

SEXTING BEHAVIORS AND GENDER

Abstract

Advances in technology have produced a myriad of accessible methods of communication (Lenhart et al., 2010). Among these is sexting, or the exchange of sexually charged texts or images using technology like cell phones or computers (Beckmeyer et al., 2022). The purpose of this study is to examine if there are differences between gender and sexting behavior on emerging adults' condom use self-efficacy and intention to have sex. A sample of 289 emerging adults ($M_{age} = 19.04$, $SD = 1.48$) completed an online survey. Using Gorden-Messer et al. (2012) coding scheme, sexting behavior was categorized as 1 = nonsexters (Never sexted), 2 = receivers (Received nude image), and 3 = two-way sexters (Received and sent nude images). Using a factorial ANOVA, results showed significant main effects for sexting behavior ($F(2, 272) = 13.22, p < .05, \eta^2 = .09$) and gender ($F(1, 272) = 75.26, p < .05, \eta^2 = .22$) on condom use self-efficacy. Results also showed significant main effects for sexting behavior ($F(2, 283) = 40.53, p < .05, \eta^2 = .22$) and gender ($F(1, 283) = 31.62, p < .05, \eta^2 = .10$) with sexual intention. No significant interactions were found in both factorial ANOVAS. Overall, two-way sexters and males had higher levels of condom use efficacy and sexual intention. Future research should further examine the relationship between condom use self-efficacy and sex to understand why such gender differences occur.

Keywords: Sexting, gender, emerging adults