

MANAS

Speaks

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH ADIKAVI NANNAYA UNIVERSITY

“Make your mental health and wellbeing a priority”

SPECIAL FOCUS

Cognitive Distortions
Mental Health Of Children
Is Dirty Talk A Sexting...?
Black Swan Review
Surgeons Without Scissors
Is Anxiety Bad?
Loneliness

#Psychology

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MANAS *Speaks*

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Manas Speaks is a monthly magazine from Manas-The academy of psychology, to publish a wide range of conceptual articles relating to different perspectives on methodologies in psychological research and to support student communities to strengthen their knowledge.

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| EDITORIAL ON CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY | 03 |
| SURGEONS WITHOUT SCISSORS | 04 |
| IS ANXIETY BAD | 06 |
| IS DIRTY TALK A SEXTING...? | 08 |
| MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN | 11 |
| LONELINESS | 14 |
| COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS | 16 |
| PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF COVID19 | 19 |
| MOVIE REVIEW ON BLACK SWAN | 20 |

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Is Dirty Talk A Sexting...?



Sexting is a transmission and exchange of sexually explicit content through the medium of text messages, calling, photographs, video, email, app, webcam etc. Although the history of sexting was traced back in 30,000 BC where sexual activity were illustrated through Paleolithic cave painting. Later it was evident in James Joyce erotic love letter to his wife Nora in 1909 AD. From that era to modern 21st century, the concept remains the same except the launching of new name sexting. Sexting is a portmanteau of sex and texting where sexually provocative naked pictures and text messages are sending to others. It was first registered in Australian online Macquarie dictionary in 2008 as a permanent word in English language due to its continuous usage in consecutive 5 years. The dictionary defined it as “sending and receiving of sexually explicit images via mobile phone”. There are different aspects of sexting described by various authors.

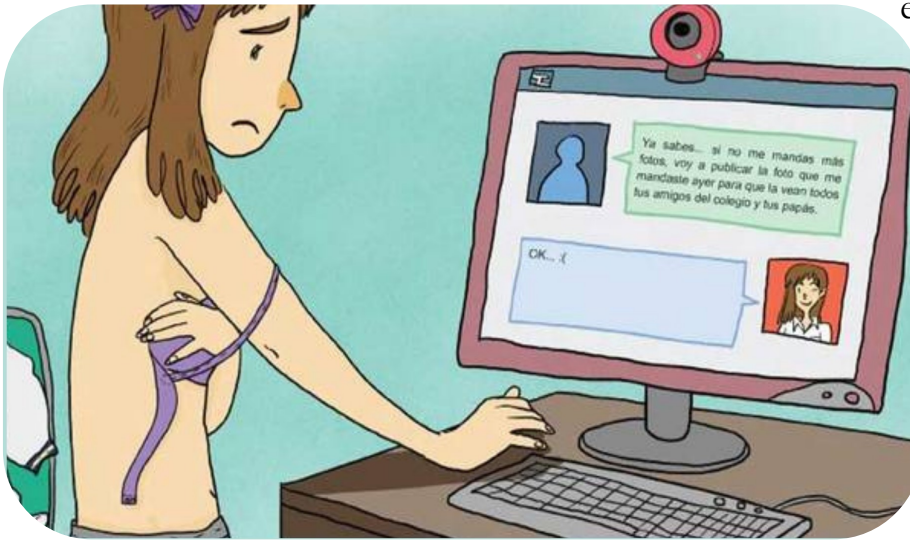


Prevalence of sexting

According to Teenage Sexting Statistics (2014), 40% of teenage girls do it for fun, 34% to feel sexy and 12% under pressure. About 70% of teenage boys and girls performed it with their girlfriend/boyfriend and among them 61% were pressured once to show their nude photograph. About 40% of boys has released or posted nude photos. 22% of girls and 18% of boys have reported sending nude or semi nude photo. 15% of teens have reported to sent photos to people they know from internet but never met. About 33% of college students and 22% of high school students have found to perform nude sexting. Madigan, Anhly, Christina, Rash, Joris and Jeff (2020) found in their study that the prevalence of sending and receiving sexts were 14.8% and 27.4%. Mitchell et al (2012) mentioned in his study that about 1 percent of youth between ages 10-11 years have reported to send or receive nude text.

Causes for Sexting

Why do people sext? There are many reasons found for sexting. Firstly, sexting is the one of the basic components of sexual partners. It is performed to sustain a romantic relationship. Partner usually involves in sexting in order to prevent any argument or silent fight with their



lovable partner. Many times, it is considered as an act of daring where nude picture of their partner are used to brag about their relationship, raising their popularity among peer mates.

Some people do it to get attention or as flirting. It acts as an incentive for the starting of a relationship. Szymialis (2010) described three different situations such as sexting between partners in relationship, distribution of images to third party and exchange of images in hope of starting new relationship. Similarly Lenhart (2009) suggested three reason for sexting such as to gain attention of someone special, as a part of sexual relation and as an experiment in minor. Not only these, even the pressure to release photograph or pass on to others was found to be the major reason in sexting. According to Sex and Tech survey (2008), 51% of girls experienced pressured from boys, 18% boys from girls and both experienced

25% pressure from their friends in sending or posting sexual content.

Lippman and Campbell (2014) mentioned in their study that sexting is taken as “no big deal” and done as a part of enjoyment where images were shared within a romantic relationship. He further added that young teenagers

do not see it as a sexual or pornographic content rather find it humorous. In support to this, Burkett (2015) revealed that the universities students do not find it as a source of sexual arousal rather use it as a humor or as a joke within the friendship circle. Also when sexual images are shared between the romantic partners, sexting is governed by “unspoken rule”

where it is understood by both the partners to not declare it as a sexual content rather a way of flirting and fun. Even a study by Goggin and Crawford (2010) found sexting as an pleasurable experience which involves creating and editing sext resulting in strong bonding and friendship formation. Burkett (2015) found that the male university student extracts pleasure from creating and sending sext with their current lover. Hasinof (2013) found sexting as an integral component in developing and maintaining romantic relationship as it preserves privacy and prevent from any hazardous activity associated with sex.

Effect of sexting on mental health

Although sexting between the lovable trustworthy partner is fun and exciting. But shows disastrous consequences when such private moments are leaked publicly. It has been found that teens perform it under pressure.

When photos or video are leaked, it causes mental burden resulting in anxiety, depression, isolation, insomnia, self harm and inability to cope with situation lead to suicide among teenage and young adults. Sexting badly affects the physical and psychological state of person triggering depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation (Strasburger, 2012; Jasso 2018). Rey, Ozeda, Casas, Merchain and Elipe (2019) found that sexting has influence on mental health where boys enjoy and remain active in both types of sexting, girls become depressed in secondary sexting. Ybarra and Mitchell (2014) revealed in their study that psychological problems are evident more in teens that has sent or showed sexual photos of themselves to others. Even young adults involved in sexting were found to be indulging in risky sexual behavior. Kosenko, Luurs and Binder (2015) found association between sexting and risky sexual behavior such as general sexual activity, unprotected sex and various sex partners. Similarly Klettke, Hallford and mellor (2014) mentioned association of sexting and risky behavior along with unfavorable outcomes as distribution of sexual material without consent, legal consequences and negative mental health. Dake, Price and Ward (2012) found a positive correlation between sexting, risky sexual behavior, substance abuse and emotional problems. Doring (2010) showed strong relationship between impulsivity, sensation seeking, bad judgment, alcohol & drug use along with suicide. Bond (2011) described two situations where image can be circulated in public. First when image produced for private purpose within a roman-



tic relationship becomes viral once relationship breaks down. Secondly, when images are send to unknown or wrong person unintentionally. Even “hacking and government monitoring” have become threat to demolish privacy of sexts (Le, 2016). Well, whatever the reason for the leakage of images, it negatively affects the well being of individual and made it difficult for them to trust anyone. It has been seen that the girls are mostly victim to escalated sexting.

Conclusion

Sexting is beautiful, fun and entertaining if performed within a con-

finied circle from where the chances of tearing privacy have been eliminated. But it becomes disastrous and traumatizing when exposed to outer world. So it is necessary to protect your private moments before it becomes the product of embarrassment and humiliation. There are many laws in our Indian constitution to safeguard the rights of victim and punish the guilty. “Section 67 of Information Technology Act 2000 states punishment for publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form.” Apart from these, parents should properly educate their kids about the sexual desires and alternatives to resolve them in appropriate way. As online technology is like a virus, once a material falls onto it, it never completely eliminates instead spreading rapidly infecting other areas. So it is well said that “Prevention is always better than cure”.

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