

Explaining Lifestyle Influenced by the Virtual Space and Its Impact on Social Capital

(Case Study of Young People Aged 15-34 years in
Isfahan, 2015)

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Abstract

Social media and in particular cyberspace have created many changes in the lives and lifestyles of people. The causes and degree of the tendency of people to the space are different under the influence of individual characteristics and social factors. The consequences of such a lifestyle are different. According to the sociologists specializing in this field, one of the consequences is the growth and consolidation of the social capitals. Social capital is a product of individual or collective investment and strategies in the creation and reproduction of social communication either consciously or unconsciously.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace and its impact on social capital in both real and virtual worlds via a survey among 361 young people aged 15-34 years in Isfahan in 2015. The target citizens were selected as the participants using a quota sampling method. Data analysis was done using SPSS and Amos Software.

These are the most important findings of this study: The mean score of the lifestyle influenced by the virtual space is the same between men and women. The mean score of the lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace is different in terms of age, socio-economic base, educational level, marital status and style of living. There is a direct relationship between the

lifestyle influenced by cyberspace and social capital in the real world. But social capital in the virtual world does not find such relationship. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) of the study also indicates no confirmed data collected by the theoretical framework of research.

Keywords: Cyberspace, Lifestyle, Lifestyle Influenced by the Virtual Space, Social Capital

1. Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Today, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is visible in all elements of life and all human behaviors are influenced by the issue. With changes in behavior patterns, consumption, transport and settlement patterns have changed and in proportion to the developments the lifestyle will be changed.

Virtual space is a new realm of human life that has the ability to accept and carry out the needs, actions and affairs of human communities and government as well as an real space through concentration, processing and displacement of information, the ability of structures and activities' simulation in real space and do it via the effectiveness of real space (Hafeznia, 2011: 1).

Virtual communication is able to form a new field of modern habitus that could have led to different actions and choices. The emergence of new habitus is challenging previous ones and as a result, the displacements have been done. Thus, although the base of process of recreation remains, however, various methods provide the basis of one's definition of right and field of act (Zokaei, 2007: 281).

Giddens believes that increasing globalization of mass media, the existence and operation of various parties and organizations seem to hear anywhere in each area and the same information open new paths to select for a person naturally. High impact of virtual space by putting together different situations and conditions, the special symbols and ways of life has created new paths and thus modern choices (Khoshnevis, 2010:2).

Cyber culture and technologies' use allow us to connect with others through new ways and relate to information occurs (Mason & Rennie, 2008).

Two studies have received a considerable attention in the media which one is a Home Net project performed by Kraut (1998) and another has been conducted by Nie and Erbering (2001) with large-scale studies. Both reports have concluded that the use of the Internet would lead to the negative consequences because of close and intimate relations. DiMaggio, Harghita and Neumann (2001) have found that the Internet users are much less likely involved in meetings or phone call with friends than non-users and in some cases even they are not a member of social networks in the real world. However, studies and other researches have achieved the opposite result. Howard and Rhine (2001) using a large random sample survey have concluded that the Internet allows people to keep in touch with family and friends and in most cases it has extended their social network (Wang & Others, 2012).

Drotner believes that the relationship between young people and the media has taken two general forms: one that a discourse of cultural pessimism and another that a discourse of

cultural optimism. Negative assessment of the relationship has placed between young people and the media, especially in public disputes following the introduction of new media technologies (Drotner, 2000).

Regardless the optimistic or pessimistic assessment, the important matter is massive presence of media in the lives of young people, particularly the Internet as an obvious and not so unusual case, because the process of growth and socialization of this generation is synchronized to grow and progress these technologies. In Iran, a significant number of population use the Internet and websites (according to statistics provided on the website of internet world stats). Now there are 36 million and five hundred thousand of Internet users and penetration rate of the Internet is 46.9 (Ameli and Hassani, 2012).¹

The younger generation's fascination has been observed more or less evenly by the forms of information and communication technology and the widespread use of these technologies in all societies. Wide access to information technology has been considered to be a fundamental difference between the young generation today and the generation of the last twenty years. The findings of some studies have indicated an effective role of age difference in the computer-based activities of people. According to the studies conducted in this area, using the ICT in various social institutions has indicated the differences in past and present generations (Hariri et al., 2011).

But what is the necessity of addressing the cyberspace and lifestyle more affected by this phenomenon is an inevitable tool of technology in cyberspace that the cultural tools have pervaded the lives of all people in visible and invisible borders. The young people in their daily life deal with this tool and thus follow its culture. Virtual space technology deals with positive and negative effects to create a new style of life. This study has intended to explain the sociological aspect of the technology and lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace and its impact on social capital in line with this objective and its social consequences due to the extraordinary expansion of this space among the youth. Selecting Isfahan town as a case study has been done for the following reasons:

Isfahan having the features of traditional structure and old culture has considered being a metropolis in Iran. But in recent years, the face of Isfahan has been changed by the introduction of technology, changes in social, political, cultural and demographic changes such as population revolutions and having young population, migration and many other factors. This change is from the physical structure and architecture of the city to change social relations (from the face-to-face relation, local and family travel to unfamiliarity and social indifference of neighbors to each other). Sociological view of the social relations' evolution in this area is being placed a special emphasis. Undoubtedly, new communication technologies will disrupt traditional social relations which are slowly giving a way towards a new social relationship taken from virtual world today. The youth of Isfahan, like others in Iran have the technologies and have exhibited the culture in their lives.

¹ However, over the last three years the number of the users has exceeded 50 million.

2. Background Research

1) **Leung(1998)**: a survey in China as "Lifestyle and use of new media technology in Chinese cities" has had a special attention to the customers' lifestyle and using the media with acceptance of new technologies' behavior in cities. This study indicates the key findings including (1) lifestyle influenced by new media might significantly have effects on innovation; (2) persons who have high socio-economic profile are receiving new media and lifestyle and (3) the adoption of specific technologies and modern media seems to provide technical nature and technologies such as "developing life", "complex and update models" and "ideal and pleasurable state of the acts". The findings are associated with important concepts for the marketing managers and media designers.

2) **Wang & Others (2012)**: In an article appearing on "Relationship between the Internet use and adult lifestyle" in China in 2009 a cross-sectional study has been performed using a regression model of processing the effects of using the internet on adult life. The results of this model has indicated that certain Internet-based habits such as being too much time online, the Internet Club access and use of the Internet for emotional discharge have led to the sedentary and weak lifestyle habits in adults. Nevertheless, using the Internet for the purposes such as acquiring the knowledge and information has positively predicted a healthy lifestyle in adults.

3) **Zarqa(2011)**: The study entitled " the impact of the Internet on relationships: the perception of male and female students in Pakistan ", perceptions of male and female students are investigated about the role of the Internet in changing their relationship with the opposite sex, family members and anonymous people based on a collective perception. The results have indicated that students have agreed that the Internet is changing the relationships with the opposite sex, family members and unidentified people. However, they have no idea about the role of the Internet in increasing romantic relationships. Pakistan is a conservative community that might force the students to keep their comments on the results. The study of the romantic relationships of this website have indicated that the Internet gets family members closer to each other and increases the unity among them and strengthens family ties and a sense of responsibility among young people. There was no a significant difference between men and women' understanding. However, understanding of the Internet users and non-users was different. Non-users disagreed that the Internet has played a role in changing relations, while the users have indicated its role to make young people' relationships.

4) **Vergeer & Pelzer (2009)**: in an article appearing under the title "Capitals of online and offline networks and welfare: a causal modeling approach " the conclusion obtained is that people using the media have created a source of support and a refuge from loneliness for themselves. Unlike many studies on the subject, the study aimed to test the hypothesis in a national sample and insights from empirical research and theoretical concepts have been obtained from different areas of study. The data collection had been performed through telephone interviews by the structural equation models in 2005. Given that traditional and modern media lead to the destruct social capitals is not empirically supported. In addition, capitals of offline network lead to increase online capital and surfing the web simultaneously

with offline social media. Nonetheless, it seems that the additional capital has the benefits for social protection and loneliness. There is no an inverse relationship between loneliness and the media.

5) **Nie & Hillygus (2002)**: In an article entitled "the effects of Internet use on socialization: findings of a daily diary" the methods have been studied in which the Internet has affected interpersonal communication and socialization. New dynamic data effects show the time and place to use the Internet rather than face-to-face interactions in their daily work. The Internet use at home has a strong negative impact on spending time with friends and family and time spent in social activities, but no such effects is to use the Internet at work. Similarly, Internet use over the weekend has strongly related to reduce time spent with friends and family and has led to social activities than the weekdays. These findings support a theory of "displacement" in Internet use-online time that is largely associated to online competitive social activity instead of the complementarily in socialized periods. However, the location and time of using the Internet is affecting the interpersonal relationships and how to be in a relation.

6) **Franzen (2000)**:in the survey entitled "Does the Internet make us alone?" the Internet and its potential impacts on the community has been addressed. Franzen's results in the whole critique of Robert Cravat's findings (1998)has led to the conclusion that the too much use of Internet has reduced communication in family and local community network and increased the feelings of loneliness and depression. The results of the Franzen's survey in the Switzerland on 15,842 the Internet users and 1196 control group have expressed that the Internet use does neither reduce the size of respondents' social network nor time spent with friends, even using it has had the positive effects of the social networks.

3. Concepts and Theories of Research

Lifestyle is a concept that is meaningful with a choice of daily life, unlike traditional societies where people have few alternative programs in their life. In contemporary society due to the importance of choice in the community, the choice is happening in the field of material and consuming goods more than anything else (Hashemi, 2011:20).

The main and important thing that has lied in the formation of lifestyle is the impact of social atmosphere. Social interaction is a part of the concepts and approaches in sociology and a style can be a product of the interaction that helps to shape the social order. In new definitions, the lifestyle is a model of thoughts, emotions, recognitions and actions that make a social and personal identity (Hassani, 2012).

The Oxford Dictionary (Crowther, 1997: 1189) have different meanings for the style: (1) a distinctive style of doing or offering something; 2- a design and shape of things; 3-prominent and fashionable quality; 4- ways and the means by which a work of art, a building or something else can characterized historical periods, specific place or person; 5- a method of writing the author's characteristic or the type of literature. In all these definitions, distinguishing and uniqueness has been emphasized. Still, other details could be found for this concept (Fazeli, 2003:80). For this reason, the researchers who conducted the study in the

field are required to clarify the precise meaning of the lifestyle.

In literature of sociology, the concept of "lifestyle" has different species of conceptualization and perception. In first understanding date backing to the 1920s, lifestyle has represented the wealth and social status of people and is often used as an indicator to determine social class. In another, the lifestyle is no way to determine social class, but a new social figure known only in the context of cultural change of modernity and the growing culture of consumerism (Giddens, 1991 and 1994; Bourdieu, 1984; Featherston, 1987 and 1991; and Lash and Yuri, 1987). In this sense, the lifestyle is a way to define the values, attitudes and behaviors of people who every day increase its importance for social analyzes (Abazari&Chavoshian, 2002: 6).

Veblen has considered the lifestyle to be a collective phenomenon; something that belongs to the class and the manifestation of a class and is not an independent nature. He has claimed that indolent class tries to emerge their newfangled status in imitation of the lifestyle of the upper classes to demonstrate their taste to carefully imitate in fashion, food and leisure activities. Fashion at the community level is developed and imitated by the lower classes. Upper-classes also create new forms to maintain their social status and consumption patterns. "Updating" is a measure of the gentry to reproduce their dominant position (Ruling, 1998).

Simmel also considered the consumption and lifestyle to be a way to differentiate them from the mass people in metropolis. Almost all Simmel's reflections about the consumption in a paper entitled "Metropolis and mental life" have been gathered. Analysis of consumer and fashion phenomena is a part of the wider concerns of Simmel for the contradictions of modern culture. For Simmel, consumption act is an important element in the construction of new cities identities (Bennett, 2007: 99). He believes that only through the strong development of individualism which its aim is to follow the symbols of status and fashion that could be endured the pressures of modern life. This kind of consuming is a way to "self-assertion" and preservation of an individual authority (Bocok, 2001: 126). Thus, according to Simmel, the relationship between subjective and objective culture (personality and culture) is of great importance for every society, especially in the formation of lifestyle.

Max Weber more than any classic sociologists has been entered into the discussion related to the lifestyle. Three words taken from the German language are expressed by Weber to indicate his views about lifestyle as follows: (styling life), or in the form of more easily (lifestyle), (conduct of life), (life chances). In Weber's view, conducting life and the life's chances are two basic components of forming and completing the lifestyle. It is referred to as the choices that people have in their lifestyle. In Weber's concept of lifestyle, choosing one's own behavior or conduct is emerged in their life (Lebensfuhrung). Structural conditions have indicated itself in lifestyle (Lebens chances) (Fazeli, 2003: 25). Weber's concept of life chances is somewhat ambiguous. But Ralph Dahrendorf by using Weber's writings has determined the meaning of life in his literature as a "stratified position" and related it to private facilities in the individual consent of the interests, needs and inquiries. He does not consider the chances of life to be a pure chance, but he has assumed them in a way that people have taken due to social situation in life (KeyvanAra, 2007: 66).

Weber's vision of choosing the lifestyle is a type of choice that is in the range of structural efficiencies, the restrictions that limit the possibilities to find the selections. He has taken into account those as the social and economic limitations. Referring to social limitations is an indicator of Weber attention to subjective, traditional, normative, legal and religious life and factors of limiting lifestyles (Abel & Others, 2000). Borocz & Southworth referring to the Weber's writings, three sources of lifestyle, formal education and occupational prestige or inherited status are an esteem source (Borocz & Southworth, 1996: 799).

Anthony Giddens is one of the supporters of the recent emergence of modernity (Giddens, 1999). According to Giddens, one of the modernity consequences in today's life is related to its importance and inevitability for individual agent. Finally, the modernity promotes to a variety of opportunities of modern life and a choice, in the view of Giddens, no culture destroys such an opportunity and choice (Cockerham, 2000: 163). He believes that the special characteristic of modernity is dynamism, the effect of high worldwide and changing traditional practices. Modernity itself causes that people leave more choices that the tradition typically has given them and they will release and so the person is facing a complex diversity of the possible choices (Giddens, 1999: 119).

In general, the view could be extracted that the lifestyle of a person is a reflection of his life experiences, situations, values, views and expectations. A person with a choice of goods and services actually has expressed that who is he or she, what their nature is, what their love is and in what type of identity he is recognized and categorized. (Samadi, 2003: 145).

Bourdieu, in the book of "distinction" by developing the ideas of Weber, Simmel and Veblen has conceptualized the lifestyle as a reflection of social status. According to Bourdieu, though apparently living is independently formed, but it has an inseparable link to the class (Bennett, 2007: 101). David Cheney, unlike Bourdieu has given little value to class for shaping the lifestyle. Cheney believes that lifestyles are the creative projects and samples of execution in which actors have the judgment about location. He has argued that lifestyles are the important form of personal empowerment in the late capitalism (Cheney, 1996: 92).

The advocates of postmodern consumption analysis believe that the actors have arbitrarily and freely chosen the consumption patterns. However, this statement refers to the pattern of cultural consumption because the material is subject to the material ability of individuals. Of course, in the field of material consumption the actors are known as the people who act and move within the financial ability knowingly (Fazeli, 2003: 52). Postmodern analysis of consumption is referred to float the identities and consumption patterns. The group claims that the boundary between high culture and the common culture is destroyed and knows the game of identity as a main stimulant in the today world (Dunn, 2006: 151). In the field of cultural consumption, post-modern thinkers have believed that other people are neither interested in high culture nor popular culture. In post modernity, people move easily between the two cultures and combine both of them (Gibbons and Reimer, 2002: 123). Some believe that post modernity means accepting personal responsibility in the area of life because of losing the importance of the life guide principles (Cockerham, 1997: 332).

The postmodern theorist, Jean Baudrillard, has an active understanding of the consumer. The

audience is not a passive consumer of advertising. Consumers cooperate through consuming as an involved member of the community (Cockerham, 1997: 255). DiMaggio also believes that the most important transformations in social structures is the emergence of national elite class that is being promoted and educated and know the taste and style of cultural goods "symbols and signs of identity". Judith Blau is also a thinker and fellow of DiMaggio and believes the principle that social stratification has lost its classical relation with cultural consumption in modern society. He believes that other class divisions are popular between high and common culture that is now no longer any basis. Blau while confirming the commercialization and market growth into structural deterioration acknowledged that popular culture and high culture in its institutional forms are dominated by social and economic conditions more or less the same (Dunn, 2006: 274). Another reading of consumption patterns in the postmodern era was beginning with the work of Richard Peterson (Peterson, 1983: 1990). His researches in the field of cultural goods and consumption have been challenged to past classic theory based on class distinction principle considered by the Bourdieu and opened new horizons leading researchers in the field of cultural goods and cultural consumption by the notion of hybridity in cultural consumption and prove the approach in his empirical research. Peterson theory rejected that there is a close relationship between the consumption of cultural goods and social class (Battani & Hall, 2000). He believes that the tastes of upper classes called Omnivores and in lower class is Univores (Fazeli, 2005: 35). He believes that in the new era the consumer model is spread that other members of the upper classes are not limited to a certain consumption pattern. He called the new consumption patterns, "Omnivore". In such new consumption patterns, the upper classes of all types of arts and culture are used and are apathetic to cultural genres. Aesthetic considerations are defined based on defined criteria and undertaking to conduct individual's life and interests' judgments (Fazeli, 2003: 53). He decided that today a life is emerged by cultural style eclectically in which classes 'members use high culture and cultural and popular cultural goods and indeed elitism is eliminated in cultural consumption and hierarchy among the arts has been altered. Peterson, of course, considered one of the strong reasons for this issue to be unusual social mobility of new world where people from lower social class enjoy and find more social levels (Peterson, 1983: 425). Ericsson as a post modern theorist considered just other cultural resources related to the familiarity with a variety of cultural genres. He argues that cultural inequality is a hierarchy of tastes and preferences and is associated with the hierarchy of knowledge. Family origin, education, past class position and individual class has a variety of different genres (Erickson, 1996: 223). Ericsson believes that the modern and complex societies are including several major forms of inequality, including gender, ethnicity and class. Any form in a set of social borders and networks is consistent and supports a different set of social continuity and cultural differences (Erickson, 1996: 224).

Social capital is referred to as connections and communication among members of a network with the creation of norms and mutual trust to facilitate the actions and due energy required to achieve members' goals (Abdullahi and Mousavi, 2007: 190).

The important function of the mass media is to create the social cohesion. Social cohesion's source is the passion, commitment and general social trust and social capital nationals

(Chalabi, 1996: 101).

Mc Quail Believes that finding the insight about the circumstances of others, social empathy, the substantiation with others and gaining a sense of belonging, finding a basis for dialogue, social interaction, filling a place of a real follower in life , contributing to the implementation of social roles and empowering the individual to bond with family, friends and the community are among the services the media present and they can offer and the strengthen social cohesion (McQuail, 2003: 112).

Therefore, by reducing social isolation and strengthening media sensation with the members of community is creating a sense of belonging, so the society identity is at the top of other identities and it is strengthened as a result of general undertaking seeking to increase social capital in the community (Chalabi, 1996:140).

According to some scholars, including Inkeles (1969), modern and non-traditional life human who lives in the society is rapidly changing and cannot be indifferent to what is going on around them and loves the circumstances in civil society in which can be effective. The media including the press with their information and interpretation can be the nobility and monitor the plenty of resources to help our environment and people's participation and influence on the environment. Education in this regard can be effective for people with higher education who can be further exploited of the media as well as higher education, mobility and social capital increases (Weeks, 1999: 368-374). With larger, more complicated and expanded communities and getting variable roles, function of personal and face-to-face relationships and trust become less and the importance of what the capitalism thinkers called social capital, public trust or generalized (it means trust to the people like women, youth, etc.) and "institutional trust" (i.e. trust to organizations and institutions such as the police, education organization, etc.) gets more important (Giddens, 2005; Coleman, 1998). In such societies, various events, acquiring the awareness of changes in personal information is almost impossible and people can interact with the media via the knowledge they obtained. Media with providing such information has affected on the understanding of the people and institutions and therefore might have influence to form individuals' social capitals.

In the second period of media, namely the era of the Internet, E-mail and satellite channels, social capital is suffered a fundamental change. Media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Kind LED moved the consumers to the producers who make their work freely available to all (Majedi & Lahsaieizadeh, 2006: 92).

Bourdieu considered the social capitals to be a tool to achieve personal goals and interests that enable social actors directly to achieve economic resources as well as through a contact with intellectuals and professionals increase their cultural capital. In addition, access to opportunities, information and social status for the increase indicated the (Sharepour and Hosseini Rad, 2008: 139). Bourdieu believes that the mass media from the perspective of improving the environment are effective to provide the conditions and space for the actor to select logically. Logical selection or rational choice in public space of actors have doubled important and strengthened the trust between the person and the increasing general contribution (Bourdieu, 2001).

The concept of social capital for Coleman is a means to explain how the people collaborate and cooperate with each other. He believes that social capital is one of the tools that can help people to get the benefits. Coleman divided the capitals into three categories, human, physical and social divisions. In his view, social capital is an outcome of relationships between individuals, groups and communities that create the trust. The relationship and trust help the collective action to achieve collective goals. Social capital tries to transmit resources and energy from person to society and from micro level to macro, followed by the realization of collective goals and objectivity throughout (Coleman, 1998: 467). Coleman has studied the trust in two different social systems. The first system is a simple social system in which each actor as a confider helps activity of a common interest and believes that others will do so. The second is the more complicated social system in which in addition to confide, trusted person is a third actor who is in the process of social trust to play a consultative role and this second role of mass media is as a trusted medium in modern society (Javaheri and Balakhani, 2006).

In his view, the mass media defines particularly the role of self-definition as an information source and trust medium that acknowledges judgment of people by providing critical reports of community and cut the trust in formal and informal institutions (Coleman, 1998: 291-294).

Robert Putnam in his book entitled "Democracy and civil traditions" discussed about the social trust as a Social capital. He believes that the most common form of social capital is confidence that is recognized by "moral resources" which their storage increases rather than decreases during usage and in the event of non-use they decrease. According to him, the more trustful two persons to each other, the mutual trust is increasing (Putnam, 2001: 290).

Trust facilitates the cooperation between people and their collaboration acknowledges the confidence. Trust needs to predict the behavior of an independent actor. In a society based on sincere trust, it is always predicted that the people are depend on the close familiarities, but the larger society needs a non-personal trust (Putnam, 2001: 290).

He has explained the decline in social trust among the people of the United States and has argued that it is rooted of the decline of social trust primarily to changes in lifestyle. His analysis of lifestyle has focused on four types of changes: 1. changes related to the pressures of time and money 2- changes related to increase labor force's participation among women 3- changes related to marginalization and 4-growth of car culture and the impact of technology and mass media. (Welch & ET al.2005: 459) He believes that one of the factors affecting on reducing the social trust is use of mass media. Putnam claims that the media including TV presents a violent image of the world around us and thus leads to insecurity that its result is a lower rank in social capital.(Uslaner, 1998:441, Putnam, 1999:78) For Putnam, samples such as reducing social and voluntary work to serve the needs of human due to excessive concerns of people to television programs, particularly radio and the Internet (Putnam, 1995: 74).

Putnam has taken into account mass media as one of the manifestations of postmodern and a major cause of the decline of active citizen's spirit and weakening social capital in US (Field, 2007).

Putnam has argued that the technology and the mass media apply devastating effects on

confidence. Also the effect of television stations has widened in rural and urban areas, a new form of entertainment has emerged which lead to a decrease face-to-face communication. For some people television indicated the increasing time of entertaining and has almost become a substitute for face-to-face interaction (Welch & ET al.2005: 460)

Generally, in Putnam’s view many facts indicate that knowing a variety of communication technologies leads to make the privatization of leisure time and thus prevent the people from participating in various community and civic activities and prevent the formation of social capital (Putnam, 1995: 74).

Based on the concepts and theoretical framework of the study, the following assumptions have been stated:

4. Hypotheses

1. There is a relationship between socio-economic status and lifestyle affected by the virtual space.
2. Lifestyle influenced by the virtual space is different based on grounding factors (gender, age, education, marital status and style of living).
3. There is a direct relationship between the lifestyle influenced by cyberspace and social capital in the real world.
4. There is a direct relationship between the lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace and social capital in the virtual world.

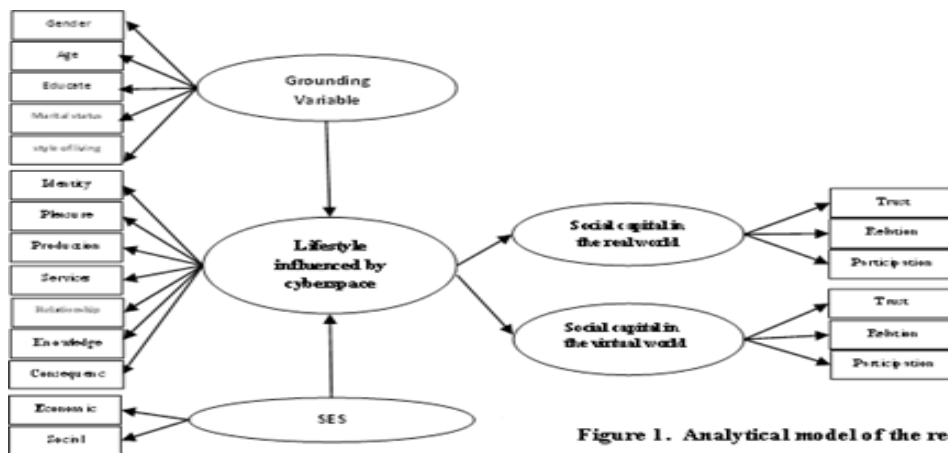


Figure 1. Analytical model of the research

5. Definition of the key concepts

Cyberspace: The meaning of cyberspace is a set of internal communications of humans via computer and communications issues regardless the physical geography (Hatef, 2009). Cyber space is a space-based metaphor to describe non-physical areas including computer systems and communication infrastructure. In cyber space we cannot smell or heard (by common

senses), but the area also has its own elements and objects: files and electronic letters, photos and so on. Unlike a real space, surfing in this environment without any physical movement is just moving by the mouse or pressing a key on the keyboard (Gharavi and Mohammadi, 2011: 76).

Lifestyle: the behaviors associated with dignity stratification are called “lifestyle”. The lifestyle is not just what a person has, but how they are represented by the individuals. Lifestyle also includes consumption patterns and power that are obtained from this area. Taste, etiquette and fashion are the symptoms of having a place in the social ladder related to the lifestyle (Leslie & Others, 1994: 13).

Lifestyle affected by cyberspace²: cyberspace is an effect on taste of people, their attitude, values and consumption as a secondary lifestyle to go along with their real-world lifestyle.

Social capital: social capital in the view of Putnam is a set of concepts such as trust, norms and networks that results in better communication and participation in the community and will ensure their mutual benefit (Putnam, 2001: 285).

Relation: a set of complicated relationship that exists among the members of a group of people to achieve personal interests (as private goods) and social benefits (public goods).

Trust: The trust in the common sense is honesty, integrity and fairness of a person, group or whole community (Safdari, 1995: 77).

Participation: a kind of purposeful action in the process of interaction between the actor and his social environment have been defined and predetermined in order to achieve certain objectives. The process by which people both consciously and voluntarily and some with specific goals in mind contribute to the social resources (Ghaffari, 1992: 42).

Socio-economic status: it is a mental construct that evaluates the use of common standards and social values in society. Age, sex, socio-professional status of the environment is defining the different bases. The characteristics of it are the nature and volume of revenue (Biro, 1991: 381).

6. Methodology

The theoretical framework was conducted through a documentary method and answering the questionnaire items in the form of a survey method. This study has a practical nature and extent perspective. Individual and micro analysis and data analysis were performed using SPSS and Amos Software. The population was 15 to 34 year old citizens in Isfahan based on Census 2014 and the total population was 727,555. The sampling is a stratified sampling method distributed in 15 districts of the city based on age and sex.

Population and Sampling Method: The population of the study was consisted of young citizens from Isfahan aged 15-34 years. The sample size was calculated based on the indices $t=1.96$, $P=0.05$ and $q=0.5$ using Cochran's Formula. The sampling was carried out by gender

² In PhD Thesis of Zahra Taheri entitled "Explanation and typology of lifestyle affected by the virtual space among 15-34 year old young people in Isfahan", lifestyle's concept affected by cyberspace and its constituent components is obtained according to the method of grounded theory and Strauss and Corbin paradigm pattern. In Cronbach's alpha table this scale is described and defined.

and addressed using quota sampling. The distribution of the population was remodeled in a smaller size based on the sample size. Then the total number of individuals in any population unit was divided by the total population. The obtained value was multiplied by the sample size in order to allocate a certain number to every population unit. Eventually, a number of 361 questionnaires were administered to the participants.

Data collection was performed by the questionnaire that is then necessary to determine the variables in the form of a questionnaire and their validity and reliability were confirmed and then delivered to the respondents. Data analysis was performed using SPSS Software.

TABLE 1: OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES AND A CRONBACH'S ALPHA VALUE

Variable	Dimension	Item	N	$\bar{\alpha}$
Lifestyle influenced by cyberspace	Identity	(Realistic): Use of real identity in the username (ID) and personal email, sharing photos and true profile of person; (Unrealistic) attracting others, testing relatives, entertainment, comforting, mistrust	7	0.78
	Pleasure	(Charging excitement); online games, palliative, compensation of failure and frustration, happy mood (Leisure time): surfing, cost less than the real world, physical security, attractiveness and diversity; (Satisfying sexual needs): easy access, the need to replace the real world, anonymity, finding a partner and communicating in the real world	12	0.90
	Content Production	(Formal) involving in the production and dissemination of information , news, photos, videos, stories, writing comments on national and international websites and resources, writing and publishing articles, books and academic texts in official websites; (Informal) informal activities in weblogs, sharing news, photos, videos, stories and so on in the internet and mobile's social networks	4	0.77
	Services	(Economic) selling cellphone charge and the internet goods, economic affairs, knowledge of prices (Social): Improving the quality of life, eliminating waste time, reducing the cost of transportation, quick and easy access without the constraints of time and space, and storage access with full details	8	0.81
	Relation	(Stable) scientific communication, education, employment, access and keep track of exhibitions, conferences, etc., communicating with friends and close acquaintances, finding new friends and continuing this relationship in the real world (Unstable) relationship with the opposite sex, dating in social networks, communicating in chat rooms and so on, emotional connection without external relationship	7	0.71
	Knowledge	(Academic) visiting the website to handle and promote educational and career background (Favorites) for the favorite websites and download them (Public) acquiring information relating to everyday life, health and so on (Restricted): information and knowledge in the society are prohibited, restricted or censored	4	0.78

	Consequences	(Material and non-material sloth): loss and delay in daily life and scientific affairs, education and employment, lower levels of study, the level of information and without citing the authentic source (Physical and psychological damage), physical damage, passivity, difficulty in sleeping, feelings of dependency, depression and anxiety (Anomie) being manipulated, cheated, fraud, cooling intimate communication, questioning the unusual demands, diversity (Secularization): Accepting open sexual relationship , sloth and neglecting in religious duties, (Tolerance): ease of communicating and accepting differences, fanatical looking at the cultures and religions meet, opening up your own visibility	19	0.91
Social capital in real world	Trust	Confidence in the deal with people and aliens, financial assistance to relatives, trust in political and social institutions	4	0.87
	Relation	Movement, borrowing money or a means of home, emotional and intellectual support, giving the children or home when to travel and to relatives and neighbors Helping people in critical situations, attending the relatives and neighbors , participate in the march-on, elections, etc., the company of relatives and neighbors in respondents' party	4	0.82
	Participation	Trust and lending money to virtual friends, confidence in the honesty of advisers the internet goods, the internet purchases	4	0.85
Social capital in virtual world	Trust	Intimate relationship, emotional support, financial and intellectual help of virtual friends	4	0.81
	Relation	(Social) respondent education, parent education	4	0.84
	Participation	(Economic) value of housing, car value, income, value, place of residence, employment status, economic class mentally responsive view	4	0.84
Socio-economic base		(Social) responsibility of education, parents' education	-	-
		(Economic) value of housing, car value, income, value, place of residence, employment status, economic class mentally in a responsive view	-	-

7. Results

Descriptive Statistics

Distribution of respondents was based on gender; among the total sample, 50.4 are male and 49.6 female.

In terms of age group, 18.3% was related to 15-19 age group, 26.6% to 20-24, 29.4% to 25-29 and 25.8% to 30-34.

In terms of location, among the total sample, 3.9 subjects were in District (1), 3.9 in (2), 4.4 (3), 6.6 in (4), 8.9 in (5), 6.1 in (6) 6.1 in (7), 13.0 people living in the area (8) 4.7 (9) 11.4 in (10), 3.9 in (11), 6.9 in (12), 6.9 in (13), 8.9 in (14) and 4.4 in (15).

In terms of marital status, from all samples, 50.4 subjects were single, 38.0 married and 7.8 cases without the spouse (due to divorce or death of a spouse) and 3.6 ones were de facto

partner.

In terms of literacy, 1.7 ones had primary school, 8.9 high school 1, 25.2 diploma, 23.0 associate degree, 29.4 B.A. degree, 10.8 M.A degree, 0.6 general PhD and 0.6 had scholarly PhD degree.

In terms of style of living, 60.9 have lived with family, 11.1 students, 2.5 soldiers, 6.1 with friends and colleagues and 9.4 were lonely and independent.

In terms of socio-economic status, the total sample was consisted of 7.5 people in the lower class, 20.2 in the middle to lower class, 2.4 in the middle class, 23.8 middle to upper class and 6.1 are in upper class (It should be noted that the variable is a combination of a few items, the education level of the respondent, their parents' educational level, region of residence, the house value, the car's price, the monthly cost of family and job of household head).

TABLE 2: MEAN SCORES OF LIFESTYLE INFLUENCED BY CYBERSPACE AND ITS DIMENSIONS

	Identity	Pleasure	Content Production	Services	Relation	Knowledge	Consequences	LSICS ³
Mean	3.14	2.92	2.49	3.759	3.71	3.75	4.01	3.40

Table (2) indicates mean scores of lifestyle affected by the cyberspace and its dimensions. The highest mean score of 4.01 is related to the consequences aspect and the lowest mean score 2.49 is related to content production. This means that among most of the youth in Isfahan the highest impact of cyber space has been in the consequences of their lifestyle and the lowest result has been in the content production in the space.

TABLE 3: MEAN SCORES OF REAL AND VIRTUAL SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THEIR DIMENSIONS

	Trust	Relation	Participation	SC ⁴ in real world	Trust	Relation	Participation	SC in virtual world
Mean	3.68	3.67	3.55	3.64	3.22	3.44	3.11	3.26

Table (3) indicates mean scores of social capital variables in the real and the virtual world and its dimensions. The comparison of two mean scores of social capital in the real and the virtual world makes clear that social capital's mean in the real world is higher than the virtual world (3.64 > 3.26).

The mean dimensions of social capital in the real world in order from highest to lowest is Trust white (Mean = 3.68), Relation white (Mean = 3.67), Participation white (Mean = 3.55). Furthermore, the mean dimensions of social capital in the virtual world in order from the highest to lowest is Relation white (Mean = 3.44), Trust white (Mean = 3.22), Participation white (Mean = 3.11).

³Lifestyle impacted by cyberspace

⁴Social capital

8. Testing Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Lifestyle affected by the cyberspace is different based on the socio-economic base.

TABLE 4: ANOVA'S DESCRIPTIVE & ANOVA'S TEST (SES AND LSICS⁵)

SES	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Lower	27	3.62	.40	.08	3.46	3.78
Lower-Middle	73	3.51	.39	.05	3.42	3.60
Middle	153	3.51	.38	.03	3.44	3.56
Middle-Upper	86	3.41	.40	.04	3.32	3.50
Upper	22	3.24	.34	.07	3.09	3.40
Total	361	3.48	.39	.02	3.43	3.51
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	2.38	4	.60	4.05	.003	

The results of ANOVA's Test (Table4) represents the difference of means between the lifestyle influenced by the virtual space according to the socio-economic base (Sig=.003&F=4.05) as well as the mean scores (Lower white Maximum=3.62& Upper white Minimum=3.24) among socio-economic classes and its high impact in lower social groups suggest that despite the negative comments about the impact of cyberspace on the lifestyle of individuals, utilization of the space by lower classes and its reflection in their lifestyle indicates that the cyberspace is a good alternative for those who have real world constraints and access to the facilities is expensive for them. Also they have been able to take advantage of this space and exploited it (mean scores in order from the highest to lowest: lower, lower to middle, middle, middle to upper and upper class).

Hypothesis 2: Lifestyle influenced by the virtual space is the different based on grounding factors (gender, age, educational level, marital status and lifestyle).

TABLE 5: GROUP STATISTICS & INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST (GENDER AND LSICS)

Gender	N	Mean		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	182	3.50	Equal variances assumed	.725	359	.469
Female	179	3.46		Equal variances not assumed	.724	356.43

1-Gender: The results of Independent Samples Test (Table5) indicates no difference of means between the lifestyle affected by the virtual space and gender, (Sig=.469& t=.72) also the mean score between the two groups (Male=3.50& Female=3.46) clearly confirms it. Although the difference in males' score is slightly more than women, it can be concluded that the impact of lifestyle in the city between men and women affected by the virtual space is relatively the same.

⁵ Lifestyle Influenced by Cyberspace

TABLE 6: ANOVA'S TEST (GROUNDING VARIABLE AND LSICS)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	6.70	3	2.23	16.60	.000
Education	13.93	7	1.99	17.22	.000
Marital status	1.70	3	.56	3.80	.010
Style of living	13.93	7	1.99	17.23	.000

2- Age: The results of ANOVA's Test (Tables6&7) represents the difference of means in the lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace and the age(Sig=.000 & F=16.60) as well as the mean scores (15-19 white Maximum=3.72 & 30-34 white Minimum=3.34) highlights that those with lower age groups have been mostly affected by the virtual space and those who are older have been less affected. Also, in order the higher to lower age group 20-24 years 3.52 and then 25-29 years, 3.40 take impact of this space. This result suggests the hypothesis that the younger the age group of people is, the higher their influence of technology and it leads to exploit it.

3. Education: The results of ANOVA's Test (Tables6&7) represents the difference of means in the lifestyle affected by the virtual space in terms of education (Sig=.000 & F=17.22), as well as the mean scores (High school white Maximum=3.71&Scholarly Ph.D. white Minimum=2.70) state that the virtual space is able to compensate real world limitations for people who are not mostly affected by higher education. (Mean scores in order from the highest to the lowest: High school 1,Diploma,Primary school, Associate Degree, B.S. Degree, M.A. Degree, General Ph.D and Scholarly Ph.D).

4. Marital status: The results of ANOVA's Test (Tables6&7) represents the difference of means in the lifestyle influenced by the virtual space based on marital status (Sig=.010& F=3.80), as well as mean scores (Single white Maximum=3.54&Candidate white Minimum=3.33) indicate that the most effective group in the space was single group and it has been driven that the loneliness and limitations of the real world to those who do not connect for every reason to others emotionally, virtual world has the greatest impact in the light of their lives and their pleasure in this space (from the highest to lowest means score in order: single, no spouse, married and candidate).

5. Style of living: ANOVA's Test Results of Analysis of Variance (Tables6&7) represents the difference of means in the lifestyle affected by the virtual space based on style of living (Sig=.000 & F=17.23), as well as the mean scores (Soldier white Maximum=3.56&Independent and lonely white Minimum=3.23) indicate that the soldiers because of their obligations to the current situation and being far away the family and the real world equipment follow their need in the virtual world. The high score for those who with family together is related to this issue that the majority of single people due to lifestyle factors, emotional and communication needs are attracted to this space. Previous hypothesis is also consistent with the hypothesis. (Mean scores in order from the highest to the lowest: soldiers, those with family, students and with friends, and independent and lonely).

TABLE 7: ANOVA'S DESCRIPTIVE (GROUNDING VARIABLE AND LSICS)

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Age	15-19	66	3.72	.40	.05	3.62	3.82
	20-24	96	3.52	.38	.04	3.45	3.60
	25-29	106	3.40	.33	.03	3.33	3.46
	30-34	93	3.33	.36	.04	3.261	3.41
	Total	361	3.47	.39	.02	3.44	3.52
Education	Primary school	6	3.65	.30	.12	3.33	3.97
	High school	32	3.70	.30	.05	3.60	3.81
	Diploma	91	3.67	.38	.04	3.60	3.75
	Associate Degree	83	3.54	.39	.04	3.45	3.62
	B.S. Degree	106	3.33	.31	.03	3.26	3.39
	M.A. Degree	39	3.13	.22	.03	3.06	3.20
	General Ph.D.	2	3.19	.07	.05	2.49	3.89
	Scholarly Ph.D.	2	2.70	.02	.02	2.44	2.96
Total	361	3.47	.39	.02	3.44	3.51	
Marital status	Single	182	3.54	.41	.03	3.48	3.60
	Married	137	3.40	.35	.03	3.34	3.46
	No spouse	28	3.50	.35	.06	3.36	3.63
	Candidate	13	3.33	.36	.09	3.11	3.55
	Total	360	3.48	.39	.02	3.44	3.51
Style of living	With family	220	3.54	.40	.02	3.48	3.59
	Student	40	3.38	.44	.07	3.24	3.52
	Soldier	9	3.56	.25	.08	3.36	3.75
	With friends	22	3.39	.26	.05	3.27	3.50
	Independent and lonely	70	3.35	.34	.04	3.27	3.44
	Total	361	3.47	.39	.02	3.44	3.51

Hypothesis 3: There is a direct relationship between the lifestyle affected by cyberspace and social capital in the real world.

		SC in real world	Trust	Relation	Participation
LSICS	Pearson Correlation	.155**	.157**	.169**	.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.003	.001	.342
	N	361	361	361	361

The Pearson correlation test's results (Table 8) for the lifestyle affected by the virtual space and social capital in the real world ($r=.155$ & $\text{sig}=.003$) indicate that there is a relationship a meaningful and direct between these variables. This means that those who are influenced by cyberspace have more social capital in relation to others in the real world and vice versa. (In order to better explanation of the correlation between the lifestyle influenced by the virtual space with dimensions of social capital (trust, participation and relation) in a separate study each of them is studied and it is demonstrated that this relationship existed for trust and

relation, but not for the participation).

- **Hypothesis 4:** There is a direct relationship between the lifestyle affected by the cyberspace and social capital in the virtual world.

TABLE 9: PEARSON CORRELATION TEST BETWEEN THE LIFESTYLE AFFECTED BY CYBERSPACE AND THE SOCIAL CAPITAL IN VIRTUAL WORLD

		SC in cyberspace	Trust	Relation	Participation
LSICS	Pearson Correlation	-.022	.011	.028	-.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.674	.835	.599	.120
	N	361	361	361	361

The Pearson correlation test (Table 9), between the lifestyle affected by virtual world and social capital in cyberspace ($r=-.02$ & $\text{sig}=.67$), indicates there is no a significant and direct correlation between these two variables. It means that the lifestyle of those who have been affected more or less by the virtual space does not lead more or less social capital in cyberspace (in order to better explanation of the correlation between the lifestyle influenced by the virtual world to the dimensions of social capital (trust, participation and relation) separate studies show that this relationship has not been established in any dimensions).

- **Structural Equation Modeling**

Structural equation modeling was used to test the first research hypothesis in Amos Software. Structural equation modeling has higher methodological exactitude comparing with conventional statistical tests of data analysis such as Pearson or Spearman correlation coefficients, linear regression, path analysis, etc. because it deals with the latent variables (Lifestyle Influenced by Cyberspace, social capital and ses) as the constructs whose measurement entails errors. In other words, it includes the measurement errors of the variables in calculating the effect of the independent on the dependent variable (Ghasemi, 2010).

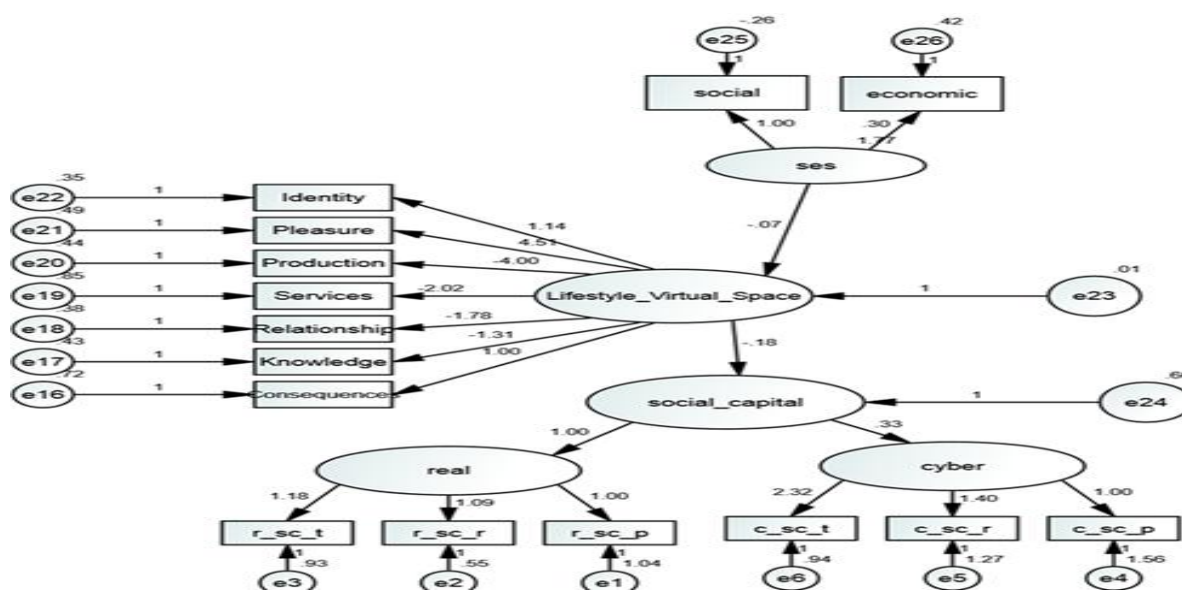


Figure 1: Standardized Coefficients of Structural Equation Modeling

In figure 1, an experimental model of research was presented in the form of structural equation model. According to the criteria coefficients of the goodness and model fitting it should be noted that the research model has a fairly acceptable fit. Also the data collected from the theoretical framework of the research has being supported.

TABLE 10: CRITERIA FOR MODEL FIT AND INTERPRETATION AN ACCEPTABLE FIT

Fitting Model Indexes	Acceptable level	Interpretation	Output	Acceptance level
Chi-square (CMIN)	chi-square in table	Data obtained by the chi-square table was compared for a certain degree of freedom.	349.540	Acceptable
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	(Not fitted) to 1 (perfect fit)	The amount reflects a good fitness is close to 0.95.	.879	Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	(Not fitted) to 1 (perfect fit)	The amount reflects a good fitness close to 0.95.	.854	Acceptable
The root mean square error of estimate (RMSEA)	Less than 05/0	Less than 0.05 shows a good fit.	.091	Acceptable
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	(Not fitted) to 1 (perfect fit)	The amount reflects a good fitness close to 0.95.	.698	Somewhat acceptable
Chi-square ratio (CMIN / DF)	1 to 5	Less than 1 indicates poor fit and the more than 5 reflects the need for improvement.	3.972	Acceptable
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)		0.50 or 0.60 above	.581	Acceptable
Parsimony comparative fit index (PCFI)		0.50/0 or 0.60 above	.626	Acceptable

9. Discussion and Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to explore the lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace and its impact on social capital among the youth in Esfahan. In this study, according to the background conducted researches, discussions and theories proposed, assumptions are extracted and analyzed, and finally an experimental model of research was presented in the form of a Structural Equation Model (SEM) and Amos Software.

Advocates of the role of values in shaping the lifestyle believe that current values of individuals are the determiners of their lifestyle. On the other hand, some lifestyle developments are resulting from the current values in society and people's efforts to adapt the new value system. It can be said that the new technology has brought with new values and a new lifestyle. (Wang & Others; 2012, Leung; 1998)

Also cultural consumption as the main characteristic of the lifestyle and not material consumption that is subject to financial conditions of people as well as an identity game as a major driver of consumption (Dunn, 2006: 151) and mixing both public and high cultures (Gabbiness and Reimer, 2002: 123) in postmodern analyses have suggested the creation of immaterial lifestyle that is slowly revealed itself in light of the real world. The results

obtained in the first debate, namely the factors affecting the formation of lifestyle affected by cyberspace, socio-economic impact of the base variables are approved by the impact of such factors on lifestyle. As Veblen states, "updating" is a measure of the gentry to reproduce its dominant position (Ruling, 1998). But the result of intra-group differences in means scores between socio-economic classes and the more influence of lower classes from the cyberspace than the higher classes indicates that despite the real world limitations to indicate and differentiate the different lifestyle created, cyberspace has been able to compete with the real world of individuation and updating does not only underline the upper classes, but also other classes and even the lower classes also take this opportunity to introduce and pay their differences. The difference in lifestyle and consumption, according to Simmel on the construction of identities (Bennett, 2007: 99) is a way to "self-assertion" and preserve the authority of an individual (Bocok, 2002: 126).

Choice of lifestyle in Weber's view and the diversity of opportunities and selections of life as a result of the modern world from the perspective of Giddens as well as David Cheney have indicated that the lifestyles are an important form of personal empowerment in context of latest capitalism (Cheney, 1996: 92). The results of this study are consistent to the fact that because the cyberspace helps to deconstruct the limitations and the more choices for people deprived of social privileges (literacy, having a partner, the pleasure of being together with family members). And in the second discussion of the paper, strengthening and developing social capital as a result of lifestyle influenced by the cyberspace, the results of this study indicated a significant positive correlation between the lifestyle influence by virtual space and social capital in the real world.

The interesting point of results is that when social capitals in the real world (trust, communication and cooperation) and lifestyle variables were evaluated in the virtual space, a positive relationship between the two dimensions of social capital variables (trust and communication) is confirmed (according to Bourdieu and Coleman's views, the personal contact between individuals strengthen the trust between them), but lack of relationship between social capital and lifestyle affected by the cyberspace, besides the idea that Putnam believes a variety of communication technologies particularly the Internet leads to deter people from participating in various community and civic activities and prevent the formation of social capitals leads to the confirmed negative opinion (Putnam, 1995: 74).

Regarding the result of lack of the relationship between variables of lifestyle affected by the cyberspace and social capital in the virtual world, it should be stated that given selected population, transforming characteristics of Iran and selection of Isfahan from traditional, religious and conservative cities in Iran, this issue would not be very unlikely. However, it is possible that the relationship between other areas may lead to a positive and constructive relationship. In the words of Anthony Giddens, one of the characteristics of modern societies is disembodiment, i.e. social relations are not dependent on the setting and the local context, as they can interact in a wide range of time-space (Giddens, 2005: 36-26). The complexities of modern society, however, lead to a threat to take the risk from other communities. But it is possible to provide them with the opportunities in cities and other countries that are in favor of stronger bonds. With the development of social networks in real and virtual space, not only

personal benefits are provided for those who are involved in these networks, but there is also more communication to provide a pleasant atmosphere for living and improved quality of life (Bocok, 2002: 41; Abdullahi and Mousavi, 2006: 77). If this can be considered and strengthened in both real and the virtual worlds, accessibility to such opportunities and advantages in society will not be impossible.

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