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Privacy Management of Sexting in Young Adult's Dating Relationships

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Abstract
This study explains young people's experience in Indonesia with their privacy management regarding sexting in dating relationships. The research uses Communication Privacy Management (CPM) Theory. This study uses qualitative research, collecting data by doing in-depth interviews with 10 informants of young adults who have sexting with their partners. Thematic analysis of the data finds that how informants perceive sexting, the function of sexting in their relationship, and the risk of sexting influence the way they carry out privacy management. The informants think it strengthens the connection and trust with their partners. However, they are fully aware of the risk of sexting: the text could easily leak to others, which could be harmful to their reputation. There are influences from gender and cultural context on what is called privacy and its risks. Therefore, they implement very complex privacy management, such as choosing the safest chat application; making rules about how the pictures or videos must not show a background that can be used to identify the sender of sexting; and keeping the passwords of all social media accounts owned by their partners. They also have their own 'language,' by using emoticons and codes, which are only understood by them and their partners. Hence, those who engage in sexting protect their privacy by establishing complex privacy boundaries that they mutually agree on.

Keywords
Communication privacy management, dating relationships, privacy boundaries, sexting

Introduction
As a social phenomenon, sexting can occur because of the current communication technology. In general, sexting is the behavior of exchanging sexual messages (images of naked or semi-naked bodies, videos, written messages, and other symbols) via mobile phones or computers (Chalfen, 2010; Lounsbury, Mitchell & Finkelhor, 2011; Drouin & Landgraff, 2012; Gordon-Messer, et al.; 2013; Hasinoff, 2016; Mori, et al. 2020, Bragard & Fisher, 2022). This behavior can be found in the context of intimate or casual relationships (Burkett, 2015; Bagley and Kimberly, 2017).

This study focuses on sexting in dating relationships of the young adult age group
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in Indonesia. This study was conducted among young adults who come from the middle class, live in urban areas in Indonesia, are proficient in using communication technology, are sexually active, have a bachelor's level of education, and are exposed to social media intensively.

In dating relationships, sexting is a private behavior. Sexting content is only known or exchanged by each individual if both of them agree to share the content. Communication Privacy Management (Petronio, 2002) describes the imaginary boundaries set by individuals in relationships, to distinguish private information from public information that will be shared with others. This research argues: sexting as a private activity has a high risk of being leaked to others because it uses digital media so that the person doing the sexting makes complex privacy management efforts to keep it between the individual and his/her partner.

Some studies state that this sexting behavior is mostly found among young adults (Ahern and Mechling, 2013; Lippman and Campbell, 2014; Walrave, et al. 2015). This is not surprising considering that young adults (18-40 years) have a high sexual interest and curiosity about sex (Erikson, 1959; Santrock, 2011). Other studies (Moses et al., 2022, Lim et al., 2016) show that sexual behavior starts at a young age; and this can be found in forms of curiosity to understand all things related to sex, including the desire to engage in intimate relationships, consuming pornography, to partaking in sexting.

As a researcher, I have also observed that when individuals partake in sexting with their partners, it means that the context of their relationship is intimate, private, and closed off from other parties outside of the relationships. This means that sexting is done by two parties/individuals in a private space that is only shared between them. Physical closeness and romantic relationships are marked by the presence of an intense desire to meet one another and partake in certain sexual activities (Wong et al., 2014). This situation is often found among romantic relationships of the young adult age range. Also, this situation is able to happen given that this is a time when these individuals are going through physical, social, emotional, and sexual changes. These changes also hint at many other aspects of the lives of individuals in this age range; one of them being the need for intimacy or emotional closeness in a relationship with another individual, whether the relationship be heterosexual or homosexual.

In this context, such relationships become spaces that facilitate sexting. Besides that, the exchange of information and behaviors in sexting becomes easier with the aid of certain communication technologies. The existence of certain tools (such as smartphones) on one hand makes it easier to exchange information and send messages quickly and easily with relatively low cost, and this facilitates online interaction when the two parties/individuals of a relationship cannot meet offline in their near or even far future. The use of communication technologies may facilitate young adult individuals who partake in sexting, specifically in giving information and practical knowledge, sharing intimacy, and becoming the means of exchanging sexual content. The explanation above shows a situation where this sexting behavior is made possible because it is easy to access, produce, reproduce, and exchange messages with the technology we have today. So, communication technologies now facilitate sexting. This is in line with the opinions of Izdebski and Zbikowska (2014) who stated that the development of technology and the internet has supported this risky behavior of sexting. For young individuals, sexting is a means to express their personal and sexual needs openly. Also, sexting is an issue that is synonymous with an enjoyable situation, presents benefits to long distance relationships, forms tight bonds between partners, makes group interactions more informal, and more (Mulholland, 2015).

This study aims to explain privacy management in sexting behavior among young adults in a couple relationship which includes:
1. How do individuals conduct privacy management regarding sexting?
2. What is the individual's motivation for privacy management, and how do individuals interpret sexting?

**Literature Review**

*Communication Privacy Management Theory*

This study uses Communication Privacy Management Theory from Sandra Petronio. The theory of Communication Privacy Management – which will be written later as CPM Theory – was developed by Sandra Petronio in 2002 and 2013 (Griffin et al., 2015; Baxter and Braithwaite, 2008; Petronio, 2002). Petronio (2002) suggests that CPM Theory does not only discuss self-disclosure behavior, but this theory focuses on the management of private information. The CPM theory is an extension of the Social Penetration Theory (SPT). Altman stated that the research of SPT were oriented towards self-disclosure. Meanwhile, in the CPM theory, Petronio's researches emphasize how the private-disclosure concept is carried out when individuals have very personal information that is not easy to share with other parties. There are complex dynamics involving privacy and self-disclosure behavior when individuals are in a situation where they want to keep or close or limit private information from other people; on the other hand, the individual wants to share private information with other parties for some reason (Petronio, 2002). Privacy is a concept that has various definitions. Petronio (in Griffin, 2015, p. 153) argues that privacy is “the feeling that one has the right to own private information. On the other hand, disclosure is a behavior to reveal information to other people that is usually hidden. CPM theory helps to navigate whether information from individuals will be hidden or shared with other parties.

The focus of the CPM theory is private disclosure (i.e. the behavior of disclosure regarding various matters that are private/secret). The use of the term ‘private disclosure’ – not self-disclosure – is the emphasis in this theory. According to Petronio, the private disclosure term is more appropriate because individuals do not always disclose private information about themselves but also various other information (Petronio, 2013). CPM theory explains how individuals organize or manage information about themselves; whether the information will be shared with other parties or hidden from other parties.

Petronio (2013) suggests that there are several key concepts from CPM theory: 1) Private Information, 2) Privacy Boundaries, 3) Control and Ownership, 4) Rule-Based Management System, and 5) Privacy Management Dialectics. Private information is secret information that should not be known by many people. Privacy boundaries refer to the boundaries set by individuals to maintain the secrecy of a particular issue. Control & Ownership is the principle for regulating ownership and exercising control over personal information both in a personal and collective context; in which privacy guardianships occur as a way of ensuring the implementation of the agreement (of keeping the secret). Rule-Based Management System (hereinafter referred to as rules) is an information management system based on certain rules in ongoing relationships. Privacy management dialectics refer to a series of tensions in relationships that arise when personal information needs to be covered or disclosed to other parties and what the implications of that situation are.

Privacy boundaries are a metaphor for an imaginary line between public and private issues. Individuals will disclose personal matters under certain conditions. Petronio (2006, p. 6) explains that “privacy could be defined as the feeling that one has the right to own private information either personally or collectively. And, as a consequence, boundaries mark ownership lines for individuals “.

When personal information is shared with others, there will be a collective
boundary. Meanwhile, when personal information is kept by a person and not shared with others, this limit is referred to as a personal boundary. A person’s personal information is protected by these boundaries. These limits can be arbitrary or dynamic. Relatively speaking, for a number of individuals, the boundary is easy to cross; or conversely, the boundary is very difficult and rigid to cross.

In its development, the Communication Privacy Management Theory can be applied in several contexts, which include 1) communication within the family – especially in parental privacy invasions, 2) social media, 3) health, (4) interpersonal relationship issues, and (5) the work environment (Petronio 2013; Braithwaite and Petronio, 2002). This study is conducted within the scope of interpersonal relationships, more specifically: in a dating relationship of young adult individuals in Indonesia.

Moreover, even though the research subjects are those who undergo or develop dating relationships with other individuals, this research will focus on the experiences of individuals – not couples – who do sexting with their partners. The use of CPM theory is relevant to individuals as research subjects as found in some previous articles, namely studies conducted by Herrman & Tenzek (2017), McDaniel & Drouin (2015), and Hernandez (2018).

Sexting is private information exchanged by individuals. Managing privacy regarding sexting is important for young adults who are dating so that this does not leak or spread virally. This risk of leakage can occur considering that individuals use digital technology when exchanging sexting with their partners.

This study only focuses on the concepts of Privacy Boundaries, Control & Ownership (especially Guardianships), and the Rule-Based Management System. The private information in this study addresses sexting. This research does not address privacy management dialectics because it only gets data from the individual, not the couple. In addition, the aspect of privacy management dialectics was not used because this study was conducted on informants who were still dating their sexting partner so turbulence did not occur regarding sexting issues exchanged by informants.

Sexting

The term sexting (sex and texting) has been widely used since 2005. There are several different definitions of sexting. Walker et al. (2013) define sexting as the process of producing and distributing sexually explicit images through communication technology. “Sexting refers to the use of a mobile/cell phone camera to transmit a suggestive or explicit photograph or video (Chalfen, 2010, p. 2). Meanwhile, Lenhart (2009) states that sexting is the behavior of creating, sharing, and forwarding sexually charged messages through digital technology such as smartphones and the internet.

Hence, sexting is the behavior of exchanging sexual messages; which includes activities to create, reproduce, send, receive, or forward; from one person to another. The content of sexting can be in the form of material that the sender (sexter) produced or material obtained from other parties (from social media or chat applications); to be forwarded to another party. The material in sexting can be images of private body parts, verbal messages, words), moving pictures or video clips, sound or audio, certain symbols (emoticons, emojis, colors, or memes), and others. The content of sexting can be exchanged easily because current communication technology provides a wide space for sexting behavior (Bagley and Kimberly, 2017).

Sexting behavior is examined within the scope of interpersonal communication. As a social issue, sexting has been extensively researched in various scopes of study such as in studies of women and gender (Hasinoff, 2016; Ringrose, et al. 2013), law (Burkett, 2015), studies with a qualitative approach (Anastassiou, 2017), identity and youth issues (Walker et al. 2013; Lounsbury, et al. 2011), psychology (Krieger, 2017), health sciences including mental health and sexuality (Ybarra and Mitchell, 2014;
Ahern and Mechling, 2013; Gordon-Messer et al. 2013), violence and criminology (Wolak and Finkelhor, 2011), communication science and media studies (Livingstone and Gorzig, 2014; Chalfen, 2010; Lippman and Campbell, 2014), and communication technology and computers (Galovan et al., 2017; Silva et al. 2016; Drouin and Landgraf, 2012). This shows that research on sexting can be viewed from various perspectives.

When individuals send sexting to their partners, there are complex and dynamic considerations. The complexity here includes what sexting information will be exchanged, what form of sexting will be conveyed, under what circumstances, existing security, and so on. Meanwhile, dynamic considerations refer to a series of agreements made that need to be adjusted in various contexts; for example when individuals are alone or in certain social situations (in a crowd, at school/campus, or in the office); whether there is a secure situation when using a particular medium or device or platform; with a partner and so on.

Research Methods

This is a qualitative study (Neuman, 2006; Patton, 2015; Cresswell, 2014). Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 10 informants and observing the contents of their sexting. The selection of informants was carried out purposefully to obtain informants who were following the research objectives. Several criteria of informants in this study are: (1) aged 18-25 years, (2) domiciled in the Greater Jakarta area (so that the researcher could conduct in-depth interviews offline), (3) had sexted (sending or receiving) a girlfriend or boyfriend.

In recruiting informants, researchers made announcements (in the form of e-posters) and distributed them through social media such as Twitter and Instagram. These two social media are used to make it easier for researchers to find young adult informants, an age group that actively uses social media. If a potential informant wants to become an informant in this study, he/she will contact the researcher via private chat on the two social media. Through this private chat, the researcher will explain the research topic, ask for willingness to become an informant, and arrange an appropriate schedule to conduct in-depth interviews. The interview was conducted at a relatively quiet location as requested by the informants. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, then analyzed thematically.

There are two screening questions to ensure informants can provide rich information: a) Have they ever sexted their partners? And b) are they willing to show the contents of their sexting with their boyfriends? Those who are willing are asked to fill out a biodata form and an informed consent form to be interviewed. The data-collecting process was done by the end of 2019.

The ten informants of this study are as follows: (1). Ult, female, Islam, 24 years old, has had sex (intercourse), (2) El, female, Islam, 25 years old, has had sex, had an abortion once, (3) Mca, female, Islam, 22 years old, lesbians, had a long distance relationship, (4) Ys, female, 21 years old, Islam, LDR, has had sex, (5) Ar, female, 21 years old, has had sex, (6) Ind, male, 21 years old, gay, has had sex. (7) Wk, female, 22 years old, Catholic, has had sex. (8) Ry, female, 21 years old, Islam, has had sex. (9) Ni, female, 23 years old, Islam, has never had sex. (10) Lt, male, 21 years old, has had sex.

Results

This study was conducted in Indonesia by involving informants of young adults in Indonesia who have certain socio-cultural (including religious) values. This might shape the way they manage privacy about sexting in ongoing dating relationships.

The results of the study show that the meaning of sexting for the informant, the function of sexting according to the informant, and the perception of the risk of sexting
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are the informants' considerations of privacy management. The management of privacy that is carried out in sexting is very complex, starting from the selection of the media to the arrangement of the content. The informant also controls the implementation of privacy maintenance boundaries by their partner.

Although almost all of the informants did not use the term sexting, they admitted to sending sexual messages to their partners. Only recently, in the last 1-2 years, they found out that what they were doing was called sexting. They get this information from their social environment (peer groups) and social media such as Twitter, Grindr, Instagram, or Tumblr.

How to perceive sexting

The informants aged 18-25 years old thought sexting was natural and unavoidable in dating relationships. For them, the contents of sexual messages sent through the media are part of communication between two people who are dating, especially for those who are already sexually active where sex is a normal thing to do in dating, "...sexting is very very common, there's nothing wrong with it" (Lt). Another informant, Ry, stated that "Actually, sexting for me is like having sex but via chat, so it's not having sex..." Thus, sexting is an alternative to having sex when partners cannot meet in person.

For informants, sexting has several functions in romantic relationships. First, sexting functions to maintain a connection or relationship bond. In long-distance relationships, individuals can still obtain sexual satisfaction from their partners by masturbating which is triggered by sexting. With these activities, informants claim to be more 'guarded' as not to have an affair with other people. As stated by Lt and El as follows:

Sexting is a way to indirectly have sex. My partner and I had to try to have sex because of distance [Lt has a long-distance relationship with his partner]. Sexting is important for me to maintain relationships, so I don't have an affair with someone else. Sexting facilitates me to masturbate when my partner is not near me. (Lt)

Sexting is just a way for people to express their sexual needs and sexual desires. But when I have sexual needs, then my partner is not in sight, we use the existing media. So yes, [sexting] is popular now and is easy to do. (El)

The second function of sexting for informants is to maintain intimacy, a sense of closeness especially emotionally. Sexting becomes a way of sharing your most personal desires and needs, signifying your partner's position as the closest person. As Ar stated: " Sexting is for intimacy, the code used to do pleasure (sex)." Ys said something similar, " Sexting is to maintain intimacy, for me dating life involving sexual aspects is normal, so [sexting] is a way to stay close to my partner."

The third function of sexting is a symbol of trust between the informant and the partner. Sharing things that are very personal and need to be kept secret with your partner shows that the sender trusts their partner. Conversely, accepting sexting indicates that the person is trusted by his/her partner. Ult stated, "I know, my partner likes to do that (sexting) with me". This mutual trust strengthens the informant's relationship with his partner.

The next function of sexting is to fulfill sexual needs and share sexual fantasies with partners, as stated by Mca (who has a long-distance relationship with her partner in Malaysia). Another informant, El, revealed that “...sexting is about imagination. Because every person has a different body, has a different action.”

Sexting Risks

Regarding the risk of sexting, the informant stated that they face some risks if the
sexting leaks or spreads. Such as, personal reputation being destroyed, getting public shaming, porn revenge if the relationship ends, and punishment by parents. A destroyed reputation can be understood as a damage to a person's name and credibility in the public eye. Public shaming can take the form of being ridiculed, insulted, or humiliated by the virtual community (netizens). Meanwhile, the informant stated that revenge porn refers to a situation where private photos can be made viral by partners as a form of revenge. This concern of risk arose because the informant lived in Indonesia which has a culture where sex is taboo in public space and sexual relationships can only be done in a marriage relationship.

Interesting things were conveyed by informant Ry. She stated, "I can't imagine what it will be like, but it is very worrying because it will damage my and my partner's good name. Even more, I'm a woman...” A similar tone, worry or even fear because of their position as women, that they would get a bad social stamp or stigma, was expressed by several female informants, but did not appear in the statements of the male informants. The informant Ind stated, "I don't want to think about that [the consequences]. It makes me scared if it leaks or spreads everywhere."

The results of the interviews show that all informants are aware of the high risk if their sexting is leaked to other people or even to the wider public. Therefore, they make various agreements before starting to do sexting with their partners. If a partner refuses it, they will not send sexting.

**Privacy Boundaries**

The concept of Privacy Boundaries is an imaginary boundary that distinguishes personal information and public information. When personal information is shared with others, there will be a collective boundary. Meanwhile, when personal information is stored by a person and not shared with others, this limit is referred to as a personal boundary.

For informants, information regarding sexting may only be shared and accessed by informants and their partners. Several informants said that they showed different behavior between when they were sexting and when they were in the offline world.

I care about my attitude and behavior when I'm in front of my parents. I can't hold hands with my boyfriend. I'm just going to be close, but avoiding physical contact. (Ys)

My partner and I are at the same university. On campus we were never alone, afraid that people talk about it. When we're walking at the mall, we almost certainly don't hang out together. Usually, he is in front of me. There is a distance of about three meters, I followed behind him, wearing a hat and mask so people wouldn't be easily recognized. I also don't want to take a photo together, let alone a photo of the two of them naked. Just in case. Afraid that it will spread. (Ind)

The informant's exposure above illustrates how the informant sets a physical or literal boundary. Furthermore, the establishment of privacy boundaries is also done by exchanging sexting in the form of emoticons (such as certain fruit or avatars), body parts, and certain code words. Informants and partners create their own 'language' only the two of them can understand. This can be seen from the statements of the following informants:

I usually use Whatsapp with my partner, I use symbols like bananas, eggplants, and peaches, or send pictures of my body. (Ni)

I usually do sexting throughWhatsapps, using the symbol available in the application. For example, peach fruit for the buttocks means anal sex. Then, use the eggplant for the penis, the dripping water means ejaculation, the index finger symbol means penetration (sexual), the image of the tongue for oral sex, and so on. (Ind)
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I’ll speak directly – put yours in mine, or chat using WA. Yes, I prefer to chat using WA, I can do role-playing with my partner at the same time. For example, I am in a swimming pool. There was my partner, a man who was like "Oom-oom" [old guy] who had needs (sex). While I am an innocent woman but have the same needs (sexual needs). (Ry)

Rule-Based Management System.

Even though sexting is an activity that occurs using media intermediaries, especially with smartphones, the informants said that setting rules for their privacy was done using communication technology and also non-technologically. Non-technology means that it is not related to the use of certain gadgets or applications. They agreed that during sexting they were not allowed to talk about other topics so that the message will not be mixed up, for example, the topic about family. In addition, sexting is only done in private times and places, not in the workplace/public space.

For me, the matter of sexting is privacy ... It feels embarrassing to accept sexting on public transport, everyone can see or hear (message content) right. So, I just downloaded it in a quiet place. (Wk)

I can’t possibly send sexting to my partner during working hours, because it can be annoying, right? If you want to send photos or pictures, we usually make an appointment. This is done right after office hours or when I’m alone in the room. Besides that, usually from the start we agree to talk about this topic but we usually don’t bring up family topics. (Ar)

Privacy boundaries regarding the forms of sexting that were exchanged: (1) Not showing full body, only half-naked; (2) at the beginning of the relationship, the body areas that were shown were not too intimate such as genitalia or breasts [for female informants]; however, over time, more intimate body area will be shown to the partner; (3) Photos must not show faces at all, and (4) must not display place attributes (such as bedrooms in homes or rented houses [kost]) that are easily identified or recognized.

Mca: For me, it’s mandatory to use (online) games, and virtual characters, so our identities are not visible. The name you use is not your real name. Besides, it’s safer (to sexting) by playing games because people can only see us playing games instead of sending sexting.

Ar: I don’t want to show my face when I send pictures of my body to my partner. It’s okay for the top, chest, or thighs. But never naked. Usually, I send the top wearing a tank top but one of the tank top straps is lowered. I also don’t want my room or bedroom to be visible. That’s not allowed, if this information is spread out, people will know whose room this is.

Ni: If I send a sexting picture, I don’t want to send the picture of a naked body, usually I send a half-naked picture or part of the thigh, or chest but still wearing underwear... I send a picture of my head without a cover [Ni is wearing hijab]. The face mustn’t be seen at all. Just in case something happens one day (a problematic relationship), this picture of mine will not be used for revenge porn.

Ni’s opinion above not only suggests a form of setting privacy boundaries but also shows that sexting is not always done by exchanging content with intimate parts of the body (genitals, breasts, buttocks). In the Indonesian context, those who usually wear hijab argue that showing their heads without covering can be considered sexual behavior.

Furthermore, the setting of technological boundaries can be done in some ways. First, by using a specific application that is mutually agreed upon. The use of various applications on cellular phones is an option that suits each other’s needs and is private because it can only be accessed by the person directly. The most used applications are
Whatsapp, Signal, Telegram, Line, Gtalk, BBM, Snapchat, iMessage, and Instagram. The choice of this application can be based on its function, for example, to send pictures and make video calls (as admitted by informants Lt, Ys, and Wk); or even using games applications to be able to do erotic role play as told by informant Mca.

The second way, technologically, is to choose an application that has a high level of security so that it is difficult to hack. For example, an informant, Ult, chose the messaging application Telegram and video calls messaging application Signal because they cannot be hacked. Some informants choose to do sexting with role-play in online games because both parties can use fake identities, not displaying their true identities. Apart from that, some informants set the settings on their smartphones so that they don't automatically download any messages that can be stored in the phone memory system. As Wk said: “For me, sexting is a matter of privacy. When I get sexting from him (partner), I have already set the settings on my WA, so that all of his material after entering his cell phone doesn't automatically/directly download.” The concern is that if one day the gadget is sold to someone else or taken to a service center, the data is still stored in the gadget. However, some informants avoided certain applications because of personal experience, like Ar: “At first, I used BBM for sexting, then used Line, then used WA; and after that using iMessage. I don't use WA anymore, because I sent sexting to the wrong person once.” Informants stated that the boundaries above need to be set from the start to keep information about sexting only between the couple.

Control & Ownership (especially Guardianships)

Apart from setting the rules of the game, the sexting perpetrator also regulates steps to ensure that these rules are implemented or guarded (guardianship). The informants stated that from the start the informants had firmly told their partners not to share their sexting with other people. There should be a statement like this: “Don't share this information with other people” or “This is just for you.” So, this boundary is very clear and unambiguous. Furthermore, they also ensure that both parties must not take screenshots of the sexting. They also agreed that all sexting photos/videos/text must be deleted immediately upon receipt, not stored in the application they use. To ensure that no sexting was stored or that sexting had been deleted on the partner's application and smartphone, several informants claimed to have access to the usernames and passwords of all social media accounts, as well as their partners' smartphone passwords. That way, couples can mutually control the contents of the gadgets they have.

I have access to my partner’s smartphone and all his social media accounts. So, I know exactly where the sexting content is stored in his smartphone. Usually, I delete all that information. I can find out what information he is sharing on his social media, so I have control of the information that will be posted on his social media account. (Ry)

I have a consensus with him; I mean, it's clear from the start that you have to be like that with him to manage this situation. For example, I have info on username and password to access his cell phone. So that I can make sure the message has been deleted. [Another example] When we use Instagram, I can access his account because I have his password. Then I said, okay we can chat via Instagram... I will tell him that I will delete our sexting on my Instagram. And, I can check whether he has deleted the chat on his Instagram or not. (Wk)

The use of certain mediums and symbols to engage in sexting with a partner indicates a controlled situation that allows the sexting information to be controlled by the two individuals in this dating relationship.
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Discussion

The findings of this study show that privacy management of sexting is very complex; setting the boundaries of privacy, rules (rules), and enforcement of rules (guardianship). On the one hand, there is a high motivation for couples to engage in sexting, on the other hand, there are also high-risk concerns. From the beginning, the boundaries and rules of privacy must be stated clearly and unambiguously. These arrangements must be agreed upon by dating partners before engaging in sexting. This research shows that the cultural context in Indonesia, including religious norms, plays a very important role in the way young adult informants interpret what is private and what can be disclosed to their sexting partners.

Physically, the informants aged 18-25 years old have a strong sexual drive. This age group is also in the young adult stage which is in the intimacy vs isolation stage of development. Erikson (1963) and Santrock (2011) explain that adolescents who become young adults begin to have an orientation to build intimate or interpersonal relationships. Here, individual success is not only marked by an open mind towards sexual relations but also by the ability to blend his identity with other individuals without worrying about losing his own identity. When individuals succeed in opening up to other individuals, this will build a sense of familiarity (intimacy) with other parties. Conversely, if this is not the case, then the individual will feel isolated. Strengthened by what they observed from their peer group and the content of social media, the informants consider sex and sexual relationships as natural and normal things.

Even so, they are also aware of the context of the social environment in Indonesia which will impose social sanctions if their sexting is discovered or spreads. Bennet, Davis, & Hidayana (2018) describe that Indonesia is a clear example of a heteronormative country; in which agents such as the state, mass media, community, health practitioners, schools, and family are shaped by surveillance technology. This form of supervision makes a person feel ashamed if the person concerned commits certain violations. Shame can be triggered by the possibility of one's actions being publicized. Shame affects all aspects of behavior, including sexuality. In addition, some of the informants were raised in families that were considered religious, shown in the form of using hijab by family members or even by the informants themselves when in public spaces. Talking about sex was almost never done in the informants’ families. The act of having sex outside of marriage violated the religious norms of the informant’s family.

This cultural context influences the way informants interpret what is considered private and the boundaries of privacy, what can be disclosed and what cannot. Sexting does not always have to show the intimate parts of the body, sending head photos without wearing the hijab is considered sensual for informants who usually wear the hijab in public spaces. There was an informant who did not approve of people hugging or kissing in public but was willing to have sex after three days of dating because it was done in a closed room. Therefore, in setting privacy boundaries of sexting there is a negotiation or even contestation between cultural identity rooted in religious norms and the identity of young people in big cities with high social media exposure nowadays.

Cultural context also influences the perception of the risks of sexting. The informants not only imagined the shame they would feel if their sexting was leaked to other people but also worried about the shame of their parents or family. So, concerns about the risks of sexting are not only centered on themselves personally but on their parents. In addition to cultural factors, gender factors also affect the perception of the risk of sexting. We will discuss it further below.

Sending and receiving sexting is only done at a private time and place, not in the
workplace/public space. There is an attempt to separate oneself when sexting as a girlfriend/boyfriend from oneself doing other activities, especially concerning other people. Suler (2004) suggests that this phenomenon is synonymous with invisibility and dissociative anonymity; in the online world, people can use different identities, which makes them not easily recognized by other parties.

Unrecognized/identifiable factors are an important consideration in sexting arrangements because there is a high concern about the risk if the contents of a sexting leak outside the collective boundaries of dating partners. Those who do sexting have their own boundaries regarding the content of which messages they will share with their partners, but when they exchange messages, they have boundary coordination with the partners. Early CPM studies by Petronio & Martin (1986) and Petronio, Martin, & Littlefield (1984) in West & Turner (2018) found that men and women have different criteria about which private messages can be disclosed and which cannot be disclosed. So gender can affect the boundaries of personal and collective privacy, as revealed in this research.

The female informants in this research expressed high concern if their private disclosure (sexting) was leaked to other people. Female informants had several sources of worry: anger and sanctions from parents/family, damage to reputation and social shaming from friends/public, and porn revenge from (former) boyfriends if their relationship ended badly. The male informants did not elaborate on their worries, only stating that they would break up the relationship if their sexting was spread. Due to higher worries of risks, women are more stringent in managing privacy about sexting than men. For example, a male informant is still willing to send photos of his face after getting sexual satisfaction from sexting, while female informants do not want to show their faces at all. This study also found that homosexual informants (gay, lesbian) have more rules than heterosexuals because they had two layers of shame: shame for having sex(ting) outside of marriage and shame for being found out about their sexual orientation.

High fear of risk, if sexting goes beyond collective boundaries, does not make dating couples stop sexting behavior because there is also high motivation to continue the behavior. Sexting is considered to maintain a connection between partners because it can satisfy each other’s sexual needs so there is no need to have an affair. Sexting is also felt to be able to maintain intimacy and shows high mutual trust between dating partners. The function of sexting which can increase satisfaction for married couples is also found in research conducted by Parker, Blackburn, Perry, and Hawks (2013), as well as McDaniel and Drouin (2015). Furthermore, some CPM studies show how couples manage private information with partners and with certain motivations but most of the subjects are married couples (McDaniels and Drouin, 2015; Koehler, 2020; Zang and Fu, 2020). The Indonesian young adults in dating relationships in this research might have a different motivation for keeping the secrecy of private information, especially sexual messages, in Indonesia. The cultural context of Indonesian society where sex outside of marriage is considered taboo is a strong consideration here. Thus, they have complex privacy management, perhaps far more complex than other issues that have been studied in the CPM.

Sexting is a behavior that has emerged due to the development of digital communication technology, especially smartphones. It is not surprising that the formation of rules when individuals engage in sexting among dating couples is also related to communication technology. For example, informants choose applications that are considered difficult to hack or that allow them not to use personal identities. So skills are needed to use certain digital media (a certain level of digital literacy) in privacy management related to sexting. This is similar to a study conducted by JA Kahlow (2020). Kahlow examines the issue of the influence of technology from a CPM
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theoretical perspective on sexting, which includes the concept of trust, proficiency in using communication technology, and strategies for managing privacy management regarding sexting in relationships. Specifically, this study focuses on the use of communication technology that can facilitate privacy management, increase trust (trust between partners) and minimize the risks that arise.

Apart from agreeing on the rules in terms of communication technology, those who do sexting also make rules that are non-technological. Establishing clear boundaries from the start makes the ownership of private information more certain, there is no confusion or doubt. Usually, boundaries are dynamic (see West & Turner, 2018, p. 213), additions of people who know private information can occur over time or the development of relationships with others who become closer. But in sexting, these boundaries are kept fixed, they may not be shared with people outside the sexting partner.

Sexting which occurs in interpersonal communication between dating partners becomes collective privacy for both of them. However, fears of high social sanctions if sexting is leaked to other people, make the perpetrators make privacy management efforts very complex, beyond privacy management of other issues.

**Conclusion**

This study aims to explain the privacy management of sexting behavior among young adults in dating relationships which takes the context of Indonesia. There are two conclusions in this study. First, sexting is private information of a sexual nature, the boundaries of which are agreed upon by both parties involved. For people who do it, sexting is a natural thing that can improve the quality of dating relationships but carries a risk in the form that the perpetrator will get high social sanctions if the sexting is leaked or spread to other parties. So there is a high motivation to have sexting but there is also a high concern that the contents of the sexting will be leaked or spread. Privacy boundaries and risk assessment are influenced by the cultural context in Indonesia, especially regarding Islamic religious norms. Gender also affects the perception of risks.

The second conclusion: because of the reasons above, those who do sexting set complex privacy boundaries, rules, and guardianship. Determination of privacy boundaries and rules is carried out using communication technology so it requires certain digital literacy and non-technologically. Technologically, for example, by selecting applications that are difficult to hack or that can be used anonymously. While non-technologically, for example, arranging what kind of photos or videos can be exchanged (such as not being completely naked, not displaying an identifiable room/office/place background) and using 'language' in the form of emoticons and codes that only couples understand. Their privacy management must be stated clearly and unambiguously so that guardianship is truly implemented, for example, that they may not take screenshots and hold each other's social media access.

Sexting behavior itself has just emerged because of the development of digital technology. CPM studies related to digital media often focus on how much private information will be shared, to whom, and with what motivation. Meanwhile, this research focuses on motivation, boundaries, and privacy rules, as well as how to control the guardianship of these boundaries.

The CPM theory cannot fully explain the management of sexting privacy, especially when it is related to the cultural context. For example, situations where certain values change (in this research perspective of the society and families that sex is a taboo subject that negotiates or even contests with the physical needs of young adults in big cities with high exposure from (social) media and peers who see sex as a normal thing).

Subsequent studies on the management of privacy, especially on sensitive issues...
like sexting) have to deepen the influence of cultural context, as well as the influence of gender related to culture. The dynamic of negotiation or even contestation of different identities; whether based on religion, age, or sexual orientation; can enrich the understanding of motivation and the various elements of CPM. In addition, subsequent studies can expand the criteria of informants and develop other aspects of interpersonal communication in the form of intimacy, satisfaction, commitment, and togetherness. Furthermore, the social implication of this study is the need for digital literacy, privacy, and formal/informal sex education.

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