

Sexting Romantic Attachment and Digital Communication

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Introduction

The development in technology has not only changed the shape of our planet but also our behaviors, and our sexual habits, the practice is very common among people 18-35 years old. It is very interesting in the sense that the use of technology can tell a lot about us. This critical review will evaluate the research article written by Robert S. Weisskirch and Raquel Delevi titled "Sexting" and adult romantic attachment. The article relates the idea of sexting with attachment theory through an online questionnaire about technology and relationships. The article is very insightful and informative, although the sufficiency of data and the methods can be challenged, as we will see in the course of this paper.

Discussion

Robert Weisskirch and Raquel Delevi argue that individuals use cell phones to "augment" interactions and sustain their relationships. The recent media has highly pointed out the sharing of nude images and sexually suggestive photos between individuals through cell phones. According to Robert and Raquel, among individuals, the youth is particularly involved in the habit of sexting through cell phones. Again, it is because of the relative effortlessness of sending and receiving sexual images. Furthermore, they argue about the "underlying psychological" concerns that the media was unable to see when they showed their concern regarding the use of cell phones among the youth involved in sexting.

According to the sources they mentioned most "sexually suggestive" images are shared between boyfriends and girlfriends. Some use sexting as regular sex activity, and inexperienced youth, instead of engaging in face-to-face sexual interaction, prefer sexting. Now, in this section of the article, they come towards the main purpose of their research: how attachment theory is helpful in understanding the underlying psychological depths of this practice among individuals engaged in sexting.

According to the theory of adult attachment, the attachment made with the mother or the caregiver during infancy affects the later romantic attachments of individuals such as Robert and Raquel. Also, there is a sense of security and insecurity present in the relationship between the caregiver and the infant. When the infant is independent of his/her caregiver's protection, he/she demands the same security from other romantic relations they engage in, particularly in their youth. When they are not provided with this security, they suffer from "anxiety and avoidance" in their intimate romantic

relationships. They further divide it into two categories: the ones who are “low on attachment anxiety and avoidance” and the ones who are “high on attachment anxiety and avoidance.”

Hence, those who are high on attachment anxiety and avoidance are more likely to be involved in sexting because they have insecurities; therefore, they engage in sex with their partners to lessen their insecurities. Therefore, their study demonstrates that those with high anxiety and avoidance show a more positive attitude toward sexting than those with low anxiety. In order to justify their argument they used a questionnaire about relationships and technology, the students were recruited from two public universities. The sample contains 130 students, 106 girls and 22 boys, as a sample to generalize their findings (Weisskirch and Delevi, 2011).

The paper tends to generalize its findings based on 130 students, mostly girls. The findings that the paper presents are of a serious nature when it attempts to touch on some serious psychological issues, such as the adult attachment theory. The adult attachment theory shares many similarities with the Freudian oedipal complex; on the surface, the oedipal complex also attempts to rationalize the sense of insecurity and loss of protection when the child enters puberty and adulthood (Waters et al. 2000). In this case, the study has its shortcomings because although they seem to understand the “underlying psychological” issues if we are to consider some biological differences in boys and girls, according to biology boys are more aggressive than girls and consequently the insecurities are more evident in girls than in boys (Peplau, 2003).

Furthermore, according to Freud, every boy unconsciously hates his father and loves his mother, but according to Robert and Requel, there are two categories of people: one with a high level of anxiety and one with a low level of anxiety, if according to attachment theory, every child is inclined to get out of the protection of their caregiver then why do they have different levels of anxieties regarding attachment? (Fonagy, 2010).

The problematic nature of generalization also can also be challenged if to see things over cultures, the idea of attachment theory like psychoanalysis has its limitations as a child’s behavior is not merely developed through the caregiver but there are many other factors involved like environment and peers, etc. (Lee, 2003). Furthermore, why this practice of sexting is only confined to the youth and not the people above 30? Nonetheless, despite its flaws, the research does provide insightful information about youth and their yearning for cell phones and sexting.

The data is reliable if we are to consider it in the American context, or it can be applied in a few other countries. As far as the practice of sex is concerned, the phenomenon is very common in every part of the world where people use cell phones because, more than being rational animals, human beings are sexual animals. I think there is something mysterious about human nature, something deeply embedded in our primal past, by treading on that path we can understand ourselves better (Jetha, 2012). The research’s results are highly statistical and described in vigorous statistical terms, which are very difficult for the masses to understand.

Conclusion

There is a very beautiful movie directed by Spike Jonze titled *Her* (2013); in this movie, in the near future, a writer falls in love with an intelligent operating system because she can fulfil his every need. I think we want someone to fulfil our every need, and that's a dilemma that this research attempted to highlight. The research indicated the rising obsession of youth with cell phones regarding their insecurities and anxieties by giving their rationale. The point is it has a strong rationale presented in the form of quantitative and statistical measures to demonstrate something abstract and intangible.

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