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Sexting During Adolescence (15-18 years): Motives and Impacts in the Emotional Life

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Abstract

This research comes as a scientific work of research about the motives of sexting and its emotional experiences. Sexting recently is a widespread phenomenon with many different definitions depending on the context (Klettke et al, 2013). Several research questions were raised, such as the relationship between involvement in sexting and emotional experiences; motives for engaging in sexting; the most used programs in sexting; the differences between rural and urban areas as well as between genders in sexting. The sample is comprised of 78 teenagers aged 15-18 years (39 subjects from the city of Tirana and 39 from city of Fieri). Snowball sampling was applied. A mixed method was carried out to collect the data, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods: *Sexting Motives Questionnaire*, of Bianchi D, et al, 2016, $\alpha = 0.786$, which enabled highlighting the involvement in sexting as well as the basic motives, and a qualitative method, two focus groups (of 26 adolescents). The findings of this study showed that engaging in sexting was associated with different emotional experiences depending on the user. Also, in terms of motives, the results showed that several motives lead teenagers to engage in sexting.

Keywords: *sexting, adolescence, motive, emotional impact.*

Introduction

Sexting is a phenomenon and situation that has received considerable attention in society from all age groups, especially during the period of adolescence. As a result, the spread of this phenomenon over the years has found aroused interest in the field of psychology, generating studies, discussions, and literature reviews by various researchers (King & Rings, 2022; Tito et al., 2019; Luani, 2018). Considering it as an issue, which is very little discussed, but is very widespread, it was found necessary to conduct a study about this phenomenon, offering a clearer view of its emotional impact on teenagers aged 15-18 in Albania.

Adolescence includes a delicate phase of the life cycle that is characterized by profound changes both in physical, biological, and psychological terms (Ricciardelli, 2019; Karaj, 2017; Santrock, 1988). During this period, adolescents begin to develop their sexuality and also begin to experiment with intimate relationships, and they show a greater tendency to be closer to sexting than other age groups (Sevcikova, 2018; Ouytsel et al, 2016). Regarding the concept of sexting, it can be said that there are different definitions depending on the context and the discussion in which it is included (Lucic etj al., 2020; Woolfolk, 2011). Therefore, it is important to note that in this paper *sexting* will be defined as sending, receiving, or distributing messages, images, or videos with sexual content through electronic means (Klettke et al., 2013).

Studies conducted over the years, such as those by Ruvalcoba and colleagues (2021), Coi and colleagues (2016), highlight that different teenagers have different motives for using sexting (Ruvalcoba et al., 2021; Choi et al, 2016; Barry, 2010). As a result, they experience a wide range of emotions during sexting, which can have an ambivalent, positive and negative impact. Therefore,

the purpose of this study is to highlight the motives that push Albanian teenagers towards the use of sexting, as well as to give a clearer picture of how receiving or sending photos and messages with sexual content affects the emotional aspect.

Overview of the literature on sexting and its motives

Virtual life encouraged a series of open horizons in the social life of teenagers, making communication through electronic means one of the main forms of messages of a sexual nature. Thus, communication has moved towards an accommodation related to technology. As Del Rey, Ojeda, Casas, Mora-Merchán, and Elipe, (2019) studied, change is also observed in the socialization of teenagers through new ways of how communication is happening in this socialization and involvement in social and intimate relationships (Del Rey et al, 2019). On the other hand, Van Ouytsel, Van Gool, Walrave, Ponnet, & Peeters, (2016) conducted a study and concluded that sexting refers to the exchange of sexual material through electronic devices, mainly mobile phones (Ouytsel et al, 2016).

The concept of sexting is derived from the words "sex" and "texting" and can include many processes or even scenarios which are different from each other (Barrens et al., 2017). Among the most common scenarios of different studies, the list includes the sharing of photos within a teenage couple, and the sharing of photos/messages with or without the consent of one party to a friend or acquaintance (Huntington & Roades, 2021; Yoshihara, 2013). But it can be said that the definition of sexting varies depending on the type of material, its use, and the content of a sensual or erotic nature. As Dolev & Ricon (2022) conducted their study they concluded that sexting is a process that can be channelled into the main, primary, and secondary categories. In the first case, messages, images, and videos are sent between two teenagers and remain within this couple without being shared

with others. This classification is known differently and with the term sexting with mutual understanding, i.e. when both partners conform to the use of this phenomenon (Dolev & Ricon, 2022; Dragoti, 2015). While in secondary sexting, Strasburger and colleagues (2019) show that during this process one of the partners shares the materials with third parties without the other person's knowledge, including relatives, friends, colleagues, girlfriends, or ex-partners, which increases the risk of damaging the victim's reputation as well as the risk of being involved in dating violence episodes. Otherwise, this form is also known as sexting without the consent of both participating parties (Strasburger et al, 2019).

Over the years, various studies have viewed sexting as one of the main factors in the development of adolescent sexual identity and sexual self-expression (Dolev & Ricon, 2022; Dodaj et al, 2020; Confalonieri et al, 2020; Clark, 2011). Some of these studies give results that about 54% of eighth-grade to eleventh-grade adolescents belonging to the age group of 12-15 years, report at least one instance of sexual intercourse (Kokkinos & Krommida, 2022; Barry, 2016). Consequently, such prevalence indicates an extremely high involvement of adolescents in sexting. The study conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy found that 20% of nearly 1,300 teenagers aged 18-19 had sent or posted nude photos (Strassberg et al, 2013). For this reason, the use of mobile phones has a major role and is associated with a concern on the part of educators, parents, or teachers about sexual relations in the daily life of teenagers and young people (Gillmore et al, 2004).

The findings on this phenomenon and the differences between boys and girls are numerous and based on a variety of literature (Caponnetto et al., 2022; Anastassiou, 2017), but have not yet managed to show a clear pattern of results regarding possible gender differences in the prevalence of sexting (Murphy &

Spencer, 2021; Bianchi et al, 2018; Furman et al, 2003). Various studies report that girls are more likely to share sexual images than boys (Aubrey & Behm, 2016; Campbell et al, 2014). While other studies reveal that boys participate more in this activity, some researchers do not observe gender differences in sending and receiving photos with sexual content (Huntington & Roades, 2021; Reyns et al., 2013). It is thought that such changes may refer to the type of sexting in which teenagers engage. As such, researchers (King & Rings, 2022; Walrave et al, 2018; Patchin, 2011; McConnell, 1989) have found that the male gender is the one most involved in sharing or sending and searching for sexually explicit photo messages at a significantly higher level compared to the other gender. Choi, Van Ouytsel, and Temple (2016) conducted a longitudinal study in Texas, drawing on data collected in seven schools with a sample of 250 adolescent girls. They concluded that the correlation between sexual coercion and sexting was positive. Regardless of education level, ethnicity, length of previous relationships, or lifestyle, adolescent females who had experienced lifetime sexual coercion were more likely to engage in sexting. Meanwhile, another study conducted by Patchin (2011) pointed out that men showed a higher probability of receiving images from others through their mobile phones, approximately 28% of boys. But meanwhile, boys were less likely to have sent images of themselves to others (about 9.5% of boys). Also, it is worth mentioning that gender differences in sexting may also correlate with differences in motivations for sexting from person to person. And in some studies, such as in Ricciardelli & Adorjan (2019) or Anastassiou (2017), it was observed that sexting significantly increased the status of the male gender but caused the feeling of shame in the female gender (Ricciardelli, 2019; Anastassiou, 2017).

From the observations and literature research, a considerable number of motives are observed that encourage teenagers to go towards the use of sexting (Izard, 2020). The term motive, in itself, is an internal energy, which serves as an incentive that sets the individual in motion, orienting him toward the realization of certain goals or the fulfilment of certain needs (Orhani, 2020). Motives play a special role, which is observed in the way an individual acts (Orhani, 2020). Authors Lippman and Campbell (as cited in Holla et al, 2018), point out that young people's involvement in sexting is greater when they are part of a romantic relationship. In this way, sexting is a form of flirting with another individual or even because of romantic interests. But on the other hand, young people and teenagers may also encounter problematic relationships in this process, accompanied by harassment, bullying, victimization, or low levels of involvement in intimacy with a partner (Reed et al, 2019). Taking into account the above, as well as individual characteristics such as social anxiety and rejection sensitivity, specifically Birkhold (2013) notes that it is precisely these character states that motivate young people to communicate virtually by becoming part of sexting (Birkhold, 2013) and this is also emphasized in Ruvalcaba, Stephens, Eaton & Boyd (2021) study about Hispanic women's perceptions of teenage sexting (Ruvalcoba et al, 2021). Taking advantage of the fact that using mobile phones can offer such advantages as being behind a screen and eliminating the experience of social anxiety or social sensitivity, teenagers find engaging in sexting as a comfortable way to express their sexual feelings and desires (Secikova, 2018; Ouytsel et al, 2016).

Authors Henderson and Morgan (as cited in Klettke, 2013) studied the motives that urge teenagers to engage in sexting, finding that about 77% of the sample rated sexting as a good way to lead to a subsequent sexual activity. Approximately 75% of

them used sexting to catch their partner's eye, about 55% of them used sexting to be flirtatious and fun, 40% participated because they felt being forced by their respective friends or partners, and 45% of them saw it as a way to show other sides of themselves. In addition to these above-mentioned motives, according to Chalfen (2009), the most cited motivations for this phenomenon are low mood, the motivation to initiate intimate relationships, or to take the relationship to another level. Often the process of sexting can be considered a "digital disease", and even young people and teenagers rationalize its use as a way to ensure more of their sexual relationship. But in his study presented at the 78th Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Ottawa, Chalfen strongly asserted that sexting was seen as a more preferable way of obtaining pleasure compared to traditional culture games, as he observed that by applying this method the lack of immediate physical contact would reduce the probability of any risk of leading to unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (Chalfen, 2009).

In summary of all the above-mentioned motives, recent studies have classified them into three dimensions, where each dimension includes a specific motivational field. First are sexual goals. This dimension itself includes sexual expression and exploration, which are seen as important motivators that lead adolescents to send or receive sexual texts, images, or videos from their peers. To continue, the second dimension relates to the reinforcement of body image. Adolescence is the period during which the individual's self-esteem is like a curve, which rises as much as it falls. Taking into account that the assessment received from others through positive comments affects the growth of the adolescent's self-esteem, sexting enables the latter (adolescents) to receive feedback on their body suitability. Finally, the third dimension is related to other reasons which basically have the

use of texts with sexual content to achieve a certain goal or to benefit something else (Tito et al, 2019; Bianchi et al, 2018). All three of these motivational domains can be conceptualized within the framework of the motivational system, which essentially has a guiding role in human behaviour. This is because motivational systems have a defined neurological basis, so a person is born with this system, which is in response to basic needs and is activated by life experiences and by the experience of the individual (Dodaj et al, 2020; Orhani, 2020).

Methodology

The study in question was conceived to be carried out in the form of a representative study with a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. The realization of this scientific research was done in such a form for several reasons.

First, the representative research model allows including more than a single case in the study (Sokoli & Braho, 2020). In this case, for the realization of this study, the sample was chosen from representatives of two cities, so we have a relatively large participation and are not based on a single case.

Second, this model allows collecting data within a certain time.

Third, the subjects that are part of the study are groups of people that allow us to make comparisons between them. In this case, such a comparison will be made between the spread of the phenomenon in different areas of Albania (rural and urban areas).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the mixed method, i.e. the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, was thought to be the method that best suits the concrete research since the topic in focus is a delicate issue and as such the application of this method can provide wider and more accurate information (Sokoli & Braho, 2020).

It is worth noting that the quantitative data analysis was carried out with the help of the SPSS package 22.

The main research is focused on the analysis of how sending or receiving photos, messages, or videos with sexual content affect the emotionality of teenagers. Some of the research questions raised in the research are the following:

Does the use of texting and sending pictures with sexual content have an emotional impact on teenagers? What are the motives that lead teenagers to use sexting? What are the most used programs for using sexting? Are there differences between rural and urban areas in the use of sexting? Are there gender differences in sending/receiving sexually explicit messages and photos?

This study also aims to provide information on the existence of a link between sexting and the emotional state of adolescents and whether one affects the other. But at the same time, just as they can be related to each other, at the end of the research the opposite can be proven, that is, that involvement in sexting does not affect the emotionality of teenagers. Therefore, two hypotheses are raised in this study, where the first hypothesis is expected to have an impact and the second hypothesis is the null hypothesis, which is expected to have no impact. Thus, if the value of p is $p \leq (0.05)$, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is confirmed. If the value is $p > (0.05)$, the null hypothesis is confirmed by rejecting the alternative hypothesis.

H1: Sending/receiving messages, photos, and videos with sexual content affects the emotional state of teenagers.

H0: Sending/receiving messages, photos, and videos with sexual content does not affect the emotional state of teenagers.

The participants in this study are teenagers from Tirana and Fieri, with an average age of 15-18 years. The representative

sample consists of 78 teenagers (65.4% female and 34.6% male; 39 from Tirana and 39 from Fieri).

In addition, 2 focus groups were also included in the study, one for each city. Regarding the composition of focus groups, each of them comprised 13 participants (N total = 26). It is emphasized that the subjects in the focus groups were from the same group of individuals who also completed the questionnaire. The reason why the focus group was chosen is related to the fact that through it, we can provide more detailed information about the emotions that teenagers experience while engaging in sexting. Secondly, this method also provides the opportunity for teenagers to talk about their opinions about this phenomenon, their experiences, and exchange ideas with each other while sharing their personal thoughts, providing us with more detailed information.

Table nr 1 Gender of participants

Sample (N)		Percentage (%)	
Gender	Female	51	65.4
	Male	27	34.6
	Total	78	100.0

The Sexting Motivations Questionnaire (SMQ) Instrument (Del Rey et al, 2021) was used to highlight the motives that drive teenagers to engage in sexting and to see the impact this phenomenon has on their emotionality. This instrument is a questionnaire, which has been used to study sexting motives and is suitable for the adolescent population. This questionnaire is presented in the form of a self-report and assesses several directions of motives. The questionnaire includes obtaining information on demographic data such as age, gender, or city.

This questionnaire is composed of 7 statements and each statement contains 2 to 9 alternatives. Each of them is evaluated with a five-point Likert numerical scale ranging from 1= Never, 2= Never, 3= Neutral, 4= Sometimes, and 5= Often. The statements refer to a period covering the last 12 months.

To assess involvement in sexting, the first part of the questionnaire includes four direct questions, which are related to involvement in primary sexting. The second part of the questionnaire includes questions related to secondary sexting.

The administration of this test started with the first step of the piloting of 20 subjects who underwent the completion of the test in the first variant.

From the analysis of the collected data, it can be seen that Cronbach's Alpha for the sexting motives questionnaire was 0.786. So, it can be said that the data obtained from this questionnaire is reliable. Reliability itself refers to its degree of consistency, predictability, and accuracy (Sokoli & Braho, 2020). As mentioned above the second method used in addition to the questionnaire was the focus group. In total, two focus groups were conducted, one of which was conducted in the city of Fier, and the second focus group was conducted in Tirana. Each focus group consisted of 13 participants. Participants in the focus groups were informed in advance that the topic was related to the phenomenon of sexting, its motives, and its emotional impacts. Focus in the two cities performed similarly and without differences. Instead of using the term "sexting" it was preferred to consistently refer to sending texts, images, or videos with sexual content. Initially, the participants were asked about their opinion about this phenomenon or whether their opinion was based on what they had noticed in their peers. Depending on their response, additional questions were reformulated to delve into specific issues, which would help the research questions or

the study as a whole. The focus group was based on the treatment of several different issues related to the reasons why teenagers would send sexual texts, photos, or videos, the consequences associated with involvement in this phenomenon, the differences that existed between boys and girls involved, experience and practice of pressure towards others or from third parties, the most used programs for sexting as well as the emotions that were experienced during this involvement. It is worth noting that with the understanding of the participants it was agreed that the focus groups would be accompanied by audio recordings.

Results and discussions

Each research question is accompanied by the corresponding tables to give a better picture of the results. Consequently, descriptive statistics were used to highlight the frequency of sexting, and the frequency of sexting motives as well as demographic questions. The analysis developed through Anova was enabled to see if there are differences between rural and urban areas as well as involvement in sexting by gender. Correlational analysis was used to see if engaging in sexting correlates with emotional experiences.

Regarding the first research question which is about the emotional impact on teenagers of the use of messages and sending photos with sexual content the results are shown in the following table (No. 2).

Table 2 Correlation of sexual materials and possible emotional consequences

The summary of the questions involving the distribution of messages/images/videos.		Does the distribution of sexting materials have emotional
The summary of the questions involving the distribution of messages/images/videos	1	-.101
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.395
	N	76
		73
Does the distribution of sexting materials have emotional consequences?	-.101	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.395
	N	73
		75

From the data collected by the questionnaire, which are also presented above, it is noted that there is no connection between sending messages/images or videos with sexual content and the consequences that teenagers may have in the emotional aspect. This is because the correlation coefficient results in a negative value ($r = -0.10$) with a significance of 0.395 ($p = 0.395$). In the present case, the variables correlate negatively with each other, so involvement in sexting does not affect the emotional aspect of teenagers. For this reason, the second method, which was used to gather qualitative information in this study, is the focus group. The data collected from the focus groups showed that these variables are positively correlated with each other with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.471$ ($r = 0.471$) with a significance of 0.015 ($p = 0.015$). Specifically, the analysis of the consequences of sexting in terms of the emotional aspect resulted in the following conclusions: about 23.1% of the subjects experienced stress, 11.5% showed signs of depression, 11.5% turned out to have experienced anxiety, 7.7% were injured and 7.7% of the subjects

turned out to show fear. During the focus groups, the subjects emphasized that if sexting is used in the right way and at the right time, it is a source of pleasure, that is, it makes teenagers experience pleasure even if it is momentary. Continuing in the same vein, these study results are also supported by research conducted by Strassberg and his colleagues (2013). This study showed that about 13% of adolescents aged 16 years who were involved in sexting, expressed experiences of negative feelings towards this phenomenon. They discovered how sexting can affect the physical and psychological health of teenagers, causing them to show the consequences of bullying, signs of depression, and suicidal attempts.

In our study based on the extracted data, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.471$) with significance ($p = 0.015$) shows that there is a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. Since the value of $p \leq (0.05)$, then it indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected by validating the alternative hypothesis.

Table 3 Focus group data on the correlation of sexting involvement and emotional impact

Involvement in sexting		Emotional impact	
Involvement in sexting	Pearson Correlation	1	.471*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.015
	N	26	26
Emotional impact	Pearson Correlation	.471*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	
	N	26	26

In addition to the administration of the SMQ questionnaire, to create a broader picture of the connection between sending images, texts, or videos with sexual content and the consequences that accompany them, the information gathered from the focus groups was used. As we can see from the focus group data, it is noted that there is a positive correlation between involvement in sexting and the emotional impact associated with this involvement. The correlation coefficient, in this case, is 0.471 ($r= 0.471$) with a significance of 0.015 ($p= 0.015$). Given that from values 0.3-0.7 the correlation is considered moderate, in this case, it can be said that we are dealing with a moderate correlation. This clearly shows that the method selected for data collection is an effective method for this study as the focus group allows us to collect more in-depth information from teenagers which is therefore associated with the extraction of more accurate results.

Table 4 Consequences of sending sexual materials

Sample (N)		Percentage (%)	
Consequences	Stress	6	23.1
	Anxiety	3	11.5
	Social Withdrawal	5	19.2
	Termination of the relationship	5	19.2
	Depression	3	11.5
	Hurt	2	7.7
	Fear	2	7.7
	Total	26	100.0

The data presented in the table above, which was made possible by the two focus groups developed in different countries, provide information about the consequences that accompany teenagers after sending sexual materials, including images, photos, and videos. Specifically, 23.1% of the subjects have experienced stress, 19.2% of them have had a break in the relationship with the person in question which may include a partner, friend, or relative, 19.2% of them distance themselves from society by isolating themselves, 11.5% show signs of depression, 11.5% are found to have experienced anxiety, 7.7% are injured and 7.7% of subjects are found to have shown fear. It is worth mentioning that these consequences, having a very large impact throughout adolescence, as well as combined with other factors such as the lack of support from family members or peers, gain extension in time, becoming more long-term.

Regarding the second research question, which was the motives that led teenagers to use sexting, the data showed a ranking of motives, starting from the most influential motive and proceeding to the least influential motivation, as follows:

It is normal in a relationship ($\bar{x} = 2.65$);

Jokes to amuse oneself ($\bar{x} = 2.49$);

Sexting is a good idea to look attractive ($\bar{x} = 2.43$);

Feeling under pressure from a loved one or someone who adored him ($\bar{x} = 2.23$);

Most people do ($\bar{x} = 2.19$);

Reason to talk to someone ($\bar{x} = 2.06$);

Feeling threatened/blackmailed ($\bar{x} = 2.03$);

Pressure from society ($\bar{x} = 2.02$);

He did it accidentally ($\bar{x} = 1.95$).

It is worth mentioning that the subjects of the focus groups gave some additional motives, such as the following:

The lack of communication in the family about sexual topics, according to them, was one of the main reasons that motivated teenagers to engage in sexting, since the lack of information and

lack of discussion about intimacy and sexuality increased their curiosity, especially pushing them to try new things. and to engage in phenomena such as sexting to create experiences; The increase in self-esteem after sending images in general and videos with sexual content was carried out to receive positive comments on body image, which consequently affected the increase in self-esteem that teenagers have for themselves; Long-distance relationships, as the lack of sexual activity and having a partner away from them, was identified by teenagers as one of the motives that led them to send sexual images or videos of themselves to the partner in question.

As for the motives that led teenagers to engage in secondary sexting, several reasons push them towards this action. Motives such as joking or amusing oneself, being driven by jealousy, or feeling pressured by society to perform such an action are the most presented motives with a higher frequency used by the subjects of the study. In addition to these three main motives, other motives for sharing are related to the fact that most people do this to impress others, to upset the person who sent it, because the relationship with the lover had ended, and with the fact that there was a consent for the person in question.

As noted, feeling pressured by society to act and share materials with sexual content is one of the main motives for engaging in secondary sexting. These data support the theory of reasoned action, which states that if a teen thinks sexting is pleasurable and simultaneously feels peer pressure to participate, he or she is more likely to sext by sending text messages, photos, or videos of sexual content (Aubrey & Behm-Morawitz, 2016).

What was observed throughout this study was the difference that existed between the motives for engaging in primary sexting and secondary sexting. This phenomenon was seen as one that allows you to experience momentary pleasure, or you may feel

pressured to perform such actions or seen as a joke to entertain yourself, which can be listed as three main reasons among many others, that motivated teenagers to share materials with third parties. In support of these results from the study on the motives of secondary sexting is the Theory of Reasoned Action, which states that if a teenager believes that sexting is pleasurable and at the same time feels peer pressure to participate, then he/she may have intentions to engage in sexting by sending messages, photos or videos with sexual content (Aubrey& Behm-Morawitz, 2016).

Regarding the use of the most important applications for sending materials of a sexual nature, the study found that the participants mentioned that Snapchat and Telegram were the two most used applications, and more precisely about 57.7% of the subjects mentioned Snapchat as the most used convenient application and about 23% of them mentioned Telegram. Meanwhile, 7.7% of the subjects said that Google was the most suitable network for them, and about 7.7% rated WhatsApp as the most appropriate.

Regarding the difference between rural and urban areas on the use of sexting, it was noticed that there are differences between rural and urban areas in the use of the sexting phenomenon. This is because the critical F value of the study is $F= 7.983$, which appears greater than the critical F value in the statistical table, which is $F= 3.98$. As a result, since the critical F value of the study is greater than the standard critical F in the statistical table, this shows that between rural areas and urban areas, there are differences in sending photos, videos, or images with sexual content. Having said that, even though the participation of subjects in the study was equal where 50% of them were from the city of Fier and 50% from Tirana, the critical value shows that there are differences in inclusion. Furthermore, based on the information gathered from the focus groups, the

subjects expressed that sexting tends to be more prevalent in urban areas as this phenomenon is seen as more normal among teenagers; regardless of the role that mentality has in this regard. According to them, in rural areas, teenagers can be involved in sexting as a result of the taboo and extensive contact with the people around them.

Table 5 Difference between rural and urban areas

Summary		Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	123.956	1	123.956	7.983	.006
Within Groups	1149.031	74	15.527		
Total	1272.987	75			

Regarding gender differences, it can be said that the data collected from the focus group showed that it is girls who face greater consequences in the case of the distribution of these materials. The data showed that 100% of the participants felt that girls experience sexting worse.

Conclusions

By analysing the collected data following the research questions posed throughout the paper, the study reached the following conclusions:

First, it was observed that adolescents' involvement in sexting affected their emotionality by generating both positive and negative emotions. Among the negative experiences, worth mentioning are fear, stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, bullying, or feelings of hurt. If sexting was used with awareness considering the consequences that could be caused, then this

phenomenon could be a source of momentary pleasure or happiness.

Second, the findings of the study indicated that there was a variety of motives that urged adolescents to engage in sexting. Its influence, which is essentially "active", seems to be more strongly associated with the typical behaviours of wanting to pleasure oneself, talk to someone, or engage in sexual experiences that are characteristic during this period of development. Although the subjects in the study mentioned positive motives for engaging in sexting, such as love or romantic interest, they also mentioned that some of them sent sexually explicit texts, images or videos for negative reasons such as feeling pressured by their boyfriends /girlfriends, blackmailed by other people or under the pressure of society.

Third, the data collected did not reveal gender differences between boys and girls involved in sexting. Regarding the consequences, it was shown that girls are the ones who face greater consequences in the case of the distribution of these materials. In addition to these, differences existed between the urban area and the rural area. This is a consequence of various factors, among which the most important one being the cultural mentality.

Finally, Snapchat and Telegram were mentioned as among the most suitable programs for sending and receiving sexual materials such as images or videos. This is because these two programs offered greater security compared to other programs as well as a good quality of materials received or sent.

It is emphasized that this study presented new findings on the motives and impact of the phenomenon of sexting on the emotionality of teenagers, a phenomenon that is associated with a lack of research and literature in our country. Having said that, based on the results obtained, it is suggested further studies should be carried out, which will enable more thorough analysis

and a better understanding of different aspects such as the influence of the media or the family in this phenomenon.

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