4.2 Causes of Infidelity

The causes of infidelity are complex and varied. Infidelity can occur in happy relationships or in troubled relationships. According to Wisner's (2022) infidelity often happens because of dissatisfaction within a relationship, but it can also happen because of low self-esteem, or an addiction to sex or romance.

Furthermore, Robert Bell (1979) stated several reasons why someone commits an infidelity, such as seeking variety, revenge, opposing monogamy, seeking emotional satisfaction, being close friends with people who lead to sexual relations, husband or wife involved in scandals, considering themselves young and attractive, and engage in extramarital affairs based on pleasure. McBain and Fuller (2020) also describe reasons why people doing infidelity including, Lack of affection, feeling deprived or neglected by partner, fear of intimacy, avoidance of conflict, seeking change or variety, falling out of love, low commitment to the relationship.

DeRose et al. explain (2019:33) the cause of infidelity is the lack of religious, Religion has governed various aspects of human life. This includes household matters. In any religion, infidelity is prohibited, so that those who hold fast to religious values will not do it. On the other hand, if a person does not have a strong religious foundation, it will be easier for him to commit an affair.

According to Selterman et al. (2017), there are several factors that cause of infidelity:

1. Anger and Revenge

When someone knows that their spouse is having infidelity, one responds

differently to the other. Starting with a spouse lashing out at him or her, expressing frustration at him, filing a divorce, discussing it carefully, some even deliberately seeking his mistress out for revenge.

2. Lack of Commitment

Someone who has a big commitment will stay loyal to his partner no matter what. As for those who are poor in commitment, sticking with something that does not benefit them is not the best choice.

3. Sexual Problems

In addition to being a human need, in domestic life, contentment also becomes one of the solutions to the harmony of the household. So if there is a sexual problem, whether a spouse is dissatisfied, a saturation, or any other sexual disorder, when this is not resolved immediately, it will foster the intention to commit an affair.

4. Situational Factors

Infidelity sometimes occurs because couples are in a situation where opportunities come. Such as if the couple are being a long-distance relationship, being on vacation, and working in a public area.

2.4.3. Effects of Infidelity

According to Nasution and Sahri (2020) there are effects of Infidelity:

1. Divorce

Divorce is probably the most fatal thing that can happen to a marriage. Although infidelity does not always end in divorce, but it can have a bad impact in the household. When neither husband nor wife can

forgive infidelity. The last choice is divorce. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), infidelity in the United States accounted for 20-40 percent of divorces.

2. Illness

One of the effects of infidelity is illness. Some studies show that infidelity can lead to illness. Like any mental illness and also has consequences for one's physical health. There is a growing School of thought that the discovery of a partner's infidelity can be a psychologically traumatic event significant enough to trigger post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

3. Guilt and shame

Spouses usually do not want to tell or cover up if their partner is having an affair. But if it was revealed and the people around him knew about it. Guilt and shame are certainly felt, both for those who cheated on them and for those who were hurt.

4. Loss of Trust

One of the consequences of infidelity is loss of trust, and when that trust is lost, a person will be difficult to accept by his partner and those around him.

5. Loneliness

Infidelity is lonely and isolating. Actually, loneliness is a state of mind. Loneliness causes people to feel empty, alone, and unwanted.

Loneliness is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, viral infections, cancer and Changes in the immune system. Psaltis et al (2015) said that social environment of person can affect their health, with those who are socially isolated are exposing to a high risk of mortality than people who are not. So, it is shows that social relationship is important without which no one could survive in life.