

# Sexting among Young Adults by Gordon-Messer

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## Overview of Sexting Among Young Adults

The act of sexting refers to receiving and sending images, videos, or messages that are sexually suggestive through mobile phones. It has become common among young adults all over the world. This critical review will provide the main strengths and weaknesses of the article “Sexting among Young Adults” by Gordon-Messer.

## Research Relevance and Public Health Concerns

The article discusses the research conducted on the young adults of the US population who send and receive such sexual content using their mobile phones. The topic is of interest to the researchers and should be because the notion of sexting may have adverse effects on an individual’s physical and psychological health. Hence, the research helps to spread awareness of the consequences and the solution to the prevailing conditions.

## Study Background and Research Design

The article first introduces the readers to the concept of sexting and admits that there has been very little systematic research on the connection between health behaviors and sexting. The past studies on the topic have been briefly described. For instance, the study by Lenhart suggested that 13% of people aged 18-29 have sent such images, videos, and messages through their cell phones, while 31% were reported to receive them. These statistics have also been observed on the basis of gender, ethnic group, and race. Men (21%) were more likely to be the receivers than the females (11%). Hispanic (22%) and African-American (27%) adults received more sexts than Whites (12%). The article emphasizes the importance of learning how sexting is linked to sexual behaviors as it could be encouraged for safer-sex or could be used as an intervention for the prevention of risky sexual behavior. Past studies have also suggested a relationship between sexting and psychological well-being. It has been found that young adults suffering from any kind of anxiety tend to sext more than those who are comparatively healthy psychologically.

## Psychological and Social Consequences

The article also points out the consequences of sexting from a psychological point of view. Spreading of sexual or nude images, videos, and messages is a cause of mental distress for those who do not intend to spread it but keep it secret with their partners or friends. Many cases of dating violence and blackmailing have been seen as a result of sexting. Thus, the article aims to spread awareness that research is required in this field as ignorance can lead to distressful situations in society. The article also discusses the implications of sexting for young adults and suggests guidelines for both investigation and practice. The methodology applied for the research consisted of sampling, procedures, measures, and results. The measures observed included depression, anxiety, self-esteem, sociodemographic characteristics, internet use, and texting as a means of communication. These measures were noted to determine whether sexting increases or decreases these factors and whether it has any impact on the psychological well-being of a person. The results of the research suggested that sexting does not relate to risky sexual behavior or the well-being of an individual psychologically. Males were reported to receive more sexual images and messages than females.

## Methodological Limitations and Study Strengths

The result that the article suggested about the possible relationship of sexting with risky sexual behaviors and psychological consequences does not seem to be evident. This is because of the sampling method used, which made some educational and racial groups underrepresented. Consequently, the results are not generalizable to the population of young adults as a whole. Apart from the drawbacks of the study, the article represents one of the first to examine and investigate the impacts of sexting on young adults. It provides a more extensive examination of sexual behaviors as compared to other studies on a national scale. It also pointed out that sending a text without receiving a reply is not a common practice in young adults. The article also gives a way to conceptualize sexting by introducing its different categories. Strassberg (2013) agrees with Gordon-Messer on the point that future research is important to closely examine the motivations of young adults and other factors and suggests the possibility of positive impacts of sexting. "There may also be positive consequences of sexting to be identified (e.g., can such behavior, when based on mutual consent, ever improve a relationship?)" (Strassberg, 2013). The relationship between depression, anxiety, self-esteem, sociodemographic factors, internet use, and mobile texting with the notion of sexting has not been examined extensively, but the clue is provided by the article. When the data of recent sexual activity (in the past 30 days) was analyzed, it was found that no connection exists between sexting behavior and the number of partners, percentage of unprotected vaginal sex, or ratio of unprotected anal sex partners. Hence, this result cannot be generalized to the overall sexual health of the population as a whole, as the data was just limited to the previous thirty days of sexual activity.

# Critical Evaluation and Research Implications

Thus, the article “Sexting among young adults” was informative and thought-provoking. It gave the way for further research on the topic and explained its strengths and weaknesses in detail. It provided the recommendations and limitations of its research. The act of sexting was discussed in detail and its relationship with the sexual behaviours and psychological well-being of the individuals was examined. The results found out that no such relationship existed, but further research must be conducted as it cannot be generalized.

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