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## SEXTING TYPES AND MOTIVES DETECTED AMONG SLOVAK ADOLESCENTS\*\*

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The present study maps different types of adolescent sexting in the Slovak Republic, i.e. primary and secondary sexting, as well as self- and peer-sexting. Our research has been focused on the investigation and comparison of motives that make the adolescents of different ages and genders decide for voluntary, forced, primary, secondary, self- or peer-sexting. The research sample included 790 Slovak adolescents aged 12–18, of which 376 were boys (47.6%) and 414 were girls (52.4%). The gender-based comparison provided us with statistically significant differences in pursuing various types of sexting. The most frequent form of sexting is peer-sexting. In terms of motivation, the research shows that most adolescents use individual sexting forms to seek attention or entertain themselves. Secondary sexting (as the most dangerous form of this behavior) is most often driven by entertainment, retaliation, revenge and jealousy. All these motives were also statistically more significant for male respondents.

**Keywords:** adolescents; peer-sexting; primary sexting; secondary sexting; self-sexting

### 1. Theoretical framework

As the availability of modern technologies grows with the Internet access, sexting has spread and become more popular among adolescents. The term itself first appeared in 2005 and referred to the behavior of sending sexually explicit messages and photos, usually through mobile devices. It is the social trend that raises concerns for teenagers, young adults, parents, teachers, legislators and lawmakers. However, DÖRING (2014) stresses that not all photos and videos exposing sexual content can be automatically considered sexting products. Free download of the sexually explicit photos and videos from the Internet does not represent sexting. Sexting actors have to take photos of themselves and send the material to the other user via computer, tablet or cell phone (DÖRING 2014). The sexting process can to a great extent depend on stimuli from the

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social environment. It means that the perception of peers and cultural norms is a determinant factor. Adolescents want to express themselves in a manner that would draw the attention of their peers and raise their social status. That should satisfy the inherent needs for affection, sympathy, and self-affirmation (HINDUJA & PATCHIN 2012).

Experts differentiate between several types of sexting. Over the past decade, the professionals have been discussing primary and secondary sexting (CALVERT 2009). Primary sexting refers to the exchange of sexual content between minors. Secondary sexting occurs if the material is shared or forwarded beyond the intended recipient. CALVERT (2013) recognizes primary and secondary sexting and adds another form that leads to revenge, retaliation, and humiliation. This kind of sexting form most often occurs after couples break up. Primary sexting tends to be consensual. Secondary sexting, on the other hand, typically becomes aggravated; i.e. harmful online behavior (VAN OUYTSEL et al. 2014).

Sexting can be further divided into experimental and aggravated sexting (WOLAK & FINKELHOR 2011). Experimental sexting includes romantic, sexual, and 'the other' form of sexting. Romantic and sexual sexting is preferred by adolescents who want to attract the attention of another person and experience online intimacy. 'The other' form of sexting occurs if the sext is created but not sent. Aggravated sexting distinguishes between the 'involvement of adults' and the 'involvement of youth'. Both involvements represent the incidents of aggravated sexual behavior that could lead to a dramatic increase of potential risks and threats. The authors claim that the intention of the youth involvement is to harm, abuse, or take revenge. Such situations happen when the sexters share a sext without permission. We might state that experimental sexting, as explained by WOLAK and FINKELHOR (2011), seems to be less harmful than aggravated sexting. The latter becomes more intense as the sexters increasingly harass the victims. HUDSON (2011) proposes four types of sexting: consensual or 'agreed' sexting (with both parties willing to sext), sex-bullying (used to harass and abuse the others), illegal sexting (between minors or between minors and adults) and at-risk sexting (resulting in multiple negative consequences, such as victimization, humiliation, educational issues, psychosomatic disorders, etc.).

Researchers VAN DER HOF and KOOPS (2011) explain self- and peer-sexting as circulating sexts among peers who wish to express themselves. As our research is focused on self- and peer-sexting motives of Slovak adolescents, we need to set out these phenomena in more details. Researchers define self-sexting as submitting photos of the naked self (ENGLANDER 2012), private exchange of self-exposing sexually explicit images (DÖRING 2014), sharing or showing one's own nude or half-naked photos (EUGENE 2015), and sending self-created sexually explicit images of minors (KROTOSZYNSKI et al. 2018). Specialized literature identifies peer-sexting as exchanging text and visual messages among peers by means of different digital devices having Internet access (LIVINGSTONE & GÖRZIG 2014). Creating and circulating sexually suggestive images among peers is also referred to as 'peer to peer sexting' (KROTOSZYNSKI et al. 2018). Sexting itself is not restricted to adolescents. We might also encounter adult sexting; i.e. sexual behavior pursued by adults.

The authors propose various motives for sending sexually explicit photos. Young people have several reasons for sexting. They might feel proud of their bodies or desire to attract someone. Mutual trust often makes them compensate for their friends' visual messages and send self-exposing photos in the belief that '*it is safe*'.

Other motives include flirting and seeking the attention of potential partners (HENDERSON 2011; ENGLANDER 2012), initiating sexual activities (TEMPLE & CHOI 2014), stimulating intimacy between partners (KLETTKE et al. 2014), complementing romantic relationships, seeking distraction, reacting to social pressure and consumer society or taking revenge (KOPECKY et al. 2015).

The research results by D. HALDER and K. JAISHANKAR (2009) prove that sexting is deemed to provide entertainment and distraction on social networks. Intimate materials (either photos or videos) distributed to the adolescents and adults might be used for revenge and retaliation. Revenge can take different forms – from blackmailing and bullying to child pornography.

Researchers BIANCHI and colleagues (2016) examined 509 respondents aged 13–35 to discover various motives for sexting behavior. The data was collected through the Sexting Motivations Questionnaire (SMQ) evaluating three scales of sexting motivation: sexual purposes, body image reinforcement, and instrumental/aggravated purposes. The most frequent sexting motivation for adolescents and young adults was found on the scale of sexual purposes (88%, n = 448) followed by the scale of body image reinforcement (57.4%, n = 292). The values of sexting as an abusive instrument are low, yet rather alarming (13.5%, n = 69).

One of the latest researches of sexting and at-risk online dating indicates that the most prevalent reason for adolescent sexting refers to seeking attention in the online environment (62.87% of girls and 52.89% of boys). Flirting with the person the adolescents liked motivated 61.09% of female respondents and 50.16% of male respondents to sext. The desire of having a boyfriend or girlfriend motivated 45.92% of the female and 49.96% of the male respondents, and the idea of surprising the boyfriend or girlfriend motivated 43.40% of the girls and 38.15% of the boys. Adolescents decided to sext for another set of reasons – to receive compliments, to grant the wish of their partners, to get entertained or distracted, and as a result of coercion (KOPECKY & SZOTKOWSKI 2017).

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Research goal**

Our research has been focused on the investigation and comparison of motives that make the adolescents of different age and gender pursue voluntary, forced, primary, secondary, and self- or peer-sexting.

The research tasks included:

*Task 1:* Mapping the occurrence of individual sexting types among Slovak adolescents of different age and gender.

*Task 2:* Mapping the motives for individual sexting types among Slovak adolescents of different age and gender.

## 2.2 Research sample

The research sample involved 790 Slovak adolescents and pubescents aged 12–18, of which 376 were boys (47.6%) and 414 were girls (52.4%). The participants were represented by 489 elementary school students (62%) and 301 high school students (38%). After having received the consent of schools and parents to inquire into their students and children, we proceeded with the available academic selection. Students who refused to take further part in the research or filled the questionnaire incompletely were excluded from the examination. Based on the available selection, the research engaged 19 schools from the whole of Slovakia. The available academic selection was supposed to involve 24 schools. Given that Slovakia is divided into eight regions, our initial intention was to select three schools from each region. Five schools, however, refused to take part in the examination, as neither the headmasters nor the parents agreed to the children's participation in the research. Schools were selected according to their type (i.e. state, private or religious schools) and location in the specific regions. The results based on the type of school are not stated here. As five schools had refused to participate in our research, the school distribution became uneven. The results were assessed with several research criteria, including age, gender, and variables stated in the objectives. Based on the age and gender criteria, the educators and teachers followed specific instructions to address and divide the respondents into approximately uniform age and gender groups. The students' engagement in our research required the informed consent from their parents. When finished, the respondents were asked to put the sealed envelope with the anonymous questionnaire into collection boxes. The initial number of received questionnaires was reduced by 45 copies due to incomplete data.

## 2.3 Research methods

For our purposes, we used the constructed *Sexting and its motives* questionnaire. This research instrument is based on the original *Cyberbullying and Online Aggression* questionnaire (HINDUJA & PATCHIN 2012) and modified to meet our requirements (HOLLA 2017). Our questionnaire was anonymous and delivered to the respondents in a printed form. The instructions on how to fill it were given to the respondents by the members of the research team or the informed person (class teacher, guidance counselor, or prevention coordinator). The overall questionnaire administration took approximately 35 minutes. The respondents needed no intervention after the completion. The schools were given the contact details of the researchers, counseling centers

and non-profit organizations, that could provide them with further pedagogical, psychological, and socio-legal aid or support. These contact details were also put on the information boards available for all students including those who had not participated in the research. Yet the researchers were not asked to provide further intervention.

The reliability of this modified research instrument was measured through Cronbach's Alpha. Scale-level Cronbach's Alpha reached  $\alpha = 0.953$ . Item-level Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from  $\alpha = 0.527$  to  $\alpha = 0.861$  (HOLLA 2017). In 2019, the 'sexting' scale from the modified questionnaire was used and complemented with motivation-oriented items. The above-mentioned *Sexting and its motives* questionnaire included 38 items – 16 items oriented towards sexting (sending and receiving sexts) and 22 items oriented towards self- and peer-sexting motivation. Scale-level Cronbach's Alpha reached the value of  $\alpha = 0.953$ .

With regard to the research goal and tasks, the results were processed via a non-parametric Mann–Whitney U-test and one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA).

## 2.4 Research results

### 2.4.1 Adolescent sexting types based on gender and age

We investigated Slovak adolescents and researched the incidence of selected sexting types, as well as the motivation to pursue such behavior in Slovak Republic. We paid attention to primary and secondary sexting, self- and peer-sexting, etc. As the individual sexting types are all closely-related, the conceptual definition of each type was needed. When studying primary sexting, we explored the act of sending sexts between friends and classmates without forwarding it to third parties. Self-sexting represented sharing self-exposing naked photos online; e.g. posting sexually suggestive photos and videos on social networks. Peer-sexting related to the exchange of sexts between friends and classmates. Increased attention was being paid to secondary sexting that can be regarded as the most at-risk type of sexting. Secondary sexting encompasses the act of forwarding sexts to the third parties.

The statistical analysis via the Mann–Whitney U-test (*Table 1*) showed no significant difference between male and female respondents in the primary sexting pursuit rate ( $U = 75,505.000$ ;  $p = 0.272$ ) and the self-sexting pursuit rate ( $U = 75,540.000$ ;  $p = 0.054$ ). Quite the opposite: a statistically significant gender-based difference was observed between peer-sexting pursuit rate and secondary sexting pursuit rate. Compared to girls, peer-sexting is more frequent with boys who tend to send the photos of their classmates ( $U = 73,399.000$ ;  $p = 0.021$ ) and friends ( $U = 73,435.000$ ;  $p = 0.032$ ). Secondary sexting is also more common for male respondents who admit forwarding sexually suggestive photos to third parties ( $U = 72,831.000$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ).

*Table 1*  
Adolescent sexting types based on gender

<i>Sexting types</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Primary sexting</i>	B	376	1.41	0.967	788	75,505.000	0.272
	G	414	1.31	0.798			
<i>Self-sexting</i>	B	376	1.10	0.485	788	75,540.000	0.054
	G	414	1.05	0.341			
<i>Peer-sexting: sexting among classmates</i>	B	376	1.34	0.927	788	73,399.000	<b>0.021</b>
	G	414	1.17	0.587			
<i>Peer-sexting: sexting among friends</i>	B	376	1.40	0.930	788	73,435.000	<b>0.032</b>
	G	414	1.28	0.791			
<i>Secondary sexting:</i>	B	376	1.28	0.794	788	72,831.000	<b>0.005</b>
	G	414	1.14	0.555			

B – boys; G – girls; N – number; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; SEM – standard error of mean; df – degrees of freedom; U – Mann-Whitney U-test; p – statistical significance level.

We proceeded with the age-oriented examination of sexting types (*Table 2*). The statistical breakdown via one-factor analysis of variance showed a significant difference in primary sexting pursuit rate ( $F = 14.891$ ;  $p = 0.0000$ ) based on age and the significance level of 0.05. Juveniles aged 16–18 are more inclined to primary sexting than younger adolescents. A statistically significant age-based difference is also observed for self-sexting; i.e. posting self-exposing intimate photos on the Internet ( $F = 2.180$ ;  $p = 0.043$ ). Compared to younger respondents, the rate of posting intimate photos is higher for 15-year-old juveniles. Students aged 15–18 decide for peer-sexting more often than younger pubescents and share sexts with classmates ( $F = 2.222$ ;  $p = 0.039$ ) or friends ( $F = 6.131$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ). It is interesting to note that no significant age-based difference exists in the secondary sexting involvement rate ( $F = 1.505$ ;  $p = 0.174$ ).

*Table 2*  
Adolescent sexting types based on age

<i>Sexting types</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Primary sexting</i>	12	166	1.11	0.528	0.041	6	14.891	<b>0.000</b>
	13	120	1.18	0.594	0.054			
	14	110	1.17	0.662	0.063			
	15	131	1.24	0.793	0.069			
	16	106	1.75	1.122	0.109			
	17	103	1.58	1.015	0.100			
	18	54	2.00	1.360	0.185			
<i>Self-sexting</i>	12	166	1.04	0.267	0.021	6	2.180	<b>0.043</b>
	13	120	1.01	0.159	0.014			
	14	110	1.09	0.460	0.044			
	15	131	1.18	0.696	0.061			
	16	106	1.07	0.285	0.028			
	17	103	1.06	0.366	0.036			
	18	54	1.11	0.462	0.063			
<i>Peer-sexting: sexting among classmates</i>	12	166	1.11	0.572	0.044	6	2.222	<b>0.039</b>
	13	120	1.23	0.764	0.070			
	14	110	1.18	0.623	0.059			
	15	131	1.30	0.917	0.080			
	16	106	1.40	0.902	0.088			
	17	103	1.28	0.720	0.071			
	18	54	1.41	0.962	0.131			
<i>Peer-sexting: sexting among friends</i>	12	166	1.10	0.462	0.036	6	6.131	<b>0.000</b>
	13	120	1.24	0.810	0.074			
	14	110	1.16	0.567	0.054			
	15	131	1.54	1.040	0.091			
	16	106	1.56	1.015	0.099			
	17	103	1.44	1.007	0.099			
	18	54	1.48	1.059	0.144			
<i>Secondary sexting: forwarding someone's naked photo to the third party</i>	12	166	1.11	0.509	0.040	6	1.505	0.174
	13	120	1.12	0.553	0.050			
	14	110	1.23	0.774	0.074			
	15	131	1.27	0.763	0.067			
	16	106	1.30	0.745	0.072			
	17	103	1.26	0.754	0.074			
	18	54	1.20	0.711	0.097			

N – number; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; SEM – standard error of mean; df – degrees of freedom; F – ANOVA; p – statistical significance level.

### 2.4.2 Motives for different types of sexting based on gender and age

When investigating what makes the adolescents choose different sexting motives, we reused the statistical comparative analyses via the Mann–Whitney U-test and one-factor analysis of variance. First, we compared the respondents' motives for individual types of adolescent sexting on the gender level (*Table 3*) and subsequently on the age level (*Table 4*). Sexting is an integral part of young people's digital world. A great number of contemporary pedagogical, psychological, and sociological experts strive to understand the reasons that motivate adolescents to engage in sexting. In terms of targeted prevention and intervention associated with the current generation, it is crucial to recognize and understand these motives.

First, we directed our attention to the motives that make adolescents choose primary sexting. The idea of attracting someone moved male and female respondents equally ( $U = 76,917.500$ ;  $p = 0.623$ ). The same tendencies were observed regarding the need of entertainment ( $U = 74,127.500$ ;  $p = 0.071$ ). Significant gender-based differences occurred regarding the motives of seeking attention ( $U = 73,512.500$ ;  $p = 0.010$ ), building relationships ( $U = 72,270.000$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), and flirting ( $U = 71,935.500$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ). It turned out that the above motives were prevalent with boys.

In case of secondary sexting that implies the forwarding of sexts to third parties, there were no significant gender-based differences for the motives of blackmailing and mocking. Secondary sexting is statistically more frequent with male adolescents who do it out of jealousy ( $U = 75,110.500$ ;  $p = 0.050$ ), retaliation or revenge ( $U = 74,366.000$ ;  $p = 0.030$ ), and entertainment ( $U = 72,408.000$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ).

Statistically significant peer-sexting motivations include entertainment ( $U = 73,125.500$ ;  $p = 0.009$ ), retaliation or revenge ( $U = 74,366.000$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ), curiosity ( $U = 71,724.000$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ), bets among friends ( $U = 72,808.500$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ) and sexual satisfaction ( $U = 73,023.000$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ). When compared to girls, the incidence of all these motives was higher for male participants.



*Table 3*  
Motives for sexting based on gender

<i>Type/Variable</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Primary sexting:</i>							
<i>attracting someone</i>	B	376	1.28	0.846	788	76,917.500	0.623
	G	414	1.23	0.714			
<i>seeking attention</i>	B	376	1.26	0.801	788	73,512.500	<b>0.010</b>
	G	414	1.14	0.562			
<i>building relationships</i>	B	376	1.30	0.866	788	72,270.000	<b>0.001</b>
	G	414	1.12	0.532			
<i>flirting</i>	B	376	1.37	0.951	788	71,935.500	<b>0.002</b>
	G	414	1.18	0.607			
<i>entertainment</i>	B	376	1.43	1.076	788	74,127.500	0.071
	G	414	1.23	0.700			
<i>Secondary sexting:</i>							
<i>blackmailing</i>	B	376	1.12	0.632	788	76,155.000	0.120
	G	414	1.02	0.183			
<i>mocking</i>	B	376	1.16	0.657	788	75,729.000	0.153
	G	414	1.10	0.467			
<i>jealousy</i>	B	376	1.20	0.771	788	75,110.500	<b>0.050</b>
	G	414	1.08	0.438			
<i>retaliation or revenge</i>	B	376	1.23	0.752	788	74,366.000	<b>0.030</b>
	G	414	1.12	0.514			
<i>entertainment</i>	B	376	1.45	1.092	788	72,408.000	<b>0.005</b>
	G	414	1.24	0.780			
<i>Peer-sexting:</i>							
<i>entertainment</i>	B	376	1.34	0.942	788	73,125.500	<b>0.009</b>
	G	414	1.18	0.678			
<i>retaliation or revenge</i>	B	376	1.11	0.499	788	74,361.500	<b>0.004</b>
	G	414	1.04	0.272			
<i>curiosity</i>	B	376	1.33	0.914	788	71,724.000	<b>0.000</b>
	G	414	1.12	0.564			
<i>bets among friends</i>	B	376	1.22	0.731	788	72,808.500	<b>0.000</b>
	G	414	1.07	0.436			
<i>sexual satisfaction</i>	B	376	1.28	0.912	788	73,023.000	<b>0.001</b>
	G	414	1.09	0.459			

B – boys; G – girls; N – number; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; SEM – standard error of mean; df – degrees of freedom; U – Mann-Whitney U test; p – statistical significance level.

As the gender-based comparison of self-sexting motives did not provide us with statistically significant differences, we decided not to state these results.

The gender-based analysis of the motivation for different types of adolescent sexting was followed by an age-oriented analysis. Compared to younger pubescents, the primary sexting motive of attracting someone was statistically more frequent with the 18-year-old adolescents ( $M = 1.46$ ,  $F = 4.969$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The motive of attracting someone reflects the need to impress the other person. Aging increases this need to impress or attract someone. Therefore, as the adolescents grow older, the likelihood of being moved by this motive when pursuing primary sexting is growing higher. Interestingly, the motive of attracting someone was most notable in the case of 15-year-old adolescents ( $M = 1.33$ ,  $F = 2.834$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ). The primary sexting motive of building relationships was predominant with adolescents aged 16 ( $M = 1.35$ ) and 18 ( $M = 1.37$ ,  $F = 3.508$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Similar tendencies applied to the motives of flirting ( $M = 1.48$ ,  $F = 4.150$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and entertainment ( $M = 1.69$ ,  $F = 5.166$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The latter was most notable for 18-year-old adolescents. As the age increases, the incidence of these primary sexting motives is growing higher, as well.

For secondary sexting, we analyzed the motives of blackmailing, mocking, jealousy, retaliation or revenge and entertainment. The examination of blackmailing ( $F = 1.172$ ,  $p = 0.319$ ) and mocking ( $F = 0.990$ ,  $p = 0.431$ ) motives did not show a statistically significant correlation with age. Secondary sexting is statistically more significant for 15-year-old adolescents who do it out of jealousy ( $M = 1.29$ ,  $F = 2.625$ ,  $p = 0.016$ ), retaliation or revenge ( $M = 1.37$ ,  $F = 3.532$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Entertainment as one of the secondary sexting motives turned out to be statistically significant for the adolescents aged 16 ( $M = 1.68$ ,  $F = 3.508$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ).

The exchange of photos has become an essential part of children's lives. For peer-sexting, we researched the motives of entertainment, retaliation or revenge, curiosity, bets among friends and sexual satisfaction. The statistical one-factor analysis of variance provided us with no significant age-based differences in the peer-sexting pursuit rate when comparing the motives of retaliation or revenge and sexual satisfaction. We can state that age has no significant role in peer-sexting if pursued out of retaliation or revenge and sexual satisfaction. According to the ANOVA analysis, statistically significant motives include entertainment, curiosity and bets among friends. Age-wise, the motives of entertainment ( $M = 1.48$ ,  $F = 2.232$ ,  $p = 0.038$ ), curiosity ( $M = 1.47$ ,  $F = 4.390$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and bets among friends ( $M = 1.27$ ,  $F = 2.252$ ,  $p = 0.037$ ) were most notable for 16-year-old adolescents.

*Table 4*  
 Motives for sexting based on age

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Research group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Primary sexting</i>								
<i>attracting someone</i>	12	166	1.09	0.478	0.037	6	4.969	0.000
	13	120	1.08	0.401	0.037			
	14	110	1.16	0.698	0.067			
	15	131	1.39	0.957	0.084			
	16	106	1.39	0.857	0.083			
	17	103	1.40	0.953	0.094			
<i>seeking attention</i>	18	54	1.46	1.094	0.149	6	2.834	0.010
	12	166	1.08	0.426	0.033			
	13	120	1.10	0.438	0.040			
	14	110	1.15	0.744	0.071			
	15	131	1.33	0.854	0.075			
	16	106	1.30	0.830	0.081			
<i>building relationships</i>	17	103	1.28	0.845	0.083	6	3.508	0.002
	18	54	1.15	0.492	0.067			
	12	166	1.07	0.367	0.029			
	13	120	1.11	0.426	0.039			
	14	110	1.13	0.622	0.059			
	15	131	1.31	0.876	0.077			
<i>flirting</i>	16	106	1.35	0.817	0.079	6	4.150	0.000
	17	103	1.28	0.954	0.094			
	18	54	1.37	0.917	0.125			
	12	166	1.13	0.541	0.042			
	13	120	1.14	0.626	0.057			
	14	110	1.13	0.560	0.053			
<i>entertainment</i>	15	131	1.36	0.953	0.083	6	5.166	0.000
	16	106	1.43	0.884	0.086			
	17	103	1.39	1.002	0.099			
	18	54	1.48	0.986	0.134			
	12	166	1.17	0.722	0.056			
	13	120	1.14	0.626	0.057			
	14	110	1.23	0.786	0.075			
	15	131	1.30	0.883	0.077			
	16	106	1.55	1.006	0.098			
	17	103	1.50	1.119	0.110			
	18	54	1.69	1.256	0.171			

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Research group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Secondary sexting:</i>								
<i>blackmailing</i>	12	166	1.05	0.265	0.021			
	13	120	1.08	0.521	0.048			
	14	110	1.00	0.235	0.022			
	15	131	1.15	0.646	0.056	6	1.172	0.319
	16	106	1.09	0.508	0.049			
	17	103	1.05	0.405	0.040			
<i>mocking</i>	18	54	1.07	0.544	0.074			
	12	166	1.09	0.478	0.037			
	13	120	1.18	0.752	0.069			
	14	110	1.10	0.487	0.046			
	15	131	1.20	0.673	0.059	6	0.990	0.431
	16	106	1.14	0.542	0.053			
<i>jealousy</i>	17	103	1.13	0.537	0.053			
	18	54	1.02	0.136	0.019			
	12	166	1.04	0.318	0.025			
	13	120	1.09	0.550	0.050			
	14	110	1.06	0.455	0.043			
	15	131	1.29	0.890	0.078	6	2.625	0.016
<i>retaliation or revenge</i>	16	106	1.21	0.727	0.071			
	17	103	1.16	0.697	0.069			
	18	54	1.17	0.541	0.074			
	12	166	1.08	0.397	0.031			
	13	120	1.12	0.597	0.054			
	14	110	1.12	0.586	0.056			
<i>entertainment</i>	15	131	1.37	0.888	0.078	6	3.532	0.002
	16	106	1.25	0.778	0.076			
	17	103	1.09	0.373	0.037			
	18	54	1.22	0.744	0.101			
	12	166	1.11	0.544	0.042			
	13	120	1.29	0.956	0.087			
<i>entertainment</i>	14	110	1.27	0.887	0.085			
	15	131	1.38	1.041	0.091	6	4.394	0.000
	16	106	1.68	1.184	0.115			
	17	103	1.35	0.882	0.087			
	18	54	1.50	1.178	0.160			

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Research group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Peer-sexting:</i>								
<i>entertainment</i>	12	166	1.16	0.635	0.049			
	13	120	1.20	0.763	0.070			
	14	110	1.17	0.776	0.074			
	15	131	1.25	0.778	0.068	6	2.232	0.038
	16	106	1.48	1.007	0.098			
	17	103	1.35	1.007	0.099			
<i>retaliation or revenge</i>	12	166	1.05	0.316	0.025			
	13	120	1.03	0.157	0.014			
	14	110	1.12	0.602	0.057			
	15	131	1.15	0.601	0.053	6	1.817	0.093
	16	106	1.06	0.333	0.032			
	17	103	1.02	0.139	0.014			
<i>curiosity</i>	12	166	1.07	0.448	0.035			
	13	120	1.07	0.361	0.033			
	14	110	1.20	0.810	0.077			
	15	131	1.27	0.793	0.069	6	4.390	0.000
	16	106	1.47	1.044	0.101			
	17	103	1.33	0.954	0.094			
<i>bets among friends</i>	12	166	1.08	0.388	0.030			
	13	120	1.03	0.257	0.023			
	14	110	1.15	0.693	0.066			
	15	131	1.21	0.744	0.065	6	2.252	0.037
	16	106	1.27	0.823	0.080			
	17	103	1.17	0.658	0.065			
<i>sexual satisfaction</i>	12	166	1.08	0.426	0.033			
	13	120	1.15	0.694	0.063			
	14	110	1.14	0.710	0.068			
	15	131	1.25	0.798	0.070	6	1.145	0.334
	16	106	1.24	0.763	0.074			
	17	103	1.23	0.866	0.085			
	18	54	1.24	0.867	0.118			

N – number; M – mean; SD – standard deviation; SEM – standard error of mean; df – degrees of freedom; F – ANOVA; p – statistical significance level.

### 3. Discussion and conclusions

Adolescence might be an emotionally turbulent stage for both girls and boys. Adolescence is also a crucial stage to reconnoiter gender identity and sexual orientation. Adolescents explore their sexuality, desire to meet their peers and partners, and develop romantic relationships. Sharing or exchanging intimate photos, videos, and messages supports sexual exploration and experimentation. Specialized literature is in most cases concerned with the prevalence and negative impacts of adolescent sexting. There are a great number of sexting prevalence inquiries. However, little is researched about the adolescent sexting motives and forms. We might claim that the current research of adolescent sexting motivation is insufficient. Sexting is perceived as a part of romantic and sexual relationships as well as the desire of attracting a partner, flirting, and excitement. It plays a crucial role in developing relationships and shaping adolescents' attitudes towards sexuality. The research results showed that male respondents were more active regardless of the sexting type and motive. These findings are supported by other researches proving that boys are more involved in sexting, requesting photos from girls, importing such photos, as well as collecting and trading them (RINGROSE et al. 2012; HOLLÁ 2017; DOLEV-COHEN & RICON 2020). Girls, on the other hand, became resigned and passive (HOLLÁ 2017). From their point of view, providing photos is an accepted part of the current culture of sexism (RINGROSE et al. 2012). Girls are thus rather prone to succumb to the social and socio-cultural pressure. As a result, this study aimed at exploring and comparing motives that engaged pubescents and adolescents in different sexting types. Within the sexting typology, we differentiated primary and secondary sexting and self- and peer sexting. Several specialists (CALVERT 2009; VAN OUYTSEL et al. 2014) define primary sexting as a consensual and private exchange of sexts between two individuals. In our research sample, we observed that 17.5% of adolescents were involved in primary sexting. The pursuit rate was equal for both male and female respondents and highest for the adolescents aged 16–18. Teenagers pursue primary sexting to attract someone and be entertained. With regard to the respondents' age, both motives dominated in the group of 18-year-old adolescents. Although gender-based differences in pursuing this kind of sexting are almost non-existent, it seems that boys are significantly more often involved in primary sexting to attract the other person, build relationships, and to flirt.

The research showed that the primary sexting motive of seeking attention was most prevalent with 15-, 16- and 17-year-old male respondents. This domination of boys who want to get the others' attention over girls is also pointed out by educators and psychologists. In the learning environments, boys tend to be rather loud and cause disruption to seek the attention of their peers. Such a motivation is even more intense should the class be heterogeneous, given that the boys' behavior is meant to impress the girls. Ontogenetic psychologists state that the sexual development of adolescents leads to several changes in relationships and thus affects their emotional perception of the real and virtual world alike.

Another sexting form – self-sexting – was pursued by 4.6% of adolescents. The occurrence rate was equal for both genders. It is worth noting the age of adolescents who post self-exposing photos. Such behavior was quite frequent with 15-year-old teenagers. Their motivation included the ideas of attracting someone and entertainment. It turned out that boys preferred self-sexting as the attempt and desire to attract someone, build relationships, and flirt. Self-sexting motivation depends on the age. As the adolescents grow older, the self-sexting rate increases, as well. The most notable motivation of pubescents at the age of 15 turned out to be the motive of seeking attention. Self-presentation and the process of shaping their sexuality are essential in adolescents' lives. Adolescents aged 16 and 18 were, first and foremost, moved by the motives of building relationships, flirting, and entertainment.

Individual quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that sexting reasons include flirtation and entertainment (ALBURY & CRAWFORD 2012; DROUIN et al. 2013), seeking attention of the other person (HENDERSON 2011), and attracting someone (KOPECKY 2011).

Peer-sexting as the exchange of sexts among peers, friends, and classmates is more typical for boys. This type of sexting was pursued by 29.2% of the research respondents. It is also the most widespread form of adolescent sexting in the Slovak Republic. Its most frequent form is sharing sexts among friends and classmates. These people are important companions on the journey to adulthood. Adolescents have different social relations with their friends and classmates who are supposed to understand and support them. This fact is highlighted by the peer-sexting motivation of the adolescents who are often moved by entertainment, retaliation or revenge, curiosity, bets among friends, and sexual satisfaction. The above-mentioned motives are again predominant with male respondents. Peer-sexting also results from the need for sexual satisfaction, youthful curiosity satisfaction, experimentation, distraction and entertainment. Rather negative motivation includes retaliation, revenge, and bets among friends. Other studies suggested that boys used sexting to achieve a higher status among peers and classmates (LEE & CROFTS 2015). Experts are thus challenged to 'take advantage' of this situation and develop proper educational programs for the adolescents that would raise awareness of online safety. Even if peer-sexting is the most widespread sexting form in the Slovak Republic, we cannot say that self- and primary sexting are entirely safe. In the current digital era, it is common to share our experiences and describe real-life situations in detail via photos on the social networks. Deleting the photo does not guarantee its complete and irreversible removal. Sharing photos and videos might spiral out of control very quickly. The person who posted them can never be sure who has downloaded the content. The recipient who decides to forward the primary sexter's photo is considered a secondary sexter. In the Slovak Republic, secondary sexting is pursued by 11.3% of adolescents. A gender-based analysis of forwarding sexts to the third parties again identified boys as more active. Secondary sexting is the most at-risk form, often provoked by a cruel and inappropriate desire for entertainment, humiliation, jealousy, retaliation or revenge and other undesirable reasons, such as coercion and blackmailing (HENDERSON 2011; ENGLANDER 2012).

A number of initial secondary sexting impulses might escalate and lead to the other related forms of deviant online behavior; e.g. cyberbullying, cyberstalking, etc. There are people who purposely search for intimate photos of adolescents and children. Their manipulative behavior helps them win favor with the others. If rejected, the aggressors can intimidate, blackmail, or force the adolescents to send them even more photos and videos. In spite of the criminal prosecution threats and media control, the rate of children's sexual abuse continues to increase (PATCHIN & HINDUJA 2020).

A moral panic associated with sexting takes place because the adults are not able to talk about sexuality. Families rather rely on schools. Schools, however, argue that imposing rules and limits on the media use and thus eliminating various online threats are the sole responsibilities of parents and families. As a result, nobody takes on this responsibility. Child protection in the online environment is a challenge for all supportive professions and institutions working with children. The Slovak Republic adopted the concept of child protection against the risks in digital space (*Koncepcia ochrany detí pred hrozbami v digitálnom priestore*), committing itself to take the necessary steps and coordinate the activities of the involved parties to eliminate negative online threats to children and adolescents. It is self-evident that society should set out specific rules and standards for the adolescents and children to follow.

#### 4. Limitations of research

Our examination turned out to have several limitations. The exclusion of five schools due to the headmasters' or parents' disapproval made the distribution uneven and the number of participating schools was not the same in each region of Slovakia. In the eastern part of Slovakia, fewer schools agreed to take part in the research. In fact, the east of Slovakia is inhabited in greater numbers by Roma ethnic groups. The question remains how the lower number of schools from the given regions and fewer respondents from the marginalized group affected the research results. We also need to point out that the biased completion of the questionnaire could have another significant impact on the outcomes.

Our research was aimed at mapping selected sexting types and motives. It did not examine the relation of pedagogical, psychological, and sociological aspects to the motivation of sexting pursuit in more details. Such matters could be, however, the subject of another empirical research in this area.

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