

# Young, internet-driven Filipinos more sexually active

MANILA, PHILLIPINES: Young Filipinos are becoming more sexually adventurous as the traditionally powerful Roman Catholic Church loses its influence on the internet and smart phones, according to a study released on Thursday (6 February).



Young people in the Philippines are more sexually adventurous as Internet access changes their conservative views. Image: Imagerymajestic [Free Digital Photos](#)

A survey of more than 19,000 Filipinos aged between 15 and 24 found pre-marital sex was on the rise, with an increasing number of people meeting partners and sharing sexually explicit material online.

One third of the respondents said they had pre-marital sex, up from 23.2% in 2002 and 17.8% in 1994, according to the nationwide survey carried out by a social research unit of the University of the Philippines.

"We suspect new media has something to do with this. That is what defines this young generation now," survey director Josefina Natividad told AFP.

"It is being connected to the outside world, via internet, social media, cellphones that makes them more amenable to being affected (by more liberal sexual attitudes)."

Young people increasingly use smart phones to access the internet with freedom. They are able to tap into social networking sites and photo and video-sharing sites outside of the home.

However the increased information available with new technologies did not translate into better knowledge about safe sex,

according to the survey.

The number of female teenagers who reported being pregnant more than doubled from 6.3% in 2002 to 13.6% last year.

The Philippines is widely regarded as a conservative Catholic country, with roughly 80% of the population followers of the faith.

Due to the influence of the Church, the Philippines is the only country where divorce remains illegal, while abortion is also outlawed and contraceptives are not freely available for the poor.

However Natividad said the survey results showed the Church's influence among the youth was waning.

"The church has no strong effect anymore on how these young people behave," she said.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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