

September 2018

NEWS FROM THE CSULB CULTURE & SOCIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT LAB (2017 – 2018)

ABOUT THE LAB

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ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

In the Culture and Social Identity Development Laboratory, we aim to understand the experiences of diverse children as they begin to form their gender and racial/ethnic identities. We seek to investigate children’s early attitudes (e.g., towards girls and boys), thoughts (e.g., group stereotypes), and behaviors (e.g., avoiding sports) that are linked with their developing identities with the goal of promoting their well-being, health, and academic achievement.

This newsletter describes some of the studies that we are currently working on or have completed. We hope that you and your child have enjoyed being a part of our research. We encourage you to sign up and participate this upcoming semester as well!



PARTICIPATING CENTERS

Much of the research described in this newsletter has been made possible by many parents, children, schools, centers, programs, teachers and staff. We thank these schools and centers for their participation.

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COMPLETED STUDIES

Parent Socialization of Gender-Typed Values

Our past work has indicated that, as they first develop a gender identity, young girls tend to be preoccupied with looking pretty and wearing feminine-typed clothing. Meanwhile, young boys might value physical strength as a symbol of masculinity. The purpose of this study was to examine whether parents influence girls' and boys' adoption of these gender-typed values. Every two months over one year we surveyed 28 parents of children ages 2½ to 7 years old. In the survey, parents reported whether and why physical appearance and/or being physically strong was important for their child and themselves through open-ended questions. Responses were coded by two independent researchers. According to these responses, 20% of parents of boys and 56% of parents of girls considered appearance to be important for their child. In addition, 33% of parents of boys and 25% of parents of girls considered physical strength to be important for their child. However, these differences were not statistically significant suggesting that parents of boys and parents of girls reported emphasized appearance and strength to about the same degree. Instead, most parents stated that they were primarily concerned with their child looking presentable and being healthy. No associations were found between parents' attitudes concerning their child's appearance/strength and children's appearance- and strength-related behaviors (e.g., play with make-up sets or superhero action figures). These findings suggest that parents might play a limited role in children's early development of gender-typed values (being pretty or strong) and that other factors, like the like the media, are important to examine.

*CSULB undergraduates: Melissa Ehlers, Tania Rodriguez

Gender and Ethnic Variation in Dating Socialization

Traditional gender roles deem it more acceptable for men to date multiple people than it is for women. However, few studies have examined the origins of these beliefs or whether these beliefs vary by culture. Thus, the main focus of this study was to examine whether there are ethnic and gender differences in how families and relatives (e.g., parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents) encourage or discourage dating multiple people at one time or dating multiple people across one's lifetime ("dating liberally"). We hypothesized that Latino men might be the most encouraged to date multiple people compared to other ethnic groups due to the influence of *machismo*, a type of masculinity that values male dominance and romantic expertise. To test this question, we administered a retrospective survey, where college students reflected on their experiences while growing up. Overall, on average, all gender and ethnic groups reported that their families encouraged them to date *selectively*. However, reflecting more traditional dating scripts, for Latinxs and Asian Americans, women reported greater encouragement from their family members to date selectively than did their male counterparts. There were no differences in dating familial socialization between European American women and men. Furthermore, Latino men reported the lowest levels of encouragement from their families to date selectively compared to men from the other ethnic groups. Finally, the more that families encouraged their youth to date liberally, the more likely that young adults personally believed in dating liberally. In addition, personal belief in dating liberally was associated with having had more sexual partners and being less satisfied in their current romantic relationships.

*Data collected with Dr. Campbell Leaper (University of California, Santa Cruz)

*CSULB graduate student: Anais Martinez

CURRENT STUDIES

Valuing Physical Appearance and Strength in Early Childhood

As children develop a sense of being a girl or a boy, do they begin to adopt gender-stereotypical values? For instance, do girls with a strong gender identity care a lot about looking pretty? Do boys with a strong sense of being a boy care a lot about being physically strong? We are conducting a study to examine children's developing identities as girls and boys and how much value they place on their physical appearance or strength. We will assess these aspects by asking children some questions about their gender and appearances/strength and by having them complete several fun activities related to valuing appearance and strength.



Testing Appearance Valuing: Fancy vs. Neutral Appearances



Testing Physical Strength: Strength-Related vs. Non-Strength Related Professions

*CSULB graduate student: Lyric Russo

*CSULB undergraduates: Julia Kang, Emily Wang

Gender and Racial/Ethnic Attitudes Across the U.S

People vary in their attitudes towards girls, boys, women, men, and people from different racial and ethnic groups. Some people can feel positive or negative towards certain groups. How do we come to have these attitudes, and when do these attitudes form? We are conducting a study to examine children's developing attitudes towards girls, boys, and children from various racial/ethnic backgrounds. We are specifically examining whether *where* a child lives might affect these attitudes. The study is part of a collaboration among five universities from different regions of the U.S. (Hawaii, Seattle, North Carolina, Connecticut, and Long Beach). We will assess these aspects by asking children some questions, showing them pictures, and having them complete several fun activities. With this study we hope to understand how biases can first form to promote equality, fair treatment, and respect for all groups.



This study is supported by the
National Science Foundation

*Data is being collected with Dr. Yarrow Dunham (Yale University), Dr. Sarah Gaither (Duke University), Dr. Kristina Olson (University of Washington), and Dr. Kristin Pauker (University of Hawaii)

*CSULB graduate students: Monique Amin, Anais Martinez

*CSULB undergraduates: Melissa Ehlers, Julyssa Juarez, Julie Rossi, Tania Rodriguez, Elaine Scenters-Zapico

CURRENT STUDIES

Play and Learning Across a Year (PLAY)

Infant behavior is important to the study of development; however, recently, the study of infant behavior is often overlooked or is conducted in structured lab settings. At this age, infants' and toddlers' locomotor skills, language, object manipulation, and social interactions are changing rapidly. To better examine infant behavior we and several other researchers will observe the behavior of infants and toddlers and their mothers in natural play at home. Videos will be taken of the natural play and home settings to examine infant behavior in a manner that reflects real-time development. These videos will later be combined into a large database contributed to by 60+ experts from around the world and by 30 data collection sites in America. Our lab was invited to participate as one of these collection sites, representing Southern California. This project will be the first of its kind. With this large-scale project, we can achieve better understanding of infant behavior across the U.S and answer questions related to the influence environment and experience may have on infant learning and development.

**This study will take place in 2019. Infants ages 12 months, 18 months, and 24 months may participate.*

This study is supported by the National Institutes of Health for Child Health and Human Development, Fisher-Price, and the LEGO Foundation.



*Principal Investigators: Dr. Karen Adolph (New York University), Dr. Catherine Tamis-LeMonda (New York University), and Dr. Rick Gilmore (Penn State University)



RESEARCH DISSEMINATION

Over the past year, we have had the pleasure of sharing our research at several talks and conferences such as:

Talks

*University of California, Los Angeles,
Department of Human Development and
Psychology*

*Stanford University, Department of Psychology
Culture Co-Lab*

Conferences

*California State University, Long Beach
Psychology Day
Long Beach, CA*

*UCLA Psychology Undergraduate Research
Conference
Los Angeles, CA*

*Western Psychological Association
Portland, OR*

*Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial
Meeting
Minneapolis, MN*

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

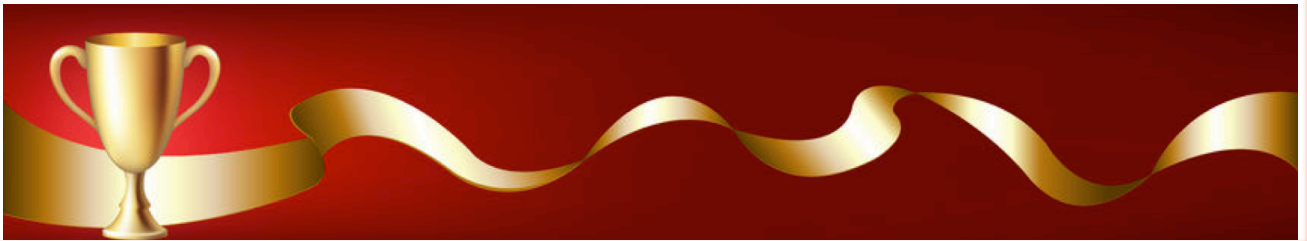
Halim, M. D., Walsh, A. S., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Zosuls, K. M., & Ruble, D. N. (2018). The roles of self-socialization and parent socialization in toddlers' gender-typed appearance. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*.

Halim, M. D., Gutierrez, B. C.*, Arredondo, M.*, Bryant, D.*, & Takesako, K.* (2018). Gender is what you look like: Emerging gender identities in young children and preoccupation with appearance. *Self and Identity Special Issue: New Directions in the Study of Self and Identity*, 17, 455-466.

**denotes former CSULB undergraduate or graduate students*

STUDENT AWARDS AND HONORS

CSULB Psychology Outstanding Seniors in Psychology Award:
Tania Rodriguez



Special Shout-Outs!



It has been a wonderful year of accomplishments for students in our lab. Congratulations to:

- Monique Amin for her recent acceptance into the University of California, Irvine's Master's of Arts in Teaching and Credential program
- Anais Martinez, for successfully completing her thesis and earning her Master's degree in Psychological Research
- Armando Alvarez and Natassia Mattoon for completing their Master's degrees in Human Factors Research from CSULB
- Kiyo Takesako for her recent acceptance into the Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about your lab.

We are researchers from the psychology department at California State University, Long Beach. Dr. May Ling Halim is the director of the lab and the principal investigator. Our research focuses on children's social identity (gender, race/ethnicity) development. All researchers are graduate and undergraduate students that were screened through a competitive application process and were selected by Dr. Halim. They have all been trained specifically to work with children by Dr. Halim. They have also completed IRB ethics training.

2. My child has already participated in one (or more) of your studies, should I still participate this year?

Our current studies can only interview children who have not yet participated. However, please let us know if your child has friends who are interested in participating, and we are actively looking for infants for the PLAY study. Our researchers can go to the child's home or children can come to our research lab. Participants will be compensated for their time.

3. I know of a center that would be interested in your research. Is there a way to put you in contact with each other?

Yes! We are always interested in working with different institutions and would appreciate a referral. You can send information about the center and your name to develop.csulb@gmail.com or call our lab at: (562) 985-7195.

4. How can I learn more/participate in your studies?

For more information about our studies and participation please email us at develop.csulb@gmail.com or call us at: (562) 985-7195. You may also visit our website at <http://web.csulb.edu/~mhalim/index.html>

5. Where can I find the results of the study?

For past studies, if you'd like to be put on a list for notification of publication, email us at develop.csulb@gmail.com, call us at: (562) 985-7195 or inform a research assistant. You may also ask to subscribe to our newsletter to keep up-to-date with our research studies. It also allows you to be informed of studies during the research process. For current studies, we are still collecting data. When data collection is completed we then interpret our data and results. Then comes publication. This may take a long time, as it involves writing, reviewing, editing, and rewriting.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

If you would like more information on any of our studies, would like to participate in a study at our on-campus laboratory, or would like to know if we will be revisiting your school/center, we can be reached through:

Email: develop.csulb@gmail.com

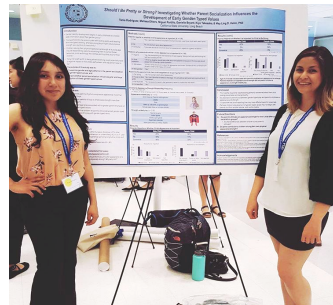
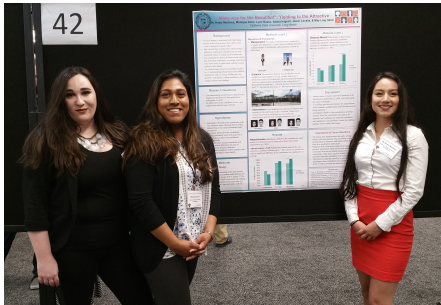
Lab phone: (562) 985-7195

Or through our website: <http://web.csulb.edu/~mhalim/participate.html>

We also plan to conduct further research at various sites in Long Beach and other surrounding areas during the 2018-2019 school year.

Thank you so much for your participation and interest in our research! None of this could have been achieved without your participation.

The Culture and Social Identity Development Lab 2017-2018



Left to right: (top left) *Dr. May Ling Halim, Elaine Scenters-Zapico, Melissa Ehlers, Julie Rossi, Julyssa Juarez, Tania Rodriguez,* (bottom row) *Emily Wang, Julia Kang, and Monique Amin*

Left to right (bottom left): *Lyric Russo, Monique Amin, and Anais Martinez*