

Małgorzata Bereźnicka, Justyna Rokitowska

Religious Declarations of Youth versus their Opinions and Attitudes towards the Phenomenon of Sexting

Introduction

Apart from critics of religion who see it as something harmful, such as C. Marx, F. Nietzsche, S. Freud or R. Dawkins, many researchers like V.E. Frankl, G. Allport, E. Fromm, R. Otto, C.G. Jung, A. Maslow or P. Tillich present quite the opposite concepts and ideas. They state that religion is a constant and natural component of human life, emphasizing its worth or need as the ultimate concern, important relationship, spiritual, inspirational, mystical experience, associated with full-humans, a valuable manifestation of expression, meeting the self and the Divine, providing the highest meaning to life and therapeutic influence. Regardless of any opinion, religious matters are an important part of many peoples' lives (both in case of belonging to some religious group and reversely – fighting all spiritual manifestations).

Poles have been perceived as a very religious and Catholic nation for ages. This views seem to be confirmed by Public Opinion Research Center statistical data (Boguszewski, 2017), even though people's declarations are not always followed by strong beliefs or regular practice. The data showed that over 90% of Polish adults were Catholics, a few (1%) indicated a different denomination (including Protestantism, Orthodoxy), Christianity in general (2%), or else referred to as non-denominational, agnostic, atheists (4%). There were 85% believers, 8% of deep believers, and 7% of non-believers (including rather and strongly non-believers). The data also shows (Boguszewski, 2018) that since the end of the 1990s, invariably over 90% of respondents (92–97%) declared to be believers, including approximately every tenth (every twelfth in 2018) assessed their faith as deep. The percentage of respondents who are completely or rather unbelieving has remained relatively low for years (3–8%). After 2005, there was a slight increase in the percentage of those who described themselves as non-believers and a decrease in the percentage of deep believers, but in the last seven years there has been stabilization of declarations in this respect. When it comes to practice, there were 49% of adults practising regularly (several times a week), 38% of the ones practising irregularly (1–2 times a month to several times a year) and 13% of non-practising.

The results referring to Polish youth look slightly different (Głowacki, 2019). Interviews conducted in 2018 with 1609 teenagers mainly aged 18–19 years old

(94%) show that 17% of the surveyed youth are non-believers, 21% – undecided, 63% – believers (including 8% – deep believers). In addition, the percentage of non-believers increased over the decade (since 2008) by 12% and the undecided ones by 8%. Believers usually regularly participate in religious practices, although there is also a significant group of religious young people practising very rarely or even not practising at all. Undecided respondents usually do not take part in religious practices or do it sporadically. Unbelieving students in the vast majority never participate in religious practices. Believers as well as practising students are more often female than male and residence of villages rather than of cities, especially big agglomerations (Jedynak, 2014). The discrepancies between the above data can be explained among all by the fact that rebellion against existing norms and values, including religious values, is natural for young people. Some of them may engage again in the religious sphere as they get older, others will not. In the meantime, most of them will presumably be interested in another aspect of life, which is also a natural component of human existence, namely sexuality. Religiosity and sexuality are very specific phenomena, involving different intimate experiences, which seem to be very distant from each other. The first one refers mainly to the spiritual sphere, the second one is often wrongly attributed only to the physical sphere, related to procreation or hedonistic aspect, while the mental and socio-cultural dimensions are overlooked. Even though the two phenomena seem not to have much in common, many studies have shown that they in fact are closely associated.

As the authors of the article *The Impact of Religiosity on the Sexual Behaviours of College Students* note (Penhollow et al., 2005), there have been evidence that religion plays a large role with regard to sexual decision making. In a study where five different dimensions of religiosity (such as identity, behavior, attitudes, perceptions and practice) were correlated with sexual attitudes and behaviors, religious behaviour turned out to be the strongest predictor of sexual behaviour (Lefkowitz et al., 2004), which supported reference group theory (Zaleski, Schiaffino, 2000). Religious affiliation may be associated with less sexual activity and having less sexual partners than in the case of those who report none (Laumann et al., 1994), moreover it can also affect attitudes toward premarital sex (Cochran, Beeghley, 1991).

The range of experiences associated with one's sexuality changed along with the nature of interpersonal communication which has shifted with the widespread use of the Internet and cell phones. One of the new way of sharing sexuality is trough sexting – one of the risky sexual behaviours connected with the new media. The phenomenon refers most of all to receiving/sending sexually suggestive images or messages through the Internet or cell phone. The problem, even though quite a new one, has been known worldwide, due to some highly publicised stories of harmful actions including suicides caused by sexting. In many other cases sexting has been related to psychological distress, harassment and (cyber)bullying. It can also lead to criminal charges, especially if cases where sexting overlaps with pornography are considered. And quite often young people (specifically under 18 years old) involved in sharing sexual videos and pictures may not be aware that they can be committing a criminal offence. It may be breaking a law to take an indecent photograph or allow for an indecent photograph to be taken; to make an indecent

photograph (including downloading or opening an image that has been sent via email); to distribute or show such an image; to possess such images, especially with the intention of distributing them; to advertise (Aynsley et al., 2013: 17). Apart from pornographic content, the Copyright Act also applies to matters related to sexting, namely prohibiting the distribution of one's image without their consent (unless that person is famous or is a part of a larger whole (Kodeks Karny, art. 81, § 1).

It is hard to estimate how popular sexting is among the youngsters. According to different studies the numbers range from 15% to 40% depending on methodology, definition etc. (Ringrose et al., 2012: 12). However like other Internet threats, affecting most of all children and youth, sexting in recent years has become a subject of interest and concern, which resulted in publishing more and more worldwide studies on the matter (e.g. Phippen 2009; Badenhorst, 2011; Mitchell et al., 2012; Albury et al., 2013 etc.), including European studies, like those conducted under EU Kids Online – multinational research network seeking to enhance knowledge of children's online opportunities, risks and safety (e.g. EU Kids Online 2018). In Poland research work has been done e.g. by The Empowering Children Foundation; formerly Nobody's Children Foundation (Wójcik, Makaruk, 2014). There are also more and more scientific publications, in which attention is paid to the risks posed by sexting and is seeking the explanation why teenagers take such risks and how it can be counteracted. In some of them critical opinions against punishment for certain forms of sexting are expressed strongly, emphasising at the same time the need to support, protect and educate minors about the threats and legal consequences of misconduct, teach them empathy as well as take good care of the mutual communication (Levick, Moon, 2010; Shariff, 2015).

The research

Our research regarding sexting consisted of three parts related to knowledge, experience and opinions of young people about the phenomenon of sexting. In this article only students' opinions (along with some attitudes) are presented and we focused only on the most popular form of sexting, that is pictures. The purpose of this study was to determine if religiosity could differentiate our respondents' views.

The research was conducted in 2019 among 318 secondary school graduates from two high schools and a technical school from the Małopolska voivodeship. Students voluntarily completed the questionnaire in a regular classroom setting and all subjects remained anonymous. The survey was completed by 109 men (34%) and 209 women (66%). The respondents' places of residence were villages – 176 students (55%) and cities – 142 students (45%). Regarding family situation of respondents, 236 of them declared having a full family (74%), in 54 cases their parents had broken up (17%), and 20 students (6%) indicated that one of the parent was dead. Additionally, two people declared they were orphans, one person maintains contact with a parent who resides outside the country and one person chose the answer "others" without providing any further information and four people did not answer at all.

The questionnaire elicited information regarding religion matters (Fig. 1). Over half of respondents (173 students, 54%) declared they were practising Catholics; 82 students (26%) – non-practising Catholics; 47 students (15%) – atheists. Other 4% of all respondents, i.e. 13 students, indicated a different faith (4 responses for agnosticism, 2 responses for Buddhism and single responses for “Christian faith without church”, Judaism, deism, satanism, worship of time, “faith in myself” and “another religion”). Only 1% (3 students) did not give an answer to that question. In the analysis we concentrated on the three largest groups.

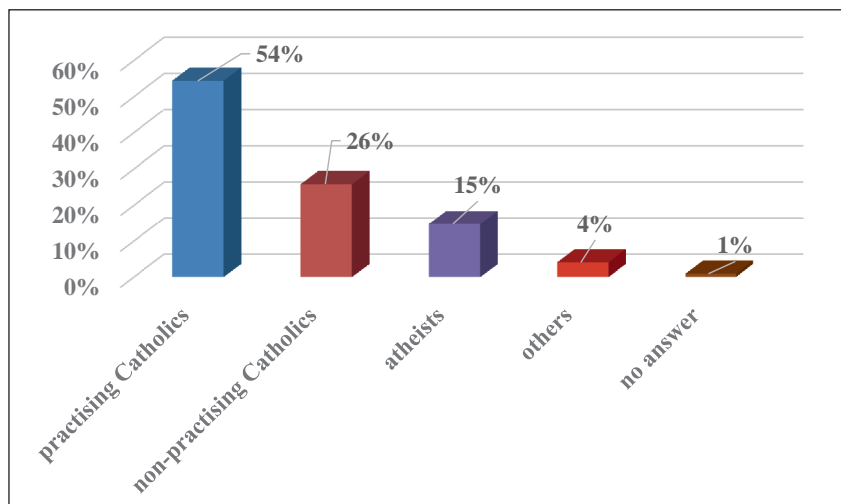


Fig. 1. Respondents' religion

Regarding the above variables along with the sex of our respondents (Table 1), 43 men (39%) and more than half of women – 130 (62%) – turned out to be practising Catholics, 35 men (32%) and 47 women (22%) – non-practising Catholics, and 19 men (17%) and 28 women (13%) – atheists. The answer “others” was chosen by 10 men (9%) and 3 women (1%). So, there were proportionally more female students declaring Catholic faith (84% vs. 71% of male respondents) and they were more often practising ones, while more men indicated to be atheists (17% vs. 13% of female respondents).

Table 1. Respondents' religion

students' declarations	number of students		%	
practising Catholics	male	43	173	54
	female	130		
non-practising Catholics	male	35	82	26
	female	47		
atheists	male	19	47	15
	female	28		

others	male	10	13	4
	female	3		
no answer	male	2	3	1
	female	1		
total number	male	109	318	100
	female	209		

Home education has a great impact on young people’s attitudes towards sexuality. Therefore, the first question referred to raising the subjects such as love, contraception or sex in respondents’ family homes (Fig. 2). The question was of a multiple choice. In all groups slightly more than half of students replied that love was being talked about in their homes. On the other hand, the issues of sex and contraception were discussed more often in atheists’ families (almost 49% indicated the first item and 45% – the second one) as well as non-practising Catholics (38% – about sex and 38% about contraception). Among practising Catholics, only 21% reported holding conversations about sex and 17% about contraception, so the difference between the data is significant. At the same time, sex was taboo in the homes of nearly 25% of all Catholics and 19% of atheists. Respondents also indicated other answers (in the family they did not talk about such topics, and there was no need to talk about sex). Also 29 students did not give answers to this question.

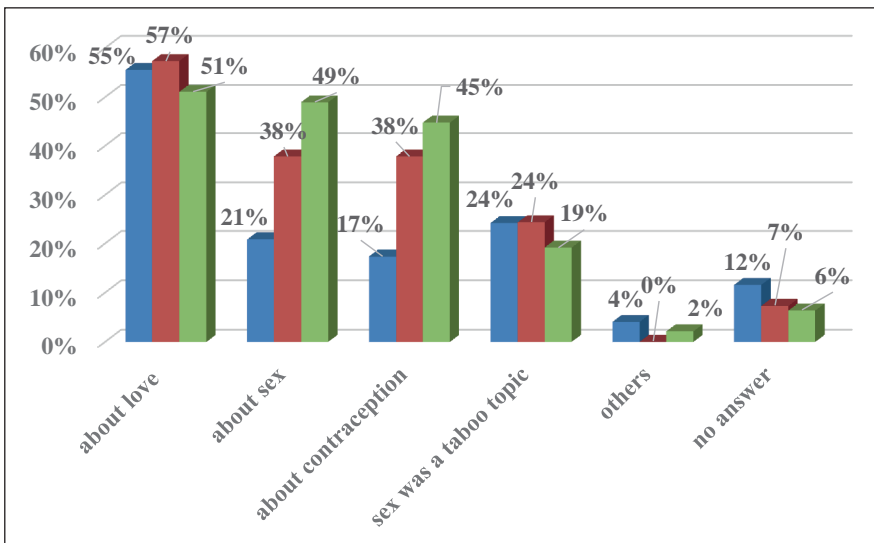


Fig. 2. Conversations in respondents’ families

Another multiple-choice question referred to attitudes towards nudity in respondents’ family homes (Fig. 3). In all groups, nudity was most often perceived as intimate (43–56%, most indications among practising Catholics) and natural (30–43%, most indications among atheists). Nudity was seen as “something indecent” in respondents’ homes according to 5% of practising Catholics and more than

twice as frequently by non-practising ones (12%) as well as according to 6% of atheists. Terms such as “something beautiful” or “something embarrassing” (in both cases chosen more frequently by atheists) received low results (5–9%). The term “something sinful” was chosen even more rarely (3–4% in all groups) and just a few students selected category “others”. No answers were given by 19 students.

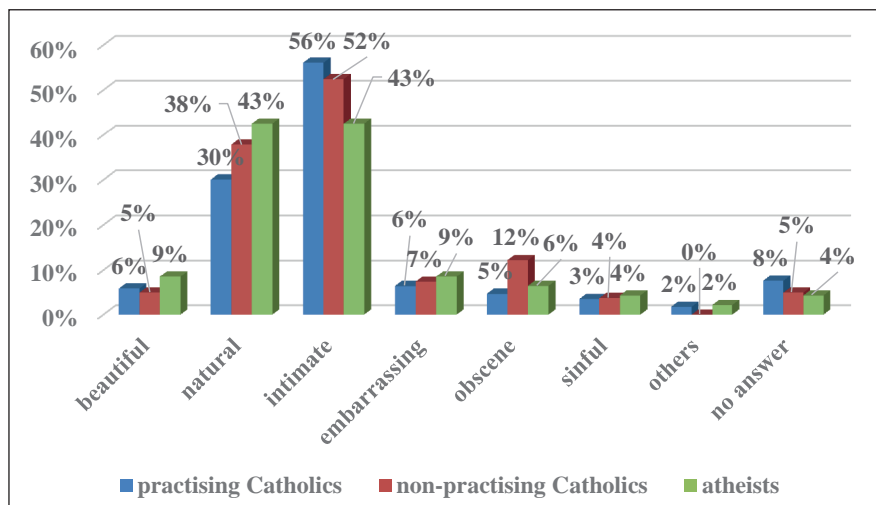


Fig. 3. Attitudes towards nudity in respondent's home

Then, respondents were asked about their own attitudes towards sexuality (Fig. 4). It is difficult to make any assumptions as far as atheists are considered, since the group may consist of people with very different worldviews and norms, whereas in the case of Catholics the certain preferred values are quite obvious. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church or flagship works such as *Love and Responsibility* by K. Wojtyła sexuality is an integral component of human nature, expressed in sexually diverse femininity and masculinity and this sphere should be reserved only for the spouse while respecting mutual dignity (KKK, 1994; Wojtyła 2001; Komorowska-Pudło, 2017).

The most common choice among all groups was treating sexuality as something meant only for a partner (54–64%). More than half of Catholics (57% practitioners and 54% non-practitioners) and as many as 64% atheists marked this answer. Sexuality intended only for a spouse was a declaration chosen mainly by Catholics, with a large majority of practitioners (42% vs. 27%), while only 11% of atheists agreed with that. It can be presumed that among a group of atheists, marriage, especially joined by the church, is less often considered a key value in life, so – in relation to the sexual sphere, it is difficult to expect that they will be guided by the principles of faith they do not profess.

The other options assumed a more subjective treatment of sexuality. In the group of atheists, every fourth respondent considers that sexuality can be presented to the environment, within certain limits, where the same answer was given by 17%

of non-practising Catholics and only 6% of practising Catholics. A small percentage of respondents described sexuality as a commodity for sale, respectively: 11% atheists, 9% non-practising Catholics and 3% practising Catholics. The question was not answered by 24 students.

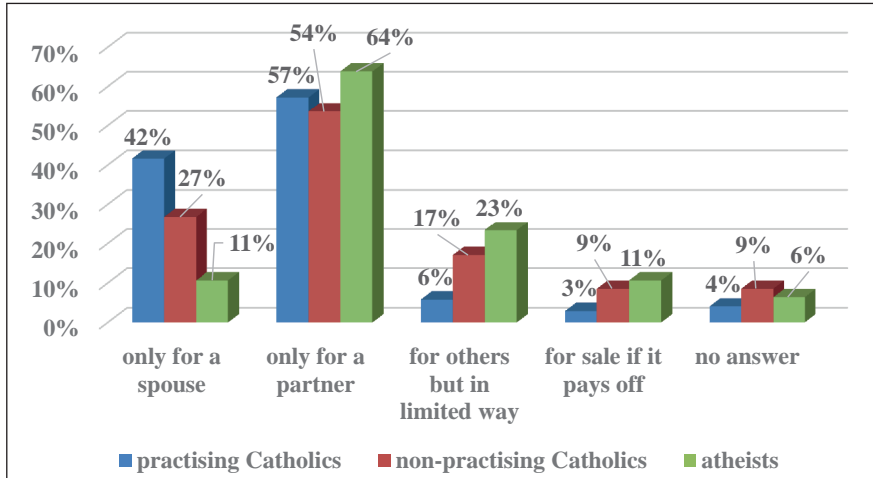


Fig. 4. Attitudes toward sexuality

The next issue dealt with the assessment of pornography by respondents (Fig. 5). Pornography often entails sexualisation and risky (or even deviant) sexual behaviours (Krawiec, 2017). Sexting often coincides with pornography, moreover, according to research, people who have contact with pornography are more likely to engage in sexting (Makaruk, 2017).

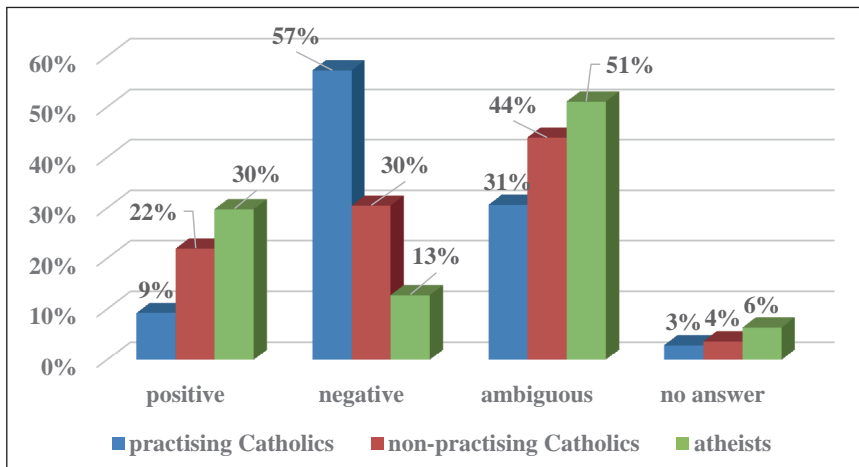


Fig. 5. Attitudes towards pornography

The answers varied. Among practising Catholics the majority of the chosen answers were negative ones (57%), with ambiguous (31%) and positive ones (9%) being their second and third choice. Non-practising Catholics turned out to be more liberal in this aspect (30% – negative evaluation; 44% – ambiguous one; 22% – positive one) however not as liberal as atheists (respectively 13%; 51%; 30%). It is worth adding that according to the data obtained from our research, almost 75% practising Catholics have never watched pornographic materials, just like 38% of non-practising Catholics and 34% of atheists. The question was not answered by 17 students.

After that, our respondents were asked to share their views on safety regarding sexing (Fig. 6). The vast majority of Catholics (88% of non-practising and 67% of practising ones) as well as more than half of atheists see such activities as not safe. Positive opinion on the issue was chosen by more than 1/6 of non-practising Catholics, slightly less than 1/10 of atheists and only 1/20 of practising Catholics. In addition, 1/4 of atheists added their own answer in “other” category, stating that it depended either on the situation, security measures or on the person. The question was not answered by 11 students.

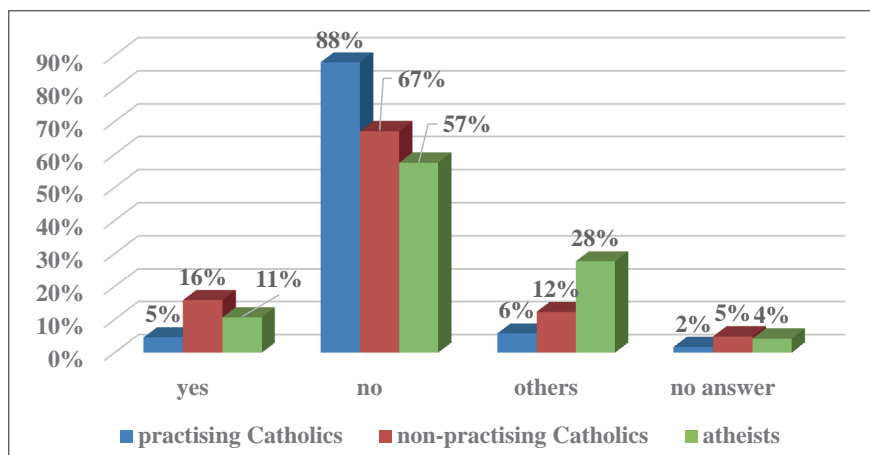


Fig. 6 Opinions on sexting as a safe behaviour

The next issue referred to respondents' judgement opinions about people involved in sexting regarding their sex (Fig. 7). Most of the students stated that gender did not matter here (52–81%), the largest number of such choices was among atheists, the least among practising Catholics. More severe opinions concerning females turned out to occur more frequently than concerning males, notably more among Catholics than atheists, whereas males were judged more severely most often by non-practising Catholics and atheists. The question was not answered by 13 Catholics.

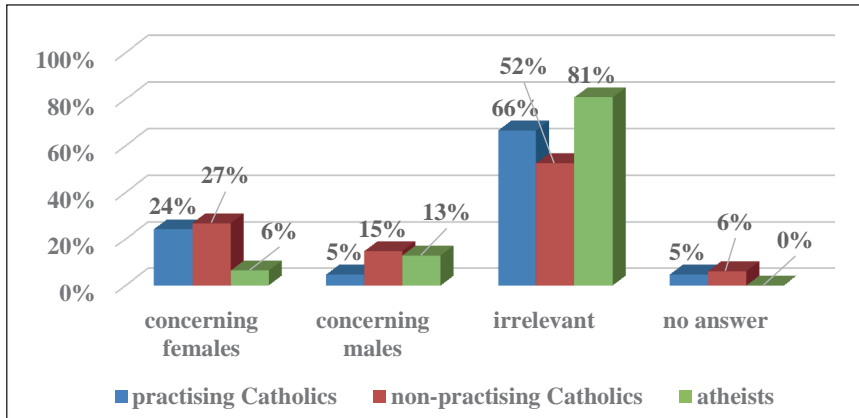


Fig. 7. More severe opinions regarding sending sexually explicit images

Respondents were also asked to give an opinion on the age from which sexting should be legal (Fig. 8). Nearly half of non-practising Catholics reported that adulthood (that is 18 years of age in Poland) should be significant here. Their second choice was “over 21” and the third one – “any age.” Atheists also most often indicated adulthood (40%), with “over 15 years of age” as their second choice and “over 21 age of years” – the third one. In the group of practising Catholics adulthood was a similarly frequent chosen option as the answer “over 21 years” and the category other (around 25% of them), containing mainly suggestions that sexting should not be legal at all. 22 Catholics did not answer this question.

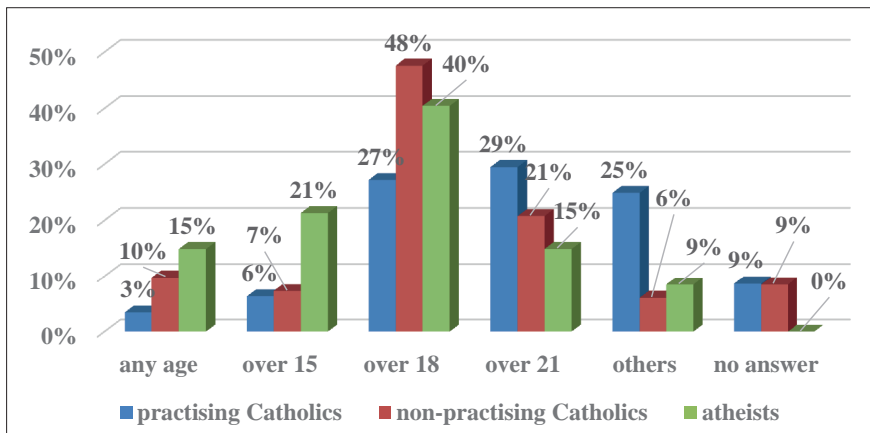


Fig. 8. Sexting legality age

The respondents were also asked to express opinions on sending their nude photos to the indicated persons or placing them on the network (Table 2). Almost half of practising Catholics and a quarter of non-practising ones replied that they assessed negatively sending such materials to girlfriends/boyfriends (45%), while

more than half of atheists rated this activity positively, as did 1/3 of non-practising and 1/4 of practising Catholics.

Apart from that, negative opinions prevailed in all groups, including sending nude photos to ex-partners, as well as to friends, strangers and a public website (the highest results in every group).

The majority of neutral opinions pertained to situations engaging girlfriends/boyfriends; that was the choice of 1/4 of practising Catholics, 1/3 of non-practising ones and over 1/4 of atheists. Also, higher results concerning neutral opinions occurred among atheists referring to ex-partners (1/5 of them) and friends – 1/4 of them as well as 1/5 of non-practising Catholics.

Table 2. Opinions on sending nude photos to others (%)

		positive	neutral	negative	no answer
to a girlfriend/boyfriend	pr. Cath.	24	25	45	5
	n-p. Cath.	34	34	24	7
	ath.	53	28	19	0
to an ex-partner	pr. Cath.	3	5	86	6
	n-p. Cath.	10	7	71	12
	ath.	4	21	74	0
to a friend	pr. Cath.	4	11	81	6
	n-p. Cath.	11	20	60	11
	ath.	12	25	64	0
to a stranger	pr. Cath.	1	4	88	6
	n-p. Cath.	2	10	77	11
	ath.	6	6	87	0
to a public website	pr. Cath.	1	2	92	6
	n-p. Cath.	4	4	83	10
	ath.	6	6	83	4

In the next question, analogous to the previous one, respondents were to respond to sending semi-nude photos with erotic poses (Table 3). The category connected with girlfriends/boyfriends was chosen equally among practising Catholics (nearly 1/3 of them). Non-practising Catholics were even more liberal here, with half of them assessing positive answer, and only 1/10 of them – negative one. However atheists turned out to be the most liberal; majority of that group (62%) chose a positive answer here, while 13% indicated negative views.

The results are not very different from data in the previous table, however it is clear that in most cases there are more positive and neutral opinions, while negative ones are reduced, comparing respondents' views on the subject.

Table 3. Opinions on sending photos of partially nude photos and erotic poses (%)

		positive	neutral	negative	no answer
to a girlfriend/boyfriend	pr. Cath.	31	32	32	5
	n-p. Cath.	49	32	11	9
	ath.	62	26	13	0
to an ex-partner	pr. Cath.	3	10	82	5
	n-p. Cath.	13	13	62	11
	ath.	11	32	57	0
to a friend	pr. Cath.	6	14	77	5
	n-p. Cath.	17	17	56	11
	ath.	20	29	52	0
to a stranger	pr. Cath.	2	5	88	5
	n-p. Cath.	6	11	71	12
	ath.	11	17	72	0
to a public website	pr. Cath.	2	3	90	5
	n-p. Cath.	6	7	77	10
	ath.	13	17	68	2

Finally, respondents were asked to provide an answer to the question, who should educate about the potential risks of sexting (Fig. 9). The most frequently marked answer in every group was school (57%–69%), especially among practising Catholics. Their second choice were parents and the media (over 1/3 of each). More non-practising Catholics reported that education in the discussed subject should be provided by parents than by media (respectively 45% and slightly more than 1/3 of them). Atheists, apart from school, pointed more often to media (2/5 of them) than to parents (slightly more than 1/4 of them).

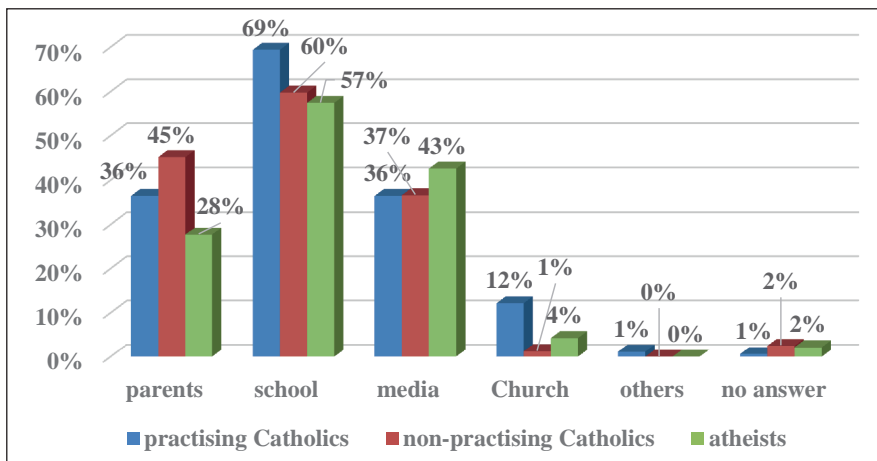


Fig. 9. Who should educate about the risks of sexting

School is quite an obvious choice, with professionals who can teach students about the aspects of Internet threats and safe online behaviour (Bereźnicka, 2019b). Also media can (and do) invite professionals to collaborate on projects dedicated to online security. However, parents do not always have the necessary knowledge and awareness in this regard (Bereźnicka, 2019a) in spite of children's needing their support also in virtual world. Finally, the Church was the least frequently mentioned option and it was mainly marked by practicing Catholics, followed by atheists in second place; surprisingly more frequently than non-practicing Catholics, among which only a handful of students indicated this item. Four respondents did not reply to that question.

Conclusions and discussion

Starting from home, where attitudes towards sexuality are shaped, the results show as follows. Regarding conversations about love and sex, the first issue was more often raised in Catholics' homes, while the other one – in atheists' home. As far as nudity is concerned, the largest number of students in all groups indicated that in their families it was perceived as something intimate (more Catholics than atheists) or natural (more atheists here).

Considering respondents' views on their sexuality, it is most frequently perceived as something dedicated only for a partner, but that option was chosen more often also in both Catholic groups. Among atheists it had a few times higher results than any other items. Second option chosen by a group of Catholics, especially practising ones and not many atheists, was treating sexuality as something only for a spouse. Sexuality presented to others in a limited way, as well as treating it as a bargain for sale were the option chosen by only a few practising Catholics, a group of non-practising ones and a larger number of atheists who tended to treat their sexuality in a subjective way more often. Also evaluating pornography, atheists seemed to be the most liberal group, however surprisingly, some of the Catholics (more frequently non-practising ones) viewed that issue as something positive, too.

As to sexting, as it was mentioned before, it is hard to assess how such a potentially diversified group as atheists treat that dealings, however Catholic beliefs clearly do not go hand-in-hand with that kind of activities, especially with regard to young (not married) couples, let alone teenagers who are single.

Most of respondents see sex of persons engaged in sexting as irrelevant. In groups with more severe judgements regarding females, Catholic students dominated, while in the smaller one, regarding males – there were proportionally more atheists than believers.

Over half of the recipients in all three groups indicate that sexting should be legal at least over 18 years of age (including a group thinking that over 21 would be more appropriate). Additionally in all groups there were students choosing the answer "over 15 years of age" or "any age", but atheists clearly prevailed here.

Sending nude photos to others was rated negatively by most respondents in all three groups, except when receivers are girlfriends/boyfriends. The most negative assessments of sexting came from the group of practicing Catholics. Surprising,

opinions of non-practicing Catholics in some cases turned out to be less restrictive than of atheists. Positive views on sexting involving girlfriends/boyfriends were rated by more than half of atheists and – another surprise – as much as 1/3 of non-practising and 1/4 of practicing Catholics. That category had also a majority of neutral opinions in all groups. Apart from that, sexting had very few positive reviews regarding sending nude photos to ex-partners, friends, strangers and especially the uploading of such material onto a public website.

Comparing respondents' views on sending nude photos to sending partially nude photos with erotic poses, we can see that all groups tend to be slightly more liberal in the second case. The results also show that practising Catholics were much more strict here than non-practising ones, while atheists turned out to be the most liberal group again.

Majority of respondents (most of Catholics and more than half of atheists) believe that sexting is not a safe behaviour, however that aspect is related more with students' knowledge and awareness than religious views. Regarding their opinions on who should educate about the risks connected with sexting, the most frequently chosen answer in all groups was school. Parents were the second choice for Catholics and a third one for atheists, and reversely – media were the second choice for atheists, and a third one for Catholics. Church was indicated much less frequently, and mainly by practising Catholics.

Interpretation of these results should consider the limitations of the study such as the number of respondents (sample of 318) in which proportions in both groups of Catholics and a group of atheists varied considerably, and also not all types of schools were covered. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to the population or youth of similar ages. Additionally, it was hard to have had any assumptions regarding atheists, except maybe that they could be more liberal in their views than believers. Atheists are theoretically a more diverse group than those who share the same religion because they can hold on to very different values and norms. So that group should be studied more closely.

Nevertheless, results of the study support the findings of the mentioned previous research, presupposing relation between religious conviction and sexual behaviours. It may be slightly surprising that in many cases the data were more similar considering atheists and non-practising Catholics than in both Catholic groups. However, there were usually significant differences between students who declared to be practising Catholics and atheists, with the first ones as the most strict in their opinions and attitudes toward sexting, and the latter ones as the most liberal ones. This may imply an assumption that that not only mere faith but (also? mostly?) participation in religious practices is a significant factor in professed values and norms. However, this is only speculation, which should be verified in further studies.

Referring to more indulgent attitudes toward sexting (as well as pornography) among some Catholics, one of the possible explanations in the lack of consistency between their faith and opinions is a general increase in liberal attitudes (e.g. regarding premarital sex) and ambivalence towards moral norms that can be observed (Zdaniewicz, 2013: 119), especially regarding youth (Dziedzic, 2016: 82).

Furthermore, when analysing the results, the age of respondents and the phase of their religious development should be taken into account, as this may be crucial for their answers. From the perspective of developmental and educational psychology Cz. Walesa (1982: 50) distinguishes the following stages of religiousness development: a) non-religious period (1 year old); b) the beginning of the child's religiosity (2–3 years old); c) magical religiosity (from 4 to about 7 years of age); d) authoritarian moral religiosity (from 7–8 to 12 years of age); e) the formation of autonomous religiosity (12 years to 16–17 years of age); f) the development of authentic religiosity (from approx. 18 to approx. 25 years of age); g) religious stability (from around 25 to around 40 years of age); h) religious maturity (from approx. 40 to approx. 60–70 years of age); i) eschatological religiosity (from about 60–70 years of age). So, our young respondents are in a period of developing their authentic religiosity, which may be stabilised only in 5–20 years. Therefore, religious sphere can reflect their life, but their opinions, attitudes and behaviour may change to a large degree.

Another important factor that most likely influenced the results were the surveyed students' types of religiosity which were not verified in our study. According to Gordon W. Allport (1967), there are two types of religiosity. Extrinsic religiosity plays an instrumental role, serving only to gain benefits for the individual. The rules of faith are not followed in one's daily life. This type is considered characteristic of an immature personality, full of prejudices, deprived of positive emotional relationships with other people and emotional security. Intrinsic religiosity is the primary motive of a more mature person's life. It affects individual's motivation and values (which are combined with social norms), and facilitates understanding of the world by integrating it. This type of religiosity is more reflective and universal (Kasik, 1998). This division is also consistent with the distinction of mature and immature religiosity (Uchnast, 1982) as well as personal and non-personal religiosity (Jaworski, 1989), where the first one is marked by existence of a relationship between man and God, while the other one, in which God is to meet the egoistic needs of man, is a deviant form, associated with a lower level of self-acceptance, adaptation, and personality integration, a higher level of hidden anxiety and a more negative attitude towards the environment. However, C.D. Batson (1983: 38) referring to Allport's theory, decided that two types of religiosity do not cover the whole complexity and multidimensionality of the problem, since there is one more group of the so-called open-ended people, whose religious life is full of questions, doubts, and searches as in the quest dimension. They are not satisfied with simple answers, therefore they are looking for a way to discover the sacred, accepting the fact that they may never know the final and complete truth (Kasik, 1998). It can be assumed that not only various types of students' religiosity, but also probably different views in the group of atheists, may have affected their opinions expressed through the survey.

Apparently, faith and religiosity are complex issues, and therefore they require further in-depth research. In the meantime, however, an issue that seems to be urgent needs to be addressed, namely the approach of some young people to sexting. Regardless of students' religiosity or its lack, it is disturbing that some of them find sexting as a safe behaviour (and the younger students, the less responsible) and that some of them accept it not only in reference to their girlfriends/boyfriends, which

also may end tragically when they prove to be unreliable or the intimate material somehow gets into the wrong hands, but also regarding strangers or even the entire network. Those seem to be universal problems causing necessity to take multilevel actions, among which education – also perceived as a need by young people – is the first measure to be taken. And the problem should be treated as a whole, meaning along with raising awareness of threats and education for online safety, children and young people should be taught assertiveness, respecting their own and someone else's body and subjective treatment of it.

References

- Albury, K., Byron, P., Crawford, K., Mathews, B. (2013). *Young People and Sexting in Australia: ethics, representation and the law*. Australia: New South Wales.
- Allport, G.W. (1950). *The individual and his religion*. New York.
- Allport, G. (1967). Personal Religious Orientation and Prejudice, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5. Washington, DC, pp. 432–443.
- Aynsley, C., Davies, H., Girling, S., Hammond, R., Hughes, R., *Sexting' in schools: advice and support around self-generated images What to do and how to handle it*. <https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/files/Sexting-in-Schools-eBooklet-FINAL-30APR13.pdf>.
- Badenhorst, C. (2011). Legal responses to cyber bullying and sexting in South Africa. In: *Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention*, 10. South Africa.
- Batson, C.D., Raynor-Prince L., Religious Orientation and Complexity of Thought about Existential Concerns, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 22/1, pp. 38–50.
- Bereźnicka, M. (2019a). *Użytkowanie Internetu przez dzieci i młodzież a kontrola rodzicielska*. In: J. Falecki, P. Łubiński (edit.), *Bezpieczeństwo współczesnego państwa. Część 2. Wymiar narodowy*. Kraków, pp. 252–269.
- Bereźnicka, M. (2019b). Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa w Sieci. In: O. Wasiuta, R. Klepka (edit.), *Vademecum Bezpieczeństwa Informacyjnego*, t. 1 (pp. 330–335). Kraków.
- Boguszewski, R. (2017). Przynależność Polaków do ruchów i wspólnot religijnych, *Komunikat z badań, Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej*, 84. Warszawa. https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2017/K_084_17.PDF.
- Boguszewski, R. (2018). Religijność Polaków i ocena sytuacji Kościoła katolickiego, *Komunikat z badań, Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej*, 147. Warszawa. https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K_147_18.PDF.
- Cochran, J.K., Beeghley, L. (1991). The influence of religion on attitudes toward non marital sexuality: A preliminary assessment of reference group theory, *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion*, 30, pp. 45–62.
- Dawkins, R. (1993). Viruses of the mind. In: B. Dahlbom (edit.), *Dennett and His Critics: Demystifying Mind*. (pp. 13–27). Oxford, UK, Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell.
- Dziedzic, J. (2016). *Religijność a postawy moralne polskiej młodzieży. Refleksja psychologiczno-pastoralna*, *Polonia Sacra* 20, 45/4. Kraków, pp. 67–86.
- EU Kids Online*, www.eukidsonline.net.
- Finkelhor, D., Jones, L.M., Mitchell, K.J., Wolak, J. (2012). *Prevalence and Characteristics of Youth Sexting: A National Study*. Durham.

- Freud, S. (1907). *Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume IX (1906–1908): Jensen's 'Gradiva' and Other Works*. London, pp. 115–128.
- Frankl, V.E. (1975). *The Unconscious God: Psychotherapy and Theology*, Simon & Schuster. New York City.
- Fromm, E. (1950). *Psychoanalysis and Religion*. New Haven.
- Głowacki, A. (2018). *Religijność młodzieży i uczestnictwo w lekcjach religii w szkołach*. In: M. Grabowska, M. Gwiazda (edit.), *Młodzież*. Warszawa. https://www.cinn.gov.pl/portal?id=15&res_id=1475764.
- Jaworski, R. (1989). *Psychologiczne korelaty religijności personalnej*, Lublin.
- Jedynak, W. (2014). *Wybrane aspekty przemian religijności i moralności młodzieży polskiej*. In: P. Długosz, H. Kotarski, W. Jedynak (edit.), *Czy stracone pokolenie? Młodzież i jej dylematy na początku XXI wieku* (pp. 13–23). Rzeszów.
- Jung, C.G. (1938). *Psychology and religion*. New Haven.
- Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego* (1994), nr 2349, 2362, 2364, 2365. Poznań.
- Kasik, M. (1998). *Religijność a osobowość: typy postaw religijnych a obraz siebie*, Studia Włocławskie, 1. Włocławek, pp. 169–178.
- Kodeks Karny: art. 81 Ustawy o prawie autorskim i prawach pokrewnych, Ochrona wizerunku, § 1.
- Komorowska-Pudło, M. (2017). *Wartościowanie płciowości i seksualności w religiach monoteistycznych. Założenia doktrynalne a rzeczywistość empiryczna*, Studia Paradyskie, 27. Świebodzin, pp. 317–318.
- Krawiec, G. (2017). *Pornografia jako cyberzagrożenie w zakresie relacji międzyludzkich i propozycja profilaktyki*. In: M. Górka (edit.), *Cyberbezpieczeństwo dzieci i młodzieży. Realny i wirtualny problem polityki bezpieczeństwa*. Warszawa.
- Laumann, E.O., Gagnon, J.H., Michael, R.T., Michaels, S. (1994). *The social organization of sexuality: Sexual practices in the United States*. Chicago.
- Lefkowitz, E.S., Gillen, M.M., Shearer, C.L., Boone, T.L. (2004). Religiosity, sexual behaviors, and sexual attitudes during emerging adulthood, *The Journal of Sex Research*, 41/2 pp. 150–159.
- Levick, M., Moon, K., *Prosecuting Sexting as Child Pornography*. Valparaiso: Valparaiso University Law Review, 44, pp. 1035–1054.
- Makaruk, K., Michalski, P., Włodarczyk, J. (2017). *Kontakt dzieci i młodzieży z pornografią. Raport z badań*. [http://fdds.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Makaruk_K_Włodarczyk_J_Michalski_P_2017_Kontakt_dzieci_i_mlodziemy_z_pornografia.pdf](http://fdds.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Makaruk_K_Wlodarczyk_J_Michalski_P_2017_Kontakt_dzieci_i_mlodziemy_z_pornografia.pdf), Warszawa.
- Maslow, A. (1970). *Religions, values, and peak-experiences*. New York.
- Nietzsche, F. (1895). *Der Antichrist*. Germany.
- Otto, R. (1923). *The Idea of the Holy*. London.
- Penhollow, T., Young, M., Denny, G. (2005). The Impact of Religiosity on the Sexual Behaviors of College Students, *American Journal of Health Education*, 36/2, pp. 75–85.
- Phippen, A. (2009). *Sharing Personal Images and Videos Among Young People*. www.swgfl.org.uk/Staying-Safe/SextingSurvey. Plymouth.

- Ringrose, J., Gill, R., Livingstone, S., Harvey, L. (2012). *A Qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting'. A report prepared for the NSPCC*. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/documents/MPP/Sexting-Report-NSPCC.pdf>.
- Shariff, S. (2015). *Sexting and Cyberbullying. Defining the Line for Digitally Empowered Kids*. Cambridge.
- Tillich, P. (1956). *The Religious Situation*. New York.
- Uchnast, Z. (1975). *Psychologiczne aspekty dojrzałości religijnej*, Częstochowskie Studia Teologiczne, 3. Częstochowa, pp. 147–161.
- Walesa, Cz. (1982). *Psychologiczna analiza rozwoju religijności człowieka za szczególnym uwzględnieniem jego ontogenezy*. In: Z. Chlewiński (edit.), *Psychologia religii*. Lublin.
- Wojtyła, K. (2001). *Miłość i odpowiedzialność*. Lublin.
- Wójcik, S., Makaruk, K. (2014). *Seksting wśród polskiej młodzieży*. http://fdds.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Wojcik_Makaruk_Seksting_wsrod_polskiej_mlodziezy.pdf, Warszawa.
- Zaleski, E.H., Schiaffino, K.M. (2000). Religiosity and sexual risk-taking behavior during the transition to college, *Journal of Adolescent*, 23/2, pp. 223–227.
- Zdaniewicz, W. (2013). *Model katolickiej religijności*. In: L. Adamczuk, E. Firlit, W. Zdaniewicz (edit.), *Postawy społeczno-religijne Polaków 1991–2012*. Warszawa.

Religious Declarations of Youth versus their Opinions and Attitudes towards the Phenomenon of Sexting

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present the results of a survey on the opinions of high school graduates and their attitudes towards the phenomenon of sexting with regard to respondents' religious declarations. The authors, recalling various studies, introduce the role that religiosity plays in relation to various sexual behaviours. After that the authors present the analysis and results of their survey, taking into consideration three groups of students: practising Catholics, non-practising Catholics and atheists. The similarities as well as the discrepancies among these groups are discussed. The paper shows that students' declarations connected with faith are not always consistent with their opinions on the discussed subject, which can be seen especially in the group of non-practising Catholics. At the end, key conclusions and postulates for the practice are presented.

Keywords: youth, attitudes, religion, sexting, education

dr hab. Małgorzata Bereznička, prof. UP

Pedagogical University of Krakow, Poland
e-mail: malgorzata.bereznicka@up.krakow.pl
ORCID: 0000-0002-1525-9184

mgr Justyna Rokitowska, M.A.

Pedagogical University of Krakow, Poland
e-mail: justyna.rokitowska@up.krakow.pl
ORCID: 0000-0002-3046-8929