Writing About the Body and the Body of Writing: The Girl’s Body in Israeli Teenage Girls’ Blogs

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## Sample

27 blogs (86 posts; three to four posts from each blog) from a total of 53 blogs that were posted on two
Israeli websites, Tapuz Portal and Yisrablog. All the bloggers identified themselves as adolescent girls between the ages of 14 and 18 and as high school students

# Abstract

This qualitative study focuses on blogs written by Israeli girls, aged 14 to 18, concerning their body and the developmental process of identity construction. Using a sociocultural approach, the study examined the ways in which the girls write about their bodies, what issues they raise in their blogs concerning their body and identity, and what blog writing about the body offers to them in the process of identity construction. A combination of thematic-categorical analysis and structural-linguistic analysis was used to analyze 27 blogs (86 posts) written by Israeli girls. The findings reveal a complex picture about the ways in which girls experience their bodies and perceive societal norms concerning their appearance. The blogs included the girls’ feelings of insecurity, stress, and confusion about their body and at the same time served as a place where girls were able to voice resistance to the current ideal of beauty and of social conventions. Findings also reveal the ways in which the girls presented their body to their girl peers. The study concludes that writing blogs is an important channel for Israeli girls to engage in discourse about the body as part of the process of identity formation.

# Outcome

Segev and Hochman (2017)found that blogs seem to play a central role in the development process, where adolescent girls are intensively busy constructing their body identity. By writing blogs, girls explore their reality online and can better cope with their reality offline. Exposed on stage, facing the imagined audience, the girls try to reconcile the contradictions, waiting for responses from their readers concerning this complicated discourse, and examining the responses. In their blogs, the girls described that they were able to express feelings and thoughts that they were not able to express in face-to-face conversations. The girls described how their writing in the blogs makes it possible to engage in a discourse that is
different from their usual conversations. Therefore, blog writing served as a
safe place for the girls to construct their body identity and to display different components of themself and of their appearance before an audience of peers. The findings shed light on the facilitative function inherent in writing, helping the girls to cope with the offensive comments they receive from teenagers their age concerning their appearance. The blogs also serve as a way to protest and voice girls’ criticism of the ideal of beauty and of the desired body. But as noted above, this voice was not the dominant one in the blogs; it was an alternative voice that exists alongside the hegemonic one. Writing about the body in a blog appears to serve as a way to create identity. The girls tend to examine their choices concerning their bodies and create a body identity by writing their narrative