



RESEARCH PAPER

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Assessing the factors affecting lifestyle of rural women in Iran: A case study in fahimiyan village- Mamasani area

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Abstract

Women's behavior and how they communicate with each other is certain patterns of culture and identity for the purpose of reflecting a particular style of women's identity. Therefore, patterned behaviors introduce lifestyle as a critical issue. This study aims to investigate the factors affecting the lifestyle of rural women in Mamasani region from the function of Iran. Given that, due to the Bourdieu's theory, lifestyle is conceptualized as an index which is based on the consumption variables including (music, book and movie consumption, ways of leisure, food habits and clothing consumption), the main hypothesis is that factors such as norms of gender, religion, media development, age, education and socio-economic status influence lifestyle of studied women. The research method is descriptive, based on cluster-sampling method, and the population includes all women from 15 to 65 years old who are living in Fahimiyan village in the Fars province, among them 390 subjects were selected based on Cochran formula. With codification of a researcher-made questionnaire and its distribution among the intended statistical population and analyzing them by multivariate regression analysis test, the results show that the most factors which affect women's lifestyle is age and then their gender norms and beliefs.

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Introduction

Oxford Dictionary defines lifestyle as various ways of life of an individual or a group (Oxford Dictionary, 1990) but it refers to "life style or way of living that reflects the attitudes and values of an individual or a group. Habits, attitudes, tastes, moral standards, the economic level make the lifestyle of the person or group (Random House Dictionary, 1987). Lifestyle is the way that people have chosen during the life and in fact is the same part of life that practically realized and its foundation is laid in family and is influenced by race, culture, values, beliefs, interests and choices of individuals. In the traditional context, life of women had certain limitations.

They attended in different places and women have always known as the second sex. But, social changes are created significant developments particularly in their social roles that lead to the development of values and norms of the family and women's lives so that different traditional types of modern and postmodern are seen among Iranian families. It seems that a strong relationship exists between economic and social status of women and their lifestyle. Their roles in everyday life and how to implement these roles indicate their family base and class. In this regard, Giddens believes that it should not be assumed that lifestyle is only related to the more affluent strata or layers of society and poor people are generally deprived of the choice of lifestyle.

In every society, traditional or modern and with any degree of complexity, there are facilities and equipment necessary to differentiate social classes and groups from each other. This distinction leads to the creation of meaning and identities that the members of each community understand it simply and organize their social and human relations by understanding the subjective meaning related to these distinctions. The term modernity has been synonymous with social transformation for centuries, but in the period that Giddens calls it end of modernity, the song and speed of transformation was escalated and the scale of this transformation was

developed and transformative implications of this period were spread to the deepest details of everyday life (Estonse, 2011).

In the current era of consumption, an issue is optional that is arising from attitudes, values and tastes. Consumption is as a symbol that the person is judged by it. Today, people with their consumption choices and practice are distinguished from others and this issue forms their identity. Hence, people try to make distinctions between themselves and others by their consumptions and want to show that they belong to a particular group by their consumption type and lifestyle. Lifestyle are born from the modern world and according to Giddens, how much one's life and belongs to be closer to the modern world, his life style will involve much more with the true core of his personal identity and its re-building (Khademian, 2008). Lifestyle applications often brought it to generalization and considering and it is used for everything and nothing so that sometimes, it is mistakenly equivalent to culture or class (Hamidi *et al.*, 2008).

Women and men attended in different places and women have always known as the second sex. But, social changes are created significant developments particularly in their social roles that lead to the development of values and norms of the family and women's lives so that different traditional types of modern and postmodern are seen among Iranian families. It seems that a strong relationship exists between economic and social status of women and their lifestyle. Their roles in everyday life and how to implement these roles indicate their family base and class. In this regard, Giddens believes that it should not be assumed that lifestyle is only related to the more affluent strata or layers of society and poor people are generally deprived of the choice of lifestyle (Giddens, 2006). Gender beliefs would lead role of women is limited to housework. In other words, home-centered roles of women, wives and mothers and being combined their leisure activities with domestic work due to the lack of a predetermined free

time, lack of leisure, lack of financial independence and living in the family put women in social isolation (Estaji *et al.*, 2006). These factors influence women's choices and lifestyles. Although modern world rescues man from the tradition, also creates constraints for man. People define their identity among their fellowmen to refuge to phenomena such as fashion, style and ways of life in order to distinguish them from others. The role of women in the consumption is important with regard to their maternal role in the family which is one of the main elements of identity and socialization process of children and future generation and influence individual's identity and lifestyle of future generations of society (Ebrahimi *et al.*, 2009). In fact, "woman" from this perspective is a "culture maker" element that transfers values, beliefs and ways of behavior, and other cultural elements from one generation to another.

The study of women's lifestyle reinforces this view that women's behavior and how behaviors associated with each other have specific patterns. Pattern-oriented of behaviors introduces lifestyle an analyzable issue. Globalization processes, expanding media communications and shortening the distance between the center and periphery in the informational dimensions always change and vary the lifestyles among various groups (Fazeli, 2003). Also, lifestyle is a predictable subject because the lifestyle is influenced by the path that the community goes through in the process of moving into the future. This point is simultaneously true about the material and cultural life style. Several factors in shaping lifestyle are considered by researchers and scholars.

Materials and methods

Research Materials

The survey method was used in this study. According to research topic, the unit of observation and data analysis was individual and micro-level analysis. Research population included all women from 15-64 years old that are living in Fahimiyan village. The general formula of Cochran was used to estimate the sample size. Thus, the sample size was 400 subjects.

Results and discussion

According to the requirements of this study, cluster sampling method was used and a researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect data. Reliability of questionnaire was considered by using Cronbach's alpha before its distribution. Its coefficient was equal to 0.83, which is reliable. Data analysis was performed by using descriptive and inferential tests (regression analysis). Measures such as music, book, movie and clothing consumption, ways of leisure and food habits were used to conceptualize lifestyle index. The multidimensional religiosity questionnaire was used for religious variable in this study. In this questionnaire, five dimensions were used to assess the religiosity of individuals which including: belief dimension, ceremonial dimension, emotional dimension, consequential dimension, and intellectual dimension. In this study, seven items were used for actual definition of socio-economic status including accountable job, father's job, mother's job that has been converted to a three-part variable (government, free, unemployed), the education level of the respondent, education level of father, mother's education level, and income of family.

Five hypotheses are proposed to conduct the study which is analyzed respectively.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between age and lifestyle of women.

Table 1 and 2 shows the significance of the regression and linear relationship between the variables. So, when the obtained significant level is less than 0.005, the significant relationship between the two variables is confirmed at confidence level of 0.95 and this level is defined by the amount of obtained F. In this table, the significance level of age variable with lifestyle variable is less than 0.005 that reflects the relationship between these two variables. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed statistically.

Table 1. The statistical analysis summary of the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Multi-correlation coefficient of R	Standard error estimation
Women's age and lifestyle	.082	.088	.297 ^a	.31926

Table 2. The significance level of regression testing for age.

Regression	F	df	Sum of squares	Sig.
Women's age and lifestyle	.324	1	1.040	.004

H₂: There is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and women's lifestyle.

Table 3. The statistical analysis summary of the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Multi-correlation coefficient of R	Standard error estimation
Socio-economic status with women's lifestyle	.568	.571	.756 ^a	.21894

Table 4. The significance level of regression testing for socio-economic status variable.

Regression	F	df	Sum of squares	Sig.
Socio-economic status with women's lifestyle	.324	1	.153	.004

The above table indicates the meaningfulness of the regression and the linear relationship between variables. So, when the significant level is less than 0.005, the significant relationship between the two variables at reliability level of 0.95 is verified and the amount of obtained F defines this level. As can be seen in this test, the significance level is less than 0.005, so the research hypothesis is approved statistically.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between religiosity rate and women's lifestyle.

In this test it is also observed that the significance level is less than 0.005, so the research hypothesis is statistically confirmed and null hypothesis is rejected (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. The statistical analysis summary of the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Multi-correlation coefficient of R	Standard error estimation
Religiosity rate and women's lifestyle	.469	.473	.688 ^a	.24279

Table 6. The significance level of regression testing for religiosity variable.

Regression	F	df	Sum of squares	Sig.
Religiosity rate and women's lifestyle	19.199	1	3.945	.000

H₄: There is a significant relationship between the spread of mass media and lifestyle of women.

By looking at this test, it can be concluded that the significance level is less than 0.005. Therefore, the research hypothesis based on the existence of significant relation between religiosity and women's lifestyle is statistically approved (Tables 7 and 8).

Table 7. The statistical analysis summary of the fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Multi-correlation coefficient of R	Standard error estimation
Development of mass media and lifestyle	.222	.227	.477 ^a	.29390

Table 8. The significance level of regression testing for mass media variable.

Regression	F	df	Sum of squares	Sig.
Development of mass media and lifestyle	24.659	1	8.570	.000

H₅: There is a significant relationship between the gender norms and beliefs and women's lifestyle.

Table 9. The statistical analysis summary of the fifth hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	Multi-correlation coefficient of R	Standard error estimation
Gender norms and beliefs and women's lifestyle	.246	.251	.501 ^a	.28945

Table 10. The significance level of regression testing for gender norms variable.

Regression	F	df	Sum of squares	Sig.
Gender norms and beliefs and women's lifestyle	40.099	1	6.307	.000a

Based on the data obtained from Tables 9 and 10, the significance level is less than 0.005, consequently, research hypothesis with regard to the existence of meaningful relationship between gender norms and beliefs and women's lifestyle is statistically confirmed. Finally, table 11 indicates the main results of the regression. Beta coefficient expresses the relative importance of the variables and great beta demonstrates its importance and role in predicting the dependent variable. Six variables remained in the

final model including the utilization of gender norms with beta amount of 0.220, the spread of mass media with beta amount of 0.079, religiosity with beta amount of 0.067, socio-economic base with beta value of 0.023, education with the beta value of 0.011 and age with beta amount of 0.998. According to this table, it can be concluded that the most effective factor in predicting the lifestyle variable is age and then gender norms with the highest beta value.

Table 11. Regression coefficients of the independent variables on the lifestyle of women.

Independent Variables	T	Standardized coefficients	Non-standardized coefficients		Sig.
		Beta	Standard error	B	
Age	209.622	.998	.005	1.019	.000
Education	-.215	-.011	.040	-.009	.830
Socio-economic base	.467	.023	.045	.021	.641
Religiosity	1.281	.067	.049	.063	.201
Development of mass media	1.477	.079	.045	.067	.140
Gender norms	4.182	.220	.039	.163	.000

Conclusion

In this study, age had the greatest impact on lifestyle variable. If the research scope is reduced to the households' level, it can be demonstrated that age difference among women in family and in other

words, between mothers and daughters influences their lifestyle. Gender norms and beliefs is another effective factor in the selection of women's lifestyle. Family is an integral unit that the gender roles' survival is essential to the functionality and durability

of a normal family. Gender is an important factor in shaping the identity of the person and consequently roles depend on it. Gender norms may be rooted in biology and nature, cultural, social and functional factors. Meanwhile, norms and prevalent idea are important in the construction and reproduction and expectations of gender roles. Families consciously or unconsciously train boys and girls differently and children play different roles according to their gender. This behavior style of parenting and relatives with child are influenced by forms that can be interpreted as gender norms. When women are trained based on gender norms and beliefs, in fact, their choices in life are influenced by these factors. In other words, women's lifestyle gets a normative character to itself and is not freely and selective. Accordingly, it can be said, other effective factors are involved in the formation of preference like gender norms that its effect in women's thoughts, attitudes and practices can be seen clearly in our community.

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