**Ways of coping with social shaming- Ethiopian girl's negotiating their blackness**

Dr. Sigal Oppenhaim-Shachar

An Ethiopian girl, who lives in a racist society faces the challenge of positively experiencing her skin color. A girl who probably belongs to a traditional family and community, has to put a lot of efforts in dealing with mixed messages about her body. Living in a secular heterogeneous society, such as many Israeli schools are, on the one hand, and in a community that demands modesty, on the other hand, exposes girls to conflicting expectations on appearance and conduct. More specifically, social shaming goes hand in hand with her stigmatized noticeable blackness, which can be perceives as a distinctive border.

Evidence from a Field Diary that was written as a part of an action Research, outlined the need to support and convey different messages in order to minimize the contradiction girls who live in families who emigrated from Ethiopia, experience. The findings indicated three dominant ways of copping and the identities that develop around bodily experiences:

The first coping process involves reducing one's visibility through silencing their voices and trying to hide their bodies. The second coping process involves a struggle to belong to the Israel circles around them using a weakening blackness assisted by dyeing and straighten their hair. The third coping process involved highlighting their blackness as and strengthens ethnic identity through their 'different' bodies.

These three coping strategies, appear as an example of different levels of power and resistance, and can be described as three ways of doing 'boundaries work' in performing "ethnic identity". These various reactions to external gaze, help immigrant girls escaping shame and shaming experiences, by trying to maintain a sense of self-worth, and respectability.

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Sigal Oppenhaim-Shachar - A lecturer and researcher at the Gender Studies Program; the Sociology and Anthropology Department, and the school of education at Bar-Ilan University, and at Levinsky College of Education. Her work on the topic of Adolescent girl's intersectionality and occupational efficacy, has been published (Hagar Studies in Culture, Policy and Identities, 2014; Woman’s Studies International Forum, 2016), and at Israelis academic Journals. Her other interests include feminist pedagogy (gender & Education, not yet published) and pedagogy of intervention processes with label population (Book in Editing Process). She initiated the "Daphna Center", in 2010 – A professional development and training center established by the Bar-Ilan University Gender Studies Program, and managed the program up to the end of 2014.