

Disclosing Middle-Aged Thai Women's Voices about Unfaithful Husbands

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Abstract: Having an unfaithful husband, one who is involved in one or more extramarital affairs, can be found within every culture. Contending with an unfaithful husband can be seen as a form of psychological violence or abuse against the affected woman. Because Thai women, who have unfaithful husbands, cannot forestall their spouses' infidelities and tend to keep this problem private, so as to avoid embarrassing their families, limited published research exists on the topic.

This study sought to explore the experience of 18 middle-aged Thai women, living in Bangkok, who had unfaithful husbands. Heideggerian phenomenology and feminist theory were used to guide the research design. Data were gathered via tape-recorded, in-depth interviews of the participants and analyzed using content analysis. The findings showed four emergent themes: seeking the facts; suffering; facing the husband's abusive behavior; and dealing with the problem. Unfaithful husbands were found to be an invisible family relationship problem, with many of the women trying to solve the problem by themselves. The women tended not to speak out about their problem because of fear of the social stigma associated with the issue. The findings suggest the importance of nurses supporting women with unfaithful husbands and assisting them in the development of their own well-being.

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