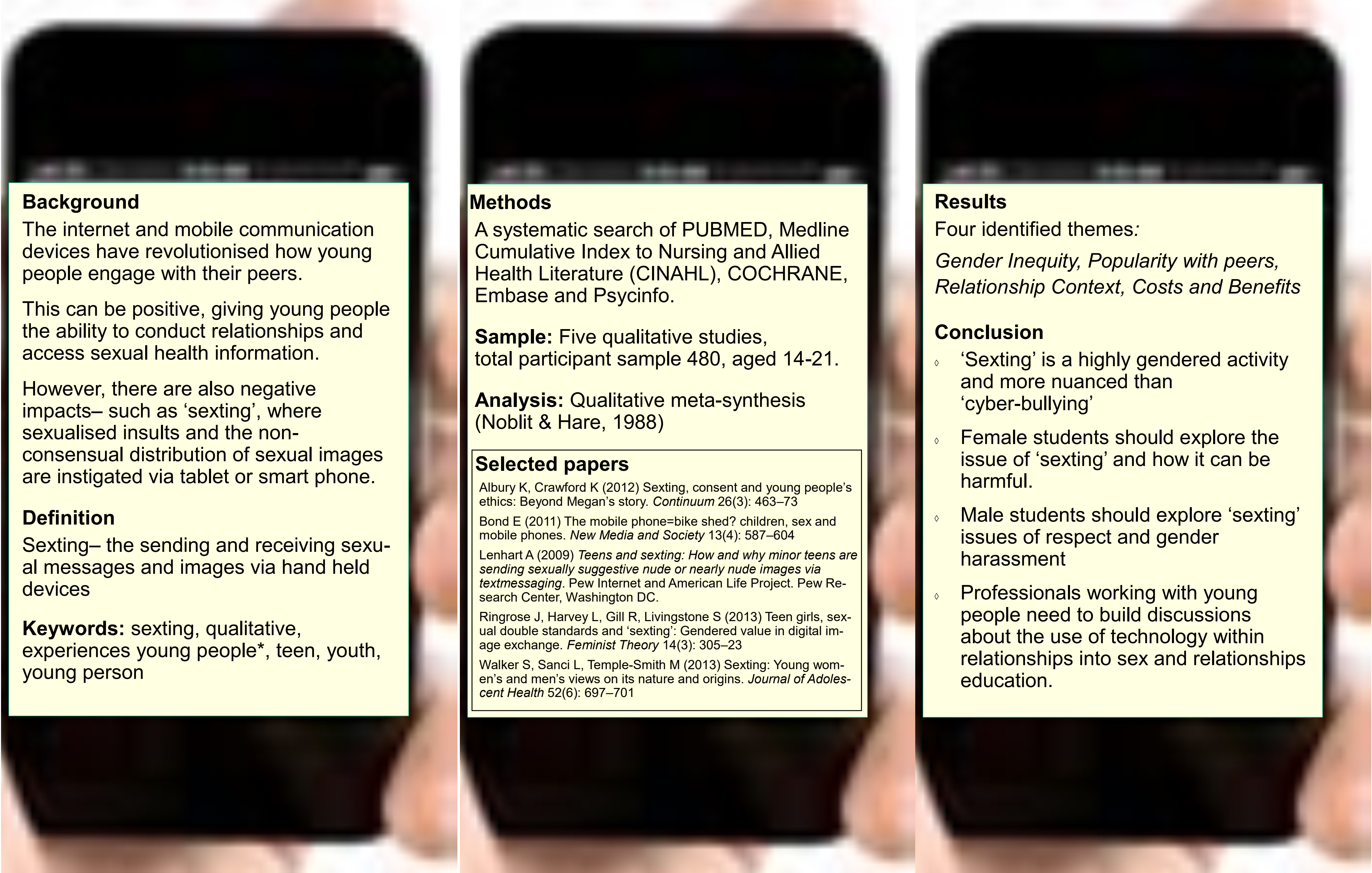


Young peoples' experiences of 'Sexting'

A qualitative Meta-Synthesis

Wilkinson Y¹, Whitfield C¹, Hannigan S¹, Ali P², Hayter M¹

¹ University of Hull, United Kingdom ² University of Sheffield, United Kingdom



Background
The internet and mobile communication devices have revolutionised how young people engage with their peers.
This can be positive, giving young people the ability to conduct relationships and access sexual health information.
However, there are also negative impacts— such as 'sexting', where sexualised insults and the non-consensual distribution of sexual images are instigated via tablet or smart phone.

Definition
Sexting— the sending and receiving sexual messages and images via hand held devices

Keywords: sexting, qualitative, experiences young people*, teen, youth, young person

Methods
A systematic search of PUBMED, Medline Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), COCHRANE, Embase and Psycinfo.

Sample: Five qualitative studies, total participant sample 480, aged 14-21.

Analysis: Qualitative meta-synthesis (Noblit & Hare, 1988)

Selected papers
Albury K, Crawford K (2012) Sexting, consent and young people's ethics: Beyond Megan's story. *Continuum* 26(3): 463–73
Bond E (2011) The mobile phone=bike shed? children, sex and mobile phones. *New Media and Society* 13(4): 587–604
Lenhart A (2009) *Teens and sexting: How and why minor teens are sending sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images via textmessaging*. Pew Internet and American Life Project. Pew Research Center, Washington DC.
Ringrose J, Harvey L, Gill R, Livingstone S (2013) Teen girls, sexual double standards and 'sexting': Gendered value in digital image exchange. *Feminist Theory* 14(3): 305–23
Walker S, Sanci L, Temple-Smith M (2013) Sexting: Young women's and men's views on its nature and origins. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 52(6): 697–701

Results
Four identified themes:
Gender Inequity, Popularity with peers, Relationship Context, Costs and Benefits

Conclusion

- ◊ 'Sexting' is a highly gendered activity and more nuanced than 'cyber-bullying'
- ◊ Female students should explore the issue of 'sexting' and how it can be harmful.
- ◊ Male students should explore 'sexting' issues of respect and gender harassment
- ◊ Professionals working with young people need to build discussions about the use of technology within relationships into sex and relationships education.

