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ADOLESCENT SEXTING: A SCOPING REVIEW OF RESEARCH UTILIZING LONGITUDINAL STUDY DESIGNS

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ABSTRACT

Sexting is broadly understood as a set of behaviours that include sending, receiving, forwarding, and posting sexually explicit or suggestive content such as photographs, videos, and messages via electronic devices. Due to the lack of longitudinal studies, this review aims to bridge the gap in the current literature by reviewing sexting research with a longitudinal study design among youths. A narrative review of the quantitative data was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. Five databases were searched, and eighteen peer-reviewed articles that met the inclusion criteria were identified. The results were categorised into five categories: (1) relationship between sexting and sexual behaviour, (2) relationship between sexting and psychological well-being, (3) relationship between sexting and violence, (4) relationship between sexting and personality, and (5) relationship between sexting and social factors. Due to the different objectives and measured variables, it is difficult to compare the results of the reviewed longitudinal studies. Longitudinal data on the temporal aspects of sexting involvement would be beneficial for building interventions and prevention frameworks to reduce non-consensual sexting.

Keywords: sexting, youths, longitudinal research, sexting measurement

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the use of technology has increased significantly, and it has become an essential aspect of life for young people. Technological advancements have led to an increase in sexting among young people, which is now an important aspect of their sexual socialisation. In its broadest definition, sexting includes a range of behaviours such as sending, receiving, forwarding and uploading explicit or sexually suggestive content (images, videos, text or voice content) created by the user via electronic devices on the internet (especially via social media applications) (see e.g., Barrense Dias et al., 2017; Dodaj et al., 2024; Gordon-Messer et al., 2013; Strasburger et al., 2019). Sexting can also be defined as a form of sexual communication wherein sexually explicit content is disseminated through digital platforms for a variety of motivations. Even though sharing sexual content in private and with trusted romantic figures (Molla Esparza et al., 2020b) has become a common and modern way for young people to explore their sexuality, intimate material can end up in the hands of others through intentional or unintentional non-consensual forwarding (Dodaj et al., 2024; Van Ouytsel et al., 2018). This can lead to an invasion of privacy, feelings of loneliness, negative effects on one's grades and intimidation, which in turn can trigger depressive, guilty, or even suicidal thoughts (see Lopez-Rosales et al., 2019). A study conducted by Dodaj and colleagues (2019) revealed a direct connection between sexting and its long-term impact on psychological well-being, including conditions like depression, anxiety, and stress. According to these explanations, sexting can be seen both as a precursor to riskier sexual behaviour and as a normal expression of sexual behaviour.

Research on sexting is crucial, as it can have both positive and harmful effects on young people (Hudson & Marshall, 2018). Furthermore, as this is a time of intense sexual exploration for youths, it is important that sexting does not go unnoticed. A recent meta-analysis (Molla-Esparza et al., 2020a) showed that the prevalence of various sexting behaviours among adolescents increased over the years (between 2009 and 2020). Adolescents frequently engage in the exchange of sexts to strengthen personal bonds or enhance their sexual experiences. However, this behaviour can sometimes be motivated by harmful intentions, resulting in the potential exploitation of shared explicit material (Schokkenbroek et al., 2023).

Sexting among adolescents can be analysed through various theoretical frameworks that highlight potential causal and consequential relationships, as well as developmental changes. From a developmental perspective, sexting represents an avenue for identity exploration and sexual expression, aligning with Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1950). Additionally, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986) underscores the role of observation and reinforcement in shaping behaviours, suggesting that adolescents may mimic sexting behaviours seen in peers or media. Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1974) further illustrates how sexting meets psychological needs for intimacy and social belonging, thus influencing its prevalence. Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1978) proposes that individuals' early attachment styles affect their engagement in sexting, with secure attachments promoting healthy interactions, while insecure styles may lead to problematic behaviours. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) provides insight into how attitudes, perceived norms, and perceived control impact the likelihood of sexting, suggesting that shifts in these factors can alter engagement levels. Lastly, Bronfenbrenner's (1992) Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes the influence of various contextual layers—family, peers, and cultural

norms—on sexting behaviours. Collectively, the frameworks suggest that sexting behaviours may evolve over time, influenced by developmental stages, social contexts, and individual experiences, reflecting a complex interplay of factors that shape adolescent sexual communication.

Over the last decade, research on sexting among young people has expanded considerably. This has not only explored the predictors or potential consequences of sexting behaviour using quantitative (e.g., Bianchi et al., 2021; Gregg et al., 2018) or qualitative (Ringrose et al., 2012; Walker et al., 2013) approaches, but also a nuanced understanding of longitudinal changes in sexting behaviour and the associated determinants (e.g. Temple & Choi, 2014; Chaudhary et al., 2017). Longitudinal studies offer higher data integrity as they allow the investigation of correlations over time and thus elucidate the temporal dynamics of the observed effects.

To our knowledge, only the most recent study by Hu et al. (2023) has provided a systematic review of longitudinal studies on sexting. The systematic review by Hu et al. (2023) looks at longitudinal studies focusing on the long-term outcomes and predictors of sexting behaviour in different age groups, including adolescents, young adults, and adults. The results of this review do not provide conclusive evidence of causal links between sexting, cyberbullying/bullying, and psychological health outcomes. Positive peer norms were found to be significant predictors of sexting behaviour, whereas sexting itself predicted future offline sexual behaviour. However, there is a need for a more focussed investigation focusing solely on longitudinal studies of sexting outcomes and predictors among adolescents to gain a more accurate overview of the longer-term effects of sexting and its predictors. There is also a need for a comprehensive summary and critique of previously reported longitudinal data reported on adolescent sexting, covering a wide range of variables, to improve understanding of the different factors that influence sexting behaviour over time.

The present scoping review therefore takes a comprehensive approach to identify and summarise all existing longitudinal data on adolescent sexting and describes its main aims, findings, methodological features, and conceptual operationalization. This scoping review aims to consolidate existing knowledge, describe the current state of knowledge, and identify avenues for future research and intervention initiatives on adolescent sexting. Therefore, this study employs a scoping review approach which is commonly used to explore and clarify the different definitions present in the existing literature (Munn et al., 2018).

METHOD

Eligibility criteria

The following inclusion criteria were used to determine the eligibility of studies: 1) Studies focusing on adolescents. We limited the age period and therefore included articles in which the sample was eighteen years old or younger (before the emerging adulthood stage) (Arnett, 2014); 2) studies focusing on sexting behaviour; 3) studies that used a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed longitudinal methodology (with at least two data collection time points); 4) original empirical articles that were available in English.

Search strategy

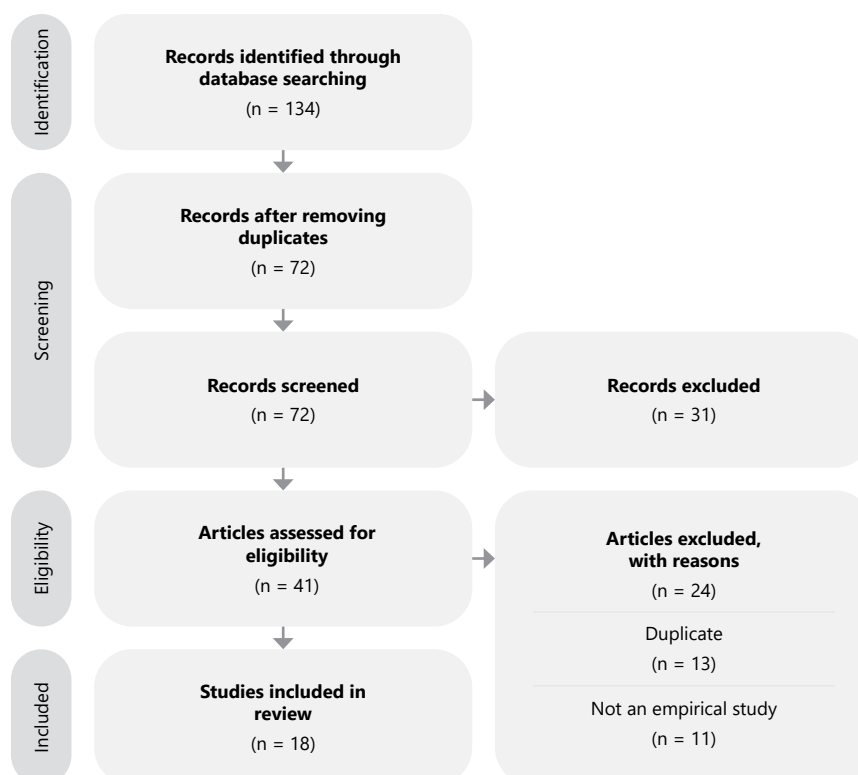
The review was conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR, Tricco et al., 2018). A comprehensive literature search was conducted using the following databases: PsycINFO, Medline (ProQuest), ERIC (ProQuest), SCOPUS, and Google Scholar. We defined the different keywords and their combination to create the following search equation: "youth*" OR "young people*" AND "sexting*" "sexting behaviour*" OR "sext*" OR "sexual texting*" OR "sexual messaging*" AND "longitudinal*" OR "longitudinal research*" OR "longitudinal study*". In this scoping review, a thorough search strategy also included the screening of grey literature and the examination of reference lists from the included studies to identify additional potentially eligible studies. We restricted our search to titles, abstracts, or keywords and to manuscripts written in English. No further restrictions were made. The search was conducted between December 2022 and May 2023.

Study selection

Figure 1 shows a flowchart for the identification and selection of studies. After screening the remaining titles and abstracts (n=134), 95 full-text articles were screened for eligibility. Of these articles, 18 articles met the criteria for inclusion in the scoping review. Despite a comprehensive search strategy that included grey literature and a review of reference lists from the included studies, no further eligible articles were identified through these supplementary methods. Table 1 provides a detailed description of the key characteristics of these articles.

Figure 1

Flow chart of the study selection process based on PRISMA guidelines (2009)



For clarity, Appendix 1 at the end of the text provides a table containing information about the studies included in the scoping review.

RESULTS

Many studies were conducted in the United States (10/17) or Spain (5/17), one in the Czech Republic, one in Croatia and one in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sample sizes ranged from 197 to 2731 participants, with half of the samples including more than 1000 participants. The duration of follow-up in the studies was 4 months (N=2), 6 months (N=1), 12 months (N=14) and 20 months (N=1). Most studies included two measurement points (N=11), especially those with a duration of 12 months (N=8). Two studies with a duration of four months comprised two measurement points, while one study with a duration of 20 months also comprised two measurement points. In a total of four studies, three measurement points were conducted: three with a duration of 12 months and one with a duration of six months. In a total of three studies with a longitudinal duration of 12 months, four measurement points were performed. Most studies (N=14) investigated sexting using single items and mostly focused on sending, receiving, and/or forwarding. Four identified longitudinal studies used a developed questionnaire to investigate sexting behaviour.

The most examined relationships in longitudinal studies were those between sexting and sexual behaviours (e.g., sexual activity, risky sexual behaviours; N=7) and between sexting and psychological well-being and mental health (e.g., depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, self-esteem, need for popularity; N=6). This was followed by relationships between sexting and violence (e.g., online peer violence, sexual solicitation, cyber gossip; N=4), sexting and personality (N=3), and sexting and social norms (e.g., normalization of sexting, peer influence, exposure to sexual lyrics in music; N=3). The results are further divided into five sections, depending on the type of study and the relationships analysed.

Sexting and sexual behaviour

Seven studies have investigated the relationship between sexting behaviours and sexual behaviours (Bogner et al., 2023; Choi et al., 2019; Hicks et al., 2021; Mori et al., 2021; Steinberg et al., 2019; Ševčikova et al., 2017; Temple & Choi, 2014). In five of these studies, participation in sexting was found to predict sexual activity, including oral and genital sexual contact, six to twelve months after the first measurement point, with sexually active individuals having multiple partners and engaging in sexting in the future (Bogner et al., 2023; Choi et al., 2019; Hicks et al., 2021; Steinberg et al., 2019; Ševčikova et al., 2017). In a study by Temple and Choi (2014), adolescents who sexted at the first measurement point were 1.32 times more likely to report generally measured sexual activity twelve months later. In one study, sexting was also associated with riskier sexual behaviours (Mori et al., 2021).

Sexting and psychological well-being

Six studies investigated the relationship between sexting and various indicators of psychological well-being (Burić et al., 2021; Casas et al., 2019; Chaudhary et al., 2017; Dodaj et al., 2019; Gamez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018; Kurup et al., 2022). Three of these studies investigated the relationship between symptoms of depression, anxiety, and/or stress as indicators of psychological well-being and sexting (Burić et al., 2021; Chaudhary et al., 2017; Dodaj et al., 2019; Gamez-Guadix & De Santisteban, 2018). In a study by Chaudhary et al. (2017), participation in sexting at the first measurement point increased the likelihood of developing anxiety and depression symptoms occurring one year later. In contrast, in a study by Gamez-Guadix and De Santisteban (2018), the symptom of depression at the first measurement point increased the likelihood of participating in sexting one year later. A study by Dodaj et al. (2019) also showed that symptoms of depression and stress increase the likelihood of sexting one year later. In a longitudinal study by Burić et al. (2021), no relationship was found between sexting and symptoms of depression or anxiety in adolescent girls over a period of twenty months.

One study found that adolescent girls who reported sexting at the first measurement point showed increased externalizing symptoms and lower life satisfaction, lower self-confidence, and lower social competence at the second measurement point (Kurup et al., 2022). In addition, in one study, indicators of greater social competence (greater prosocial behaviour and need for popularity at the first measurement point) predicted sexting behaviour four months later (Casas et al., 2019).

Sexting and violence

Four studies investigated the relationship between sexting and different types of violent behaviour (Casas et al., 2019; Gamez-Guadix & Mateos -Perez, 2019; Ojeda et al. 2019; Van Ouytsel et al., 2019). One study (Gamez-Guadix & Mateos-Perez, 2019) found that participation in sexting was a significant predictor of later experiences of sexual solicitation and cyberbullying. Adolescents who reported experiences of cyberbullying victimisation (Van Ouytsel et al., 2019) or cyber-gossip (Casas et al., 2019) were more likely to be involved in sexting behaviour. Finally, it was found that not only involvement in cyber violence but also involvement in traditional peer violence increased the likelihood of forwarding sexting (Ojeda et al., 2019).

Sexting and personality

Two studies investigated the relationship between sexting and the Big Five personality traits and found that lower conscientiousness, higher extraversion, and lower agreeableness at the time of the first measurement consistently predicted sexting in the follow-up study one year later (Alonso & Romero, 2019; Gámez Guadix & de Santisteban, 2018). One of the most recent studies investigated the relationship between sexting and borderline personality disorder (Kurup et al., 2022). It was found that only in girls was sexting associated on average (between-person) with an increase in borderline personality disorder. There were no within-person gender differences and no longitudinal correlations.

Sexting and social norms

Three studies have analysed various indicators of social norms (Burić et al., 2021; Casas et al., 2019; Keenan-Kroff et al., 2023). According to Burić et al. (2021), peer conformism is associated with more frequent sexting among adolescents. In one study (Casas et al., 2019), the degree of normalization of sexting played the most important role, but only in boys. Finally, exposure to sexual context, such as sexualized lyrics in music, contributes to adolescents sexting a year later (Keenan-Kroff et al., 2023).

DISCUSSION

The conclusions of this review highlight several important findings regarding the long-term relationships between sexting and different areas of adolescent development.

First, the results emphasise the nuanced link between sexting and sexual activity. The seven studies found in this review show that adolescent sexting behaviour is associated with later sexual activity. However, our data suggest that risky sexual practices such as having many partners, may precede sexting. This is consistent with the findings of cross-sectional studies showing a relationship between sexting and a range of sexual behaviours (Houck et al., 2014; Temple et al., 2012) and risky online and offline behaviours (Dake et al., 2012; Klettke et al., 2014).

Second, this review also emphasises the link between sexting and mental health. Six studies analysed the relationship between sexting and other measures of psychological health, such as anxiety, depression, stress, and self-esteem. While some studies found no significant relationship, others found a link between sexting and negative psychological outcomes, such as increased symptoms of anxiety and despair. Previous cross-sectional studies have also found conflicting results regarding the relationship between sexting and mental health indicators. While some researchers have suggested that adolescents who sext are more likely to report anxiety, depression, shame and fear (Klettke et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2012; Morelli et al., 2018), others have found no difference between adolescents who sext and those who do not in terms of various psychological problems (Gordon-Messer et al., 2013; Temple et al., 2014). These contradictory results highlight the need for further research to clarify the complex mechanisms underlying the relationship between sexting and adolescent psychological well-being.

Third, this review also shows how sexting affects the violent behaviour of young people and vice versa. Four studies investigated the relationship between various violent behaviours, such as cyberbullying, and peer aggression, and sexting. The results suggest that adolescents who engage in sexting are more likely to engage in violent behaviour, both online and offline, and vice versa. Previous research utilising a cross-sectional design has found an association between sexting and cyberbullying, sexual grooming, and solicitation among adolescents (Machimbarrena et al., 2018; Madigan et al., 2018a; 2018b). Subsequent research efforts should address the broader sociocultural elements that support youth violence related to sexting.

Finally, this review highlights the influence of personality traits and social norms on sexting behaviour. Two studies identified in this review found that certain personality traits, such as lower

conscientiousness and higher extraversion, predicted adolescent sexting behaviour. In addition, exposure to sexualised content and peer conformism were found to be associated with increased sexting behaviour in adolescents. Previous cross-sectional studies have investigated a relationship between sexting and personality traits. Low agreeableness and neuroticism positively predicted sexting, while conscientiousness negatively influenced sexting behaviour (Delevi & Weisskirch, 2013; Morelli et al., 2020). In addition, emotionality and extraversion were positively associated with sending sexting, while agreeableness and openness to experience were negatively associated with forwarding sexting without consent (Morelli et al., 2020). Furthermore, previous cross-sectional studies have suggested that social adjustment and normative adjustment are negatively associated with involvement in sexting and that sexting and social adjustment are positively related to friendship quality (Foody et al., 2023). Adolescents' motivation to share intimate images with peers is related to the development and maintenance of friendships and intimate relationships (Hollá et al., 2018). Adolescents may feel pressurised to engage in sexting, especially if they feel that sexting is approved by their social group and that their peers are also involved in sexting (Walrave et al., 2014). In adolescence, adolescents attempt to secure better social status and their need for popularity by conforming to the norms of their peer group (Asher & McDonald, 2009).

The patterns observed in longitudinal studies shed light on the evolving nature of sexting and its connections to other behaviours and mental health outcomes. By tracking these changes over time, researchers can see that sexting often leads to sexual activity, suggesting it might serve as a predictor of future sexual behaviours. Additionally, the relationship between sexting and psychological well-being is intricate; for example, engaging in sexting may increase feelings of anxiety or depression, while existing mental health issues can also drive sexting behaviour. This temporal perspective allows for a deeper understanding of how sexting influences, and how it is influenced by various psychosocial factors, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions that address both the behaviours and the underlying emotional and social contexts.

To summarise, this comprehensive analysis makes an important contribution to our understanding of the long-term relationships between sexting and various facets of adolescent development. This review contributes to our understanding of the complex nature of sexting behaviour and its impact on adolescent wellbeing by bringing together existing research findings. Nevertheless, it emphasizes the need for additional long-term studies to fully investigate the complicated relationship between sexting and adolescent development. Future studies should also consider how adolescents' experiences of sexting behaviour are shaped by contextual elements such as parental influences and cultural norms. To support the healthy sexual development and well-being of adolescents in the digital age, researchers and practitioners can develop more effective treatments by addressing these gaps in knowledge.

Limitations of studies included in the scoping review

The measurement instruments used to assess sexting vary considerably depending on which forms of sexting they focus on. For example, previous studies have measured sexting with one or a few individual items rather than multi-item measure (e.g., Chaudhary et al., 2017; Choi et al., 2016; Temple & Choi, 2014). Most standard items on sexting behaviour were the sending of sexually ex-

PLICIT content and the sending and receiving of sexts. Later research examined sexting behaviour as the sending, receiving and forwarding of self-produced sexually explicit content among adolescents. Some studies have also investigated whether adolescents ask or are asked by others to share sexually explicit content (e.g., Temple & Choi, 2014; Van Ouytsel et al., 2019). Given the diversity of measurement approaches in the studies included in this review, as well as the prevailing trend towards the use of shorter questionnaires, future longitudinal research could significantly benefit from the implementation of abbreviated multi-item scales that emphasize core constructs in sexting research. Specifically, these constructs should include the sending, receiving, and forwarding sexts, as well as experiences related to the non-consensual dissemination of one's own sexts. Such an approach would facilitate a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of sexting while maintaining the feasibility of data collection in longitudinal settings.

The majority of studies included in this review employed only two measurement points (N=11), which complicates the ability to distinguish between true change and measurement error. Furthermore, this limitation precludes the modelling of nonlinear forms of change (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010). Considering the significant number of longitudinal studies conducted to date that rely solely on two measurement points, we strongly recommend that future longitudinal research be grounded in theoretical frameworks and incorporate a minimum of three measurement intervals. The rationale for this recommendation lies in the fact that two measurement points can only indicate linear change, thereby inhibiting the ability to capture the nuances of change over time (Rogosa, 1995; Singer & Willett, 2003).

Another critical aspect to consider is the issue of attrition. Missing data was noted in seven of the studies included in this review (Burić et al., 2020; Chaudhary et al., 2017; Choi et al., 2019; Dodaj et al., 2019; Gámez-Guadix & Mateos-Pérez, 2019; Temple & Choi, 2014; Van Ouytsel et al., 2019). Given the infrequent decline in response rates, future longitudinal studies should explicitly address the issue of missing data in their limitations (Chan, 1998; Ibrahim & Molenberghs, 2009). While missing data do not inherently introduce bias, they can reduce statistical power and potentially lead to significant analytical challenges (Ployhart & Vandenberg, 2010).

In addition, sexting research is mainly based on self-report questionnaires in which youths do not always respond honestly due to social desirability regarding sexting involvement (Hudson & Marshall, 2018). Therefore, their answers may only sometimes be honest because they fear that someone may violate their anonymity and privacy, or others will find out about their answers. Although self-reporting in youth sexting research is often unavoidable, researchers typically use anonymous online surveys to mitigate this issue, while some authors advocate for the integration of mixed methods and triangulation to capture more nuanced data and reduce potential biases due to the sensitive nature of the topic (Barrense-Dias et al., 2017; Cohen et al., 2002; Dodaj et al., 2022).

Findings from longitudinal studies on youth sexting provide important insights into changes over time, but they do not imply causation. While these studies can highlight associations and trends in sending, receiving, forwarding sexts, and/or being victims of non-consensual sexting, they cannot conclusively demonstrate that one factor directly influences another. In contrast, the absence of longitudinal research complicates the task of establishing causal relationships, especially regarding

sexting and its related predictors or outcomes. Researchers without longitudinal data must often rely on cross-sectional studies, which may not adequately address the temporal aspects needed to determine whether sexting occurs before or after changes in other variables. As a result, the scarcity of longitudinal research hampers our ability to draw robust conclusions about causal links in this area.

Moreover, considering the intricacies of sexting behaviour, certain studies have not sufficiently accounted for relevant confounding variables. In longitudinal research, it is crucial for researchers to strategically decide when to measure indicators that remain constant over time and when to assess those that change over time. Failing to do so may result in important confounding variables being overlooked or measured at inappropriate times. Important confounding variables in further longitudinal youth sexting research include social emancipation, social-cognitive factors, and parental or school supervision. While baseline assessment can provide initial data on involvement in sexting behaviour, follow-up research should track expected behavioural changes, such as entering romantic relationships or transitioning from elementary to high school. Carefully considering when to collect data is important to fully understand the factors that shape sexting behaviours in adolescents.

It is also important to note that while longitudinal studies can provide insights into temporal associations, they do not establish causation (Taris & Kompier, 2003), and the lack of such studies limits the ability to draw causal inferences between sexting and its associated predictors or outcomes.

Limitations of current review and implications for further research

This scoping review has several shortcomings that should be considered. First, the quality of the studies included was not formally assessed, which could affect the reliability of the findings. Moreover, the assessment of study quality could contribute to greater transparency, precision and evaluation of research (Protogerou & Hagger, 2019). Without this assessment, the robustness of the conclusions drawn from this review may be questionable, and readers should interpret the findings with caution.

Also, despite a comprehensive search strategy, the review may have missed relevant studies published in languages other than English or those not indexed in the selected databases, which could introduce a language or publication bias.

Future longitudinal studies on sexting could greatly contribute to current knowledge by investigating contextual variables since reviewed literature did not examine any. Longitudinal data on temporal aspects of sexting involvement would be beneficial for building interventions and prevention frameworks to reduce involvement in non-consensual sexting and negative consequences of sexting behaviour. It could be beneficial to investigate communication within intimate partner relationships and among peers about involvement in sexting behaviour (Widman et al., 2021). Exploring the dynamics of relationships and satisfaction with communication with potential or current intimate partners could provide useful insight into understanding sexting among youths.

CONCLUSION

The first empirical studies with a longitudinal design were published in the mid and late 2010s (e.g., Chaudhary et al., 2017; Temple & Choi, 2014). These studies mainly investigated the possible consequences of sexting behaviour. In particular, longitudinal research on sexting has mainly focused on the consequences of sexting in terms of sexual behaviour and the impact on psychological well-being, while the influence of individual and social predictors has been partially ignored. Although research on sexting is increasing, there is still a lack of consistent longitudinal data that could broaden the understanding of sexting as a complex behaviour among adolescents. Therefore, current longitudinal research on sexting lacks coherence (Doyle et al., 2021). It is therefore important to emphasise the coherence of the conceptual and methodological aspects of sexting research. For example, future cross-sectional studies could have a greater chance of comparing prevalence rates in research, and longitudinal studies could provide temporal explanations for the phenomenon through an empirically validated theoretical framework. Also, future scientific efforts could bridge the gap in the current literature by examining longitudinal associations between non-consensual sexting, offline and online victimisation, and psychosocial consequences among youths.

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Appendix 1

Studies included in the scoping review

Authors	Country	Sample size (N)	The age of participants in the sample	Subject of measurement	Sexting measure	Number of measuring points	Time gap between measuring points	Conclusion
Temple & Choi (2014)	The USA (Texas)	984	M=16.09; SD= 0.79	Sexting and sexual activity	Single items for sexting (sending, requesting, and being requested to send sexts)	2	12 months	1.32 times higher probability of sexual activity in T3 among youth who were involved in sexting in T2.
Chaudhary et al. (2017)	The USA (Texas)	500	M=12.2; SD=0.57	Sexting, anxiety, and depression	Single items for sexting (sending, receiving, and forwarding sexts)	2	12 months	Youth who sexted at T1 had significantly higher odds of anxiety and depressive symptoms at T2 than those who did not.
Ševčíková et al. (2017)	Czechia	1134	M=13.84; SD= 1.94	Sexting and sexual activity	The single item for sexting (sending sexts)	3	6 months	Sexting in T1 predicted sexual activity in T2 and T3.
Gamez-Guadix & De Santisteban (2018)	Spain	2731	M=13.57; SD= 1.09	Sexting, personality, and depression	Sexting questionnaire (Gámez-Guadix et al., 2015)	2	12 months	Lower conscientiousness, higher extraversion, and higher depression at T1 predicted sexting at T2.
Alonso & Romero (2019)	Spain	624	M=14.35; SD=1.55	Sexting and personality	Sexting frequency questionnaire (Weiskirch and Delevi, 2011) (sending sexts)	2	12 months	Higher extraversion, lower agreeableness, and conscientiousness in T1 are associated with sexting in T2. High extraversion at T1 predicts sexting at T2.
Casas et al. (2019)	Spain	1431	M=13.61; SD=1.31	Sexting, normalization of sexting, need for popularity, cyber-gossip, perceived social competence	Single items for sexting (sending, receiving, and forwarding); Sexting Normalization Questionnaire (Casas et al., 2019)	2	4 months	All studied factors (T1) predict sexting in T2.

Choi et al. (2019)	The USA (Texas)	1042	M= 17.4; SD=0.77	Sexting and sexual activity	Single items for sexting (sending, receiving, searching)	4	12 months	Involvement in sexting increases with age, and a longitudinal association between sexting (T1) and sexual activity (T2, T3, T4) was established. Those who had multiple partners and were sexually active were significantly more likely to engage in sexting behaviour in the future.
Dodaj et al. (2019)	Bosnia and Herzegovina	359	M= 16.32; SD=0.65	Sexting and psychological distress	Sexting Behavior Questionnaire (Morelli et al., 2016)	2	12 months	Stress was a significant predictor of sending sexting in the baseline study, while depression of receiving and sending sexting in the follow-up study.
Gamez-Guadix & Mateos -Perez (2019)	Spain	1497	M=13.65; SD=0.79	Sexting, sexual solicitation, and online violence	Questionnaire on sexting (Gamez-Guadix et al., 2017); Questionnaire on sexual solicitation of minors with adults (Gamez-Guadix et al., 2017)	2	12 months	The results indicate that the participation of minors in sexting in T1 predicted a significant increase in sexual solicitation and electronic violence in T2; sexual solicitation and electronic violence were associated with increased participation in sexual behaviour in T2.
Steinberg et al. (2019)	The USA	429	1st year of secondary school	Sexting and sexual behaviours	The single item for sexting in the context of sexual behaviour (sending)	3	12 months	Sexual behaviour is common in adolescence and appears together with genital sexual contact through different trajectories of sexual development.
Ojeda et al. (2019)	Spain	1736	M= 13.60; SD= 1.25	Sexting and (online) peer violence	Single items for sexting (sending, receiving, forwarding, receiving forwards)	2	4 months	Adolescents who engaged in sexting at T1 were more likely to report engaging in sexting at T2. Adolescents who reported being involved in traditional peer violence at T1 were more likely to be involved in forwarding third-party sexual content at T2.
Van Ouytsel et al. (2019)	The USA (Texas)	776	M= 16.1; SD=0.79	Sexting and (online) peer violence	Single items for sexting (send, request, I was requested)	3	12 months	T3 cyberbullying victimization was associated with sexting involvement at T4. T2 cyberbullying victimization is indirectly related to T4 sexting through T3 cyberbullying victimization. For traditional violence, a cross-effect was found between T3 sexting and T4 traditional victimization. Although T2 sexting was not directly related to subsequent traditional victimization, a significant mediation effect was identified such that T3 sexting mediated the effect of T2 sexting on T4 traditional victimization.

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Burić et al. (2021)	Croatia	859	M=15.8; SD=0.50	Sexting, psychological well-being, anxiety and depression, the influence of peers and parents	Single items for sexting (sending)	2	20 months	No associations were found between changes in sexting and depression and anxiety among Croatian adolescent girls. Negative family environment and participants' peer conformism were related to more frequent sexting and lower levels of well-being.
Hicks et al. (2021)	The USA	1240	11-17 yrs.	Sexting and sexual behaviour	Single items for sexting and sexual behaviour	4	12 months	Sexting (T1) predicted oral and sexual contact (T4) for African American men, white men, and white women, but not for African American women.
Mori et al. (2021)	The USA (Texas)	894	M=17.04; SD=0.77	Sexting, sexual behaviour, use of contraception, number of partners, use of addictive substances	Single items for sexting (sending, receiving, searching)	3	12 months	Latent class analysis (MPlus) identified 4 classes: No sexting – low sex (42.2%), Sexting – low sex (4.5%), No sexting – moderately risky sex (28.3%) and Sexting – moderate risky sex (24.9%)
Kurup et al. (2022)	The USA	197	1st year of secondary school	Sexting, externalizing symptoms, personality, life satisfaction, belonging to a group, social competence, self-esteem	Single items for sexting (sending and receiving sexts)	4	12 months	For girls only, sexting (T1) was associated with increased externalizing symptoms and features of borderline personality disorder, as well as decreased life satisfaction, group affiliation, self-perceived social competence, and self-confidence (T2).
Bogner et al. (2023)	The USA	343	M=12.89	Sexting and sexual activity	Single items for sexting	2	12 months	Youth who had sexted at T1 were more likely to engage in first oral and/or penetrative sex at T2 (one year). Exploratory analysis revealed that sexting (T1) predicted oral and penetrative sex (T2).
Keenan-Kroff et al. (2023)	The USA (Texas)	278	M=15	Sexting and sexual lyrics	Sexual messages are coded (sending and receiving sexts).	2	12 months	Boys are more likely to engage in sexting (T2) in the future when exposed to sexualized lyrics in music (T1), while no such relationship was found for girls.

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SEKSTING MEĐU ADOLESCENTIMA: SUSTAVNI PREGLED ISTRAŽIVANJA LONGITUDINALNOG DIZAJNA ISTRAŽIVANJA

SAŽETAK

Seksting se općenito shvaća kao skup ponašanja koja uključuju slanje, primanje, prosljeđivanje i objavljivanje seksualno eksplicitnog ili sugestivnog sadržaja kao što su fotografije, videozapisi i poruke putem elektroničkih uređaja. Zbog nedostatka longitudinalnih studija, ovaj sustavni pregled ima za cilj premostiti jaz u trenutnoj literaturi pregledom istraživanja sekstinga među mladima koristeći se dizajnom longitudinalne studije.

Narativni pregled kvantitativnih podataka proveden je u skladu s PRISMA smjericama. Pretraženo je pet baza podataka i identificirano je osamnaest recenziranih članaka koji su zadovoljili kriterije za uključivanje.

Rezultati su kategorizirani u pet kategorija: (1) odnos između sekstinga i seksualnog ponašanja, (2) odnos između sekstinga i psihološke dobrobiti, (3) odnos između sekstinga i nasilja, (4) odnos između sekstinga i osobnosti i (5) odnos između sekstinga i društvenih čimbenika.

Zbog različitih ciljeva i mjerenih varijabli, teško je usporediti rezultate pregledanih longitudinalnih studija. Longitudinalni podaci vremenske uključenosti sekstinga bili bi korisni za izgradnju intervencija i preventivnih okvira u svrhu smanjenja sekstinga bez pristanka.

Ključne riječi: seksting, adolescenti, longitudinalno istraživanje, mjerenje sekstinga



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