

To study the social factors affecting on young lifestyle (Case study in Talesh town)

By

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Abstract

Rising consumer society by increased material goods on the one hand and democratization of consumption and its generalization on the other hand lead to selective daily life. This reflects the lifestyle of today's consumer society. Lifestyle actually includes attitudes, behaviors, performances, functions, activities, preferences and insights in a wide range. Lifestyles point out the way of living and full reflection of social values, attitudes and activities and are also combination of behavioral patterns and personal behavior habits throughout the life that have created following the socialization process. The method used in this study is a survey and desired data is obtained using a questionnaire among 100 young people aged 29-18 of uptown and down town of Talesh town. The results show that there is a significant relationship between social class, age, gender, income and education and youth lifestyle but there is no significant relationship between marital status and lifestyle.

Keywords: *Lifestyle, consumption society, daily life, consumerism, youth*

1. Introduction

Acting in development path has led to changes quantitatively and qualitatively in different economic, social and cultural levels for developing countries. With Numerous, increasing and exciting achievements of development process for these countries on the one hand and the innate human characteristic as being flexible and adaptable in dealing with societal changes flowing from this process on the other hand, today human is thinking such new forms of life and using abundant facilities such as cars, planes, etc., and cultural implications arising from these developments and their impact on various aspects of their lives. So it was the concept of lifestyle that got consistent against the main principles of the concept of classification meaning production and consumption. In other words, it made the changes of modernity and basic impact of social analysis on the basis of consumption and collective identities of individuals and groups on the basis of its corresponding concept means lifestyle. So people were relatively free from class and job requirements and free to select lifestyle. (Bakak, 2002; 36)

Lifestyle represents the values, norms, expectations, intentions,... and individual. Now, people show their social identities through their lifestyles. So lifestyle is type of giving identity. Lifestyle is the pattern-oriented way of consumption, understanding and valuation of the material and cultural products that makes using status criteria in nameless social status makes possible.

Consumption behavior and normative attitudes to consumption is the foundation of social identity. Today sociology to define normative social identities focuses on consumption rather than production and on the cultural analysis rather than the structural and functional analysis that give more role to functionality and Reflective processes to construct their identities. Therefore, the concept of lifestyle is an alternative and a rival to the concept of social class.

So the modern lifestyle has expressive features through which a person introduces themselves to their surroundings. Understanding of modern lifestyles and contrasting them with earlier social formations

opens. Having regard to the role and importance of lifestyle, it seems essential that in the third millennium it will be examined and factors affecting it will be identified.

Problem Statement

Lifestyle is the result of choices and preferences, and behaviors that an individuals does in the relationship of material and cultural goods. Also the visual signs and symbols of status in life makes lifestyle to be associated with stylometry and aesthetic of consumption, Therefore, consuming goods is eligible for the cultural meaning and dignity particularly for young people and this is because young people as consumers will have the greatest impact of social and cultural change.

In fact, nowadays due to the development of process of modernization, and changing patterns of urbanization and diversity of cultural, economic, and social patterns on lifestyles, people are also experiencing dramatic changes.

Since the decade of 70, different and broad debates about lifestyle as a modern sense have been done. Two elicitations and two types of conceptualization have been yielded from the lifestyle concept: according to the first impression that its history goes back to the 1920s, the lifestyle represents wealth and social position and often is used as an indicator to explain the social class.

According to the second definition, lifestyle is not a way to determine social class, but it is known a new social form that is meaningful only in the context of modernity cultural changes. (Abazari & Chaoshian, 2002:6)

Lifestyle, is partial identity. Thus, identifying people, you should know his lifestyle. On the other hand, people's leisure time is fit to their lifestyle. A person can show their lifestyle and social identities with a particular type of coverage or listening to certain types of music.

Today since people are away from their social identities, the lifestyle can indicate its class. (Chavoshian,2002:8)

Iran cities, because of benefiting from the achievements of modern world technology and communication infrastructure, has been in the course of its cultural-social history experience relatively the large movement of lifestyle, from their traditional lifestyle towards a new life. These movement and change can be due to the entry of higher education and modern facilities and so on.

Consumption patterns, furniture, home decorating, food, clothing, and ... that can be named as a lifestyle have changed dramatically in recent years and urbanization has provided a new kind of lifestyle, leisure and the way of consumption for people.

The question is that what are the factors that influence the youth lifestyle in Talesh town? Can the variables of education, gender and marital status explain youth lifestyle in Talesh town?

The importance of research

Research on lifestyles can place everyday life and patterns in it once again at the center of theorizing. Thus a new way opens to understand how people experience life. Why such an experience is obtained and between the active choice and structural requirements, how is daily life patter made.

Besides, researcher's observations of Talesh town in recent years reflects the fact that lifestyles are changing. In addition to changes in consumption patterns in structures such as customs, beliefs, values and ideals, and normalization, changes generally in lifestyle has occurred.

Research objectives:

According to the above, the main objective of this research is to investigate the social factors that influence the lifestyle of young people in Talesh town. The aim of the present research is to determine the relationship between gender and lifestyle, between education and lifestyle, between marital status and level of lifestyle, between income and lifestyle, between social class and lifestyle.

Theoretical framework

Lifestyle is a pattern-oriented approach of consumption, understanding and valuing of material-cultural products that makes the deployment of identity criteria in the framework of time and space. Lifestyle primarily focuses on symbolic meanings of products that is what lies beyond the reveal Identity of these products, lifestyle is a term that is hardly useful in traditional culture because it is associated with a kind of selection among large number of options available. This approach is a way of understanding the implications of modern lifestyles and its contrast with previous formation and this symbolic meanings are agreement affairs that are constantly being developed. (Gidnez, 2003:120)

Many believe that the book of distinction (Bourdieu, 1984) by Bourdieu is Bible of scholars in this field and most texts dealt with to his opinion. Bourdieu focuses on the analysis of lifestyle choices and to consider important social and structural distinction in the recent decades of modernity increasingly expressed through cultural forms.

All the actions taken on consumption, meaning the extraction and manipulation should display the mastering on communication encrypted and also should be considered as an aesthetic tendency that are the title in high demand imposed by the world of culture (often implicitly) (Bourdieu,2005:8). We can see that the style of using goods especially those goods which are considered privileged form one of the key signs of identity and also ideal weapon in differentiation strategies. (Bourdieu,2005:30).

Bourdieu's second argument of unique Principle provides for critique social differentiation on the preferences and shows that creativity and taste the primarily and before anything is unwillingness and reluctance to adapt others'. Reason for this is that actions and cultural procedures- playing golf or football, visiting museums or car exhibition, listening to jazz or watching comedy serials and something like this- Business and unique – do not take its social significance, and identified ability of making difference and social distance from some of its intrinsic properties, but they acquire the position secret that they have in its goal system and favorable procedures. Hence, revealing social logic of consumption is not practical by making a direct relationship between certain action and procedures, but via the structural correspondence between two sets of relationships means lifestyle and social position occupied by different group.(Mirdamadi, 2004:339)

Cultural- social transformations in the recent decades of modernity are the main theme of Giddens's attention. Like Giddens, Bourdieu deals with the issue of competition between the macro and micro sociology or competition among unique perspective with an emphasis on agency and perspectives that emphasize on the structure. Arrangements in the context of post-traditional turn into a reflected project (2001:32).

Reflection of lifestyles means that each lifestyle naturally has necessarily a specific meaning and thus being uncertainty of the meaning of lifestyle means the negation of the possibility of structural predictors, is not conclusive enough to rule out the possibility of explaining by means of structural predictors, reflectivity points out that the meaning of lifestyle activities basically is not specified with more broad forces but during the process of life practical business of distinct worlds, the meanings of methods of using materials and symbolic materials of mass consumption, transforming to objects and actions get tangible which are metaphor for themselves,, reflectivity refers to the use of data associated to activity conditions as a means to adjust and redefine the meaning and nature of behavior.(Giddens,2001:86)

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Since each operative responding to their needs and express uses things in a particular way by helping facilities and existing ways, he has types of behavior, preferences and specific orientation in life, hence his style is associated with his personality. In defining the lifestyle conceptually, Giddens believes: "lifestyle can be more or less integrated set of functions that a person applies. These actions will not only meet his current needs but his own identity is visualized against others. Lifestyle relatively is an integrated set of all behaviors and activities during daily life of an individual. (Giddens, 1999:120)

Bourdieu shows different lifestyles with the concept of "social space". Social space thus is created to this way that social operative and groups based on the amount and volume of economic capital and cultural capital are common with some people and are in different with some others. (Bourdieu, 2001:33).

Thus, the social space is constructed based on the investment. The higher position financially, they will be in high position in the social space. Bourdieu argues that people who are close in social space have a lot of similarities, even if they have never seen each other. In other words, people who are in the same social space have similar tastes and lifestyles. In fact, for every level of positions, there is a level of lifestyles and tastes created on the effect of appropriate social conditions and by these tastes and their multiplier capacities, an organized set of wealth and characters is created that have a kind of unity within itself. (Bourdieu, 2001:35).

Research hypotheses are:

- Education influences on lifestyle.
- Gender affects lifestyle.
- Marital status affects the lifestyle.

2. Methods

The present research method is in terms of time and in terms of data collection method it is survey and documents research. Statistical population of the present study, is Talesh town's youth and the number of samples is 80 people which is 40 males and 40 females. Sampling method was randomly. The questionnaire is used for data collection.

In this scheme for content reliability, designed items for each of the structures were referred to the experts and their consensus on (the extent of studying conceptual space of assessed structures) were achieved. For data analyzing, SPSS 16 software was used.

Descriptive analysis of the data

In this analyzing, the researcher has investigated demographic data collected from the sample using appropriate descriptive analysis tools.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of respondents in terms of gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>50.0</i>
<i>Female</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>50.0</i>
<i>total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100.0</i>

According to above table and diagram, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 50% of responders were men and 50% of them were female.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of respondents in terms of marital status

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
single	64	64.0
Married	18	18.0
No reply	18	18.0
Total	100	100

According to above table, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 64% of responders were single and 18% of them were married.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondents in terms of age group

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
21-18	46	46.0
25-22	36	36.0
Upper than 2	18	18.0
total	100	100.0

According to above table, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 46% of age group were 18-21 years and 18% of them were from 25 to up.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of respondents in terms of Education

<i>Education</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
diploma	28	28.0
associate	18	18.0
bachelor	45	45.0
master	9	9.0
total	100	100.0

According to above table, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 28% of their degree were diploma and 9% of them have reported Master's degree.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of respondents in terms of employment

<i>Job status</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
Employed	9	9.0
Student	64	64.0
Unemployed looking for work	18	18.0
No reply	9	9.0
Total	100	100.0

According to above table, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 64% were university student and the minimum percent means 9% of them were looking for a job.

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Table 6. Frequency Distribution of respondents in terms of social class

<i>Social class</i>	<i>frequency</i>	<i>percentage</i>
Moderate to high	9	9.0
Average	36	36.0
Moderate downward	37	37.0
low	18	18.0
Total	100	100.0

According to above table, the total of responders to this variable is 100 people. Meanwhile, 37% of them have reported their social class downward-medium and 9% of them have reported upward-medium.

3. Data Analysis

It seems that there is a significant difference between social status and lifestyle.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics about the amount of lifestyle in terms of social class

group	number	average	Standard deviation	Standard deviation
uptown	50	128.1000	30.50410	4.31393
downtown	50	105.9600	34.49221	4.87794

The results of the above table shows that 50 out of the total of 100 responses to the variable "lifestyle" were from uptown and 50 people were women, the average amount of lifestyle in uptown is 128.10 and in the downtown is 105.96, the descriptive results suggest that the average of lifestyle among uptown youth is greater, but to ensure significant difference between these two variables, we should pay attention to the test results.

Table 7: t-test results for comparison of lifestyle in terms of social class

Significance	t	Degree of freedom
0/001	3.40	98

T-test results assuming equal variances of two groups indicated that significance level is $\alpha=0.001$ and T is 3/40. Since the achieved significance level ($\alpha=0.001$) is smaller than our desired significance level of ($\alpha=0.05$), there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is rejected and our main hypothesis is confirmed, then we can conclude that the amount of lifestyle has been more in uptown.

There is a relationship between age and lifestyle.

Table 8: Results of Pearson correlation coefficient on lifestyle and age

Pearson correlation coefficient	(**)406.-
Significance	.002
number	100

The results obtained from correlation coefficient test between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=-0.406$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.002$. Since this significance level is lower than our desired significance level of

$\alpha=0.05$, there is sufficient evidences to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between age and lifestyle that is increasing age, lifestyle decreases.

There is a relationship between gender and lifestyle.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics on the amount of lifestyle in terms of gender

group	number	average	Standard deviation	Standard deviation
Male	50	104.5600	33.02205	4.67002
female	50	129.5000	31.02418	4.38748

The descriptive results of the above table shows that 50 out of the total of 100 responses to the variable "lifestyle" were women and 50 people were men, the average amount of lifestyle among men is 104.56 and among women is 129.50, the descriptive results suggest that the average of lifestyle among women is greater, but to ensure significant difference between these two variables, we should pay attention to the test results.

Table 10: Results of t-test to compare the social lifestyle in terms of gender

significance	t	Degree of freedom
0/0000	3.89	98

T-test results assuming equal variances of two groups indicated that significance level is $\alpha=0.000$ and T is 0.000. Since the achieved significance level ($\alpha=3.89$) is smaller than our desired significance level of ($\alpha=0.05$), there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is rejected and our main hypothesis is confirmed, then we can conclude that the amount of lifestyle has been high among women.

There is a relationship between income and lifestyle.

Table 11: Results of the Pearson correlation coefficient on income and lifestyle.

Pearson correlation coefficient	.639(**)
Significance	.000
number	100

The results obtained from correlation coefficient test between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.639$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.000$. Since this significance level is lower than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, there is sufficient evidences to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between income and lifestyle.

There is a relationship between education and social health.

Table 12. Pearson's test results on education and lifestyle

Education Lifestyle	Total	Master's degree or higher	Bachelor	Associate	Diploma
Low	57	11	31	9	6
	57.0%	61.1%	68.9%	100.0%	21.4%
Average	29	7	7	0	15
	29.0%	38.9%	15.6%	.0%	53.6%
High	14	0	7	0	7
	14.0%	.0%	15.6%	.0%	25.0%
Total	100	18	45	9	28
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Statistical result	Sig=0/0000 r=0/254 n=100				

The results obtained from correlation coefficient test between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.0000$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.254$. Since this significance level is lower than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, there is no sufficient evidence to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between education and lifestyle.

There is a relationship between social class and lifestyle.

Table 13: Results of Pearson correlation coefficient on social class and life-style

Pearson correlation coefficient	(**)317.
Significance	.000
number	100

The results obtained from correlation coefficient test between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.317$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.0000$. Since this significance level is smaller than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, there is sufficient evidence to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between social class and lifestyle.

Is there any relationship between marital status and social?

Table 14: Results of t-test for two independent samples on lifestyle and marital status

Significance level	t	Degree of freedom	Standard error	Standard deviation	average	number	Marital status
0/120	1.57	80	3.75389	30.03113	115.6875	64	single
			5.60961	23.79954	127.7778	18	married

The results obtained from t test of two independent samples between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with a significance level of

$\alpha=0.120$ and t equal to 1.57. Since this significance level is higher than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.120$, there is no sufficient evidence to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between marital and lifestyle.

4. Conclusions

Among variables (variables of marital status) out of the total number of samples studied: the highest percentage of 64% were single and 18% were married. The next variable of educational status we will describe the results: out of the total number of the samples studied, 28 percent were associate's degree and minimum of them have been reported as master's degree. The next variable (gender status of respondents) which we will describe the results below: out of the total number of statistical sample studied, 50% were female, 50% have been reported male.

Variable of respondents' status by age group: out of the total number of statistical samples studied in this age group, 46% were among 18-21 years and 18% have been reported from 25 years to up.

Variable of respondents' status by employment: out of the total number of statistical samples studied in this group, 46% were students or university students and 9 % have been reported only once looking for job. variable (in terms of social class status of respondents): out of the total number of statistical samples studied in this group, 37 percent of social class have reported themselves lower-middle class and the lowest percentage (9%) have also reported themselves a moderate to high.

Descriptive results show that out of total of 100 response to the variable of lifestyle, 50 people were uptown and 50 people down town. The average of lifestyle in the uptown is 128/10 and in the downtown of 105/96. Descriptive results indicate that the average of lifestyle among young people is higher but to ensure a level of significance of this difference, we should look at the test results between these two variables.

Results of T-test assuming equal variances of two groups indicated that significance level is $\alpha=0.001$ and T is 3/40. Since the achieved significance level ($\alpha=0.001$) is smaller than our desired significance level of ($\alpha=0.05$), there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis is rejected and our main hypothesis is confirmed, then we can conclude that the amount of lifestyle has been more in uptown.

Descriptive results show that the results obtained by correlation coefficient tests between these two variables shows that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.406$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.002$.

Since this significance level is smaller than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.05$. There is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis therefore we have to reject null hypothesis and our main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude that there is a significant relationship between age and lifestyle. It means increasing age, lifestyle decreases.

Descriptive results show that 50 out of total of 100 responses to the variable of lifestyles were men and 50 were women, the average levels of lifestyle among men is 104.56, and among women is 129.50. Descriptive results suggest that the average level of lifestyle among women is more, but to ensure a significance level of the difference between these two variables, we should pay attention to the test results.

T-test results assuming equal variances of two groups indicated that it is calculated with the significance level of $\alpha=0.000$ and T obtained equal to 0.000. Since the obtained significance level ($\alpha=3.89$) is smaller

than our desired significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, the null hypothesis is rejected and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude that the lifestyle level is higher among women.

The results obtained from correlation coefficient test between these two variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.639$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.000$. Since this significance level is smaller than our desired significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, there is sufficient evidence to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between income and lifestyle.

The results obtained from correlation coefficient tests between these variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.000$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.245$. Since this significance level is smaller than our significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, there is no sufficient evidence to reject our null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between education and lifestyle.

The results obtained from correlation coefficient tests between these variables indicate that the correlation coefficient among the 100 responders in this study is calculated with $R=0.317$ and with a significance level of $\alpha=0.000$. Since this significance level is smaller than significance level of our $05/0 = \alpha$, there is no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis therefore we have to reject our null hypothesis and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is a significant relationship between social class and lifestyle.

T-test results shows that two Independent sample between these two variables suggests that among 100 cases studied, correlation coefficient with a significance level of $\alpha=0.120$ and the number of t equal to 57/1 are calculated. Since this significance level is more than significance level we mean $\alpha=0.120$, we have no sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, thus we reject the null hypothesis and our desired hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, we conclude there is no significant relationship between marital status and lifestyle there.

5. Suggestions

According to the novelty of lifestyle in sociology, particularly in the Iranian Sociological research, it is needed it to be addressed based on different approaches and perspectives to enrich. In studies of lifestyle, in addition to the scope of consumer behavior, it can be considered from the realm of differentiation and identity.

Since this research was conducted in Talesh town and on the other hand, and also researcher had faced with financial constraints, it is recommended that further research move up on a larger measure so that the results can be generalized to wider community.

In the condition that globalization is widely spoken and there is no exact experimental parameters for this statement, Comparative study of lifestyles as a solution to the study is used.

The study of lifestyle is much more effective than individual reviews. Adoption of a consistent pattern of behavior by an individual, family or community represents structural changes made in the individual and society much more than to do a single activity. By analyzing lifestyle, it can be treated in much greater measure of societies and also by becoming aware of the outcomes of lifestyle, it can be seen that to what extent likely the future procedure of evolution communities are close to each other. Therefore, it is

imperative to address it. Comparing the lifestyles of people in towns and cities, it may lead to interesting information that is important to the cultural and economic policymakers. Another suggested is that since lifestyle is impressionable by more various factors and it is difficult to study all of them on a research, therefore it is recommended that other factors related to the lifestyle to be dealt with in future research.

6. Applied research proposals:

The results show that the lifestyles of young people by gender is different, and girls and boys have different lifestyles. Today, the study of the influence of gender on lifestyle has become a mean for investigating cultural developments. Therefore, to establish the identity of women, it is essential to address their lifestyle.

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