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**THE ROLE OF VIRTUAL WORLD AND SATELLITE CHANNELS IN MODELING INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY LIFESTYLE: CASE STUDY OF FEMALE STUDENTS OF PSYCHOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES; ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY (MARVDASHT BRANCH; IRAN)**

\*Khalil Nematollahi<sup>1</sup>, Kobra Mokhtari<sup>2</sup>, Zeinab Al-Sadat Hosseini<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty Member of Payam Noor University; Department of Psychology

<sup>2</sup> B.A Student of Psychology; Payam Noor University of Arsanjan

<sup>3</sup> Zeinab al-Sadat Hosseini: MA Student of Clinical Psychology, Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences and Research

\*Author for Correspondence

**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of virtual world and satellite channels in modeling individual and family lifestyle among female students of Psychology, Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences; Islamic Azad University (Marvdasht Branch; Iran). The population under study included all female students at Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences; Islamic Azad University, of whom 50 students were selected through simple random sampling method as the research sample. The instruments used to collect the data were Walker's Health Promoting Lifestyle Questionnaire, Young's Internet Addiction Test (1996), Shakeri's Family Flexibility Questionnaire (shortened version), and the questionnaire of the role of satellite channels in the education system from the perspective of families. Besides, Pearson correlation test and t-test was used to collect the data for the dependent groups. The results of the study indicated that there was no significant negative correlation between Internet addiction and lifestyle. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between the role of satellite channels and lifestyle. However, of the components of lifestyle, only eating habits were significantly related to the satellite channels. It was also noted that Internet addition and the role of satellite channels were not significantly related to the family flexibility. In the same line, single and married individuals were not significantly different concerning the Internet addition. Furthermore, addiction to the internet was not significantly different among people with B.A and M.A degrees. Accordingly, single and married individuals were not significantly different with regard to exposure to satellite channels. Finally, exposure to satellite channels was not significantly different among people with B.A and M.A degrees.

**Keywords:** *Internet, Satellite Channels, Lifestyle, Family, Individuals*

**INTRODUCTION**

The impact of new media (the Internet and satellite channels) on the society and especially their communication aspect that dominated all dimensions of life is undeniable. Consequently, in recent years Iran has been invaded by a soft war waged by Iranian enemies through the launching of satellite channels whose audience is mainly Iranian youth as a growing labor force that is more susceptible than other age groups. The main goal of satellite channels is to change the youth's lifestyle. Some of their goals are specifically are the elimination of the religion and religious beliefs from the youth's life, the promotion of luxury, sexual promiscuity, and free and unrestrained relations with the opposite sex, and the elimination of values from the youth's life (Nourian, 2004). Without doubt, satellite channels and networks affect intentionally or unintentionally people's lifestyle, especially that of young people for instance the way they dress, make up, talk and behave. Media influence people in a way that they create a sense of dissatisfaction and deprivation in them so that when individual are watching satellite programs they feel dissatisfied and think that their lives are much more lower and imperfect than an ideal or even a typical life (Fazeli, 2004).

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The introduction of technology and mass media in families has affected familial values so that some changes have occurred in the way young people speak and behave. One of such facilities is the easy access to the Internet. In addition to the strengths, the Internet has some weaknesses as well. Mass media make the distances disappear and the wall between the humans become largely transparent (Slevin, 2001). Therefore, we cannot deny the fact that such facilities affect social groups, including a group called family. The negative impact of the Internet is due to the fact the conventional controls cannot be applied to the Internet as it is the case for other media. Monitoring is done individually or collectively on the mentioned media at individual, familial, group, and governmental levels. Such monitoring is not possible or cannot be sufficiently provided concerning the use of the Internet. Consequently, the problem of the Internet addiction becomes prominent. This is an important problem as the impact of the Internet addition is so serious that it creates unavoidable impacts on the users' lives (Rasouli, 2003). Bakhtiari et al., (2012) conducted a study entitled "The relationship between youth religious identity and TV satellite programs. The population under study included media professional in Hamedan Province, of whom a total number of 97 persons were selected as the participants in the research sample through simple stratified sampling by the use of Cochran Formula. Statistical indices such as means and standard deviations were used for data analysis and univariate t-test was used to test the research hypotheses. The results of the study showed there is a significant relationship between the two variables and TV satellite channels have a negative impact on youth religious identity. Bastani et al., (2013) conducted a study on "The impact of using the Internet and satellite channels on youth social behaviors; Comparing users and non-users in Isfahan". The results indicated that the impact rate and the quality of using the Internet and satellite channels are different on various dimensions of social behavior. Besides, it was noted that the use of the Internet and satellite channels does not affect the youth behavior in the family while it affects their behavior with their friends. On the other hand, the Internet and satellite channels do not similarly affect the young people's social participation. The way the Internet is used especially the types of websites used will impact the youth social participation in NGOs, voluntary activities, and their social participation, however, the use of the satellite channels is negatively associated with the young people's social participation. Rasouli et al., (2013) in a study on "Internet addiction and its effects among high school students in Tehran" concluded that internet addiction has a significant impact on the access to the news and information. Besides, it significantly affects the participation in virtual classes and distant education. The effects of the internet addiction and cultural changes including changes in the style of speaking and conversation and the preference for fashion are also significant among high school students. However, there is no significant relationship between the use of the Internet and individual isolation, instruction of social skills, and academic failure. As the findings of the study suggested, the model used in the study could predict 18% of effects of using the Internet.

Maheri et al., (2012) conducted a study on "The relationship between internet addiction and medical students' lifestyle and the impact of the internet addiction on the medical students' health in Tehran University of Medical Sciences". They observed that there is a significant relationship between the internet addiction and a healthy lifestyle in that people addicted to the internet have a more unfavorable lifestyle than ordinary internet users. In addition, people addicted to the internet gained lower scores concerning mental growth, health accountability, interpersonal relations, stress management, physical activities, and eating habits than ordinary internet users. Heidari SoorShojaee (2012) studied "The relationship between the internet addiction and mental health among household users in Ahwaz and observed that there is a significant relationship between the internet addiction and mental health. Khosravi et al., (2012) conducted a study on "The relationship between the internet addiction, family function, and mental health. They observed that there is a negative significant relationship between some family functions such as self-assertion, personal taste, and religious beliefs. Besides, there was a positive significant relationship between subscales of family disintegration, high conflict, authoritarian family lifestyle, and internet addiction. Mohammadi (2012) in a study entitled "Internet social networks and youth lifestyle: A case study of Largest Virtual Iranian Community", observed that there is a relationship

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between membership in the internet social networks and the spending time on other social activities. Besides, most respondents stated that they were objected by other family members for the spending too much time on using the internet. There was also a relationship between the membership in the internet social networks and factors such as relationship with the opposite gender and the way the members talked in the outside environment. As a result, it can be said that a relationship between membership in the internet social networks and youth lifestyle. In today's world, the advancement of mass media provide the opportunity for individuals to update themselves and students as active and energetic members of the society are among target groups of media. Students use satellite channels and the internet for various purposes such as recreation, hobby, spending the leisure time, accessing information resources, looking for scientific and research findings, publishing their scientific works, being informed about social, cultural, and political issues and events, and finally making friendly and interpersonal relations or, in general, participation in news groups as well as electronic panel discussion. The youth exposure to each of these media with a huge wave of information and diversified programs around the world introduces a special culture and faces young generations with new cultures different from their own culture. Consequently, such exposure can bring about cultural changes such as stylistic and behavioral changes, mindset changes, and in fact changes in personal lifestyle and family relations among young people including student in the time of their studies. The primary research and investigations performed in Marvdasht suggested that cultural changes among the youth in this city have grown significantly during recent years and this is related to the growth on modern media such as the Internet and satellite channels. Accordingly, the present study aimed to explore the role of the virtual world and satellite channels in modeling individual and family lifestyle among female students.

### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

- There is a significant relationship between the Internet addiction and lifestyle.
- There is a significant relationship between the use of satellite channels and lifestyle.
- There is a significant relationship between the Internet addiction, the role of satellite channels, and family flexibility.
- There is a significant relationship between the Internet addiction among single and married individuals.
- There is a significant relationship between the Internet addiction among people with B.A and M.A educations.
- There is a significant relationship between the impact of satellite channels among single and married individuals.
- There is a significant relationship between the impact of satellite channels among people with B.A and M.A educations.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Since the aim of the present study was to explore the role of the virtual world and satellite channels in modeling individual and family lifestyle among female students, a correlational research method was employed. The population under study included all female students at Department of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences; Islamic Azad University, of whom 50 students were selected through simple random sampling method as the research sample.

### **INSTRUMENTS**

#### **WALKER'S HEALTH PROMOTING LIFESTYLE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire developed by Walker (1997) and translated by Mohammadi et al., (2011) contains 54 items to measure health promoting behaviors (e.g. eating habits, exercise, responsibility for health, stress management, interpersonal support, and self-actualization) with a Likert-type scale (1 = never, 2 =

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sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always). The questionnaire includes six dimensions whose related items are presented in the following table:

**Table 1: Dimensions of lifestyle questionnaire**

Dimensions	Items
Eating habits	1-11
Exercise	12-24
Responsibility for health	25-32
Stress Management	33-38
Interpersonal support	39-46
Self-actualization	47-54

To obtain the total score of each dimension, the scores of items relating to that dimension are added up. Besides, obtain the total score of the questionnaire, all scores will be added up (Mohammad Zaidi et al, 1390).

**RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

Mohammad Zaidi et al., (1390) confirmed the reliability of the questionnaire. Besides, the reliability of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach's alpha method. The value of the Cronbach's alpha usually varies from 0 which suggest the inconsistency to +1 which is an index of the full consistency. The values of the Cronbach's alpha for the dimensions of Walker's Health Promoting Lifestyle Questionnaire are shown in Table 2:

**Table 2: Values of the Cronbach's alpha for the dimensions of Walker's Health Promoting Lifestyle Questionnaire**

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha
Eating habits	0.79
Exercise	0.86
Responsibility for health	0.81
Stress Management	0.91
Interpersonal support	0.79
Self-actualization	0.81

**INTERNET ADDICTION STANDARD TEST**

Yang Internet Addiction Test (1996) includes 20 items developed and validated by Yang et al., (1996) using a Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree).

**ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE SCORES**

In this method, the scores obtained are added and analyzed based on the following table. It should be noted that the following scores are related to only one questionnaire. For instance, if you have ten questionnaires the following scores are multiplied by 10. Example: The lower limit of the questionnaire is obtained as follows:

$$\text{Lower boundary} = \text{Number of items} \times 1$$

**Table 3: Analysis based on scores**

Lower limit of scores	Middle limit of scores	Upper limit of scores
20	70	120

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- If the questionnaire scores are from 20 to 45 the rate of Internet addiction among the population is weak.
- If the questionnaire scores are between 45 and 70, the rate of Internet addiction among the population is moderate.
- If the questionnaire scores are higher than 70, the rate of Internet addiction among the population is very high (Atashpour et al., 2005).

**VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

The reliability of a measuring instrument is the degree of its consistency in measuring what it measures. In other word, reliability concerns with how equal the results obtained by an instruments, everything being constant. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined by Atashpour et al., (2005) through Cronbach's alpha method using SPSS Software as follows:

**Table 4: Value of Cronbach's alpha level of Internet addiction questionnaire**

Variable name	Cronbach's alpha
Internet addiction	0.78

**SHAKERI'S FAMILY FLEXIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE (SHORTENED VERSION)**

The questionnaire was adapted by Shakeri (2003, cited in Samani and Zare, 2008) based on Olson’s (1999) integrated model. It includes 16 items each measured by Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, totally disagree). The maximum score possible in this test is 80 and the minimum score is 16. The reliability and the validity of the instrument were confirmed by Shakeri in a study on 48 participants. The internal reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach's alpha was reported as equal to 0.89. The results of factor analysis indicated that the questionnaire contains only a general factor (g) called flexibility. Samani and Zare (2008) used Cronbach's alpha method to determine the reliability of the instrument with a value of 0.70. Beside, material analysis was used to measure the reliability of the instrument. To do so, the internal consistency coefficient was determined through the calculation of the correlation coefficient between each item and the total score in which all coefficients were significant.

**QUESTIONNAIRE OF SATELLITE CHANNELS ROLE IN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN FAMILIES’ VIEW**

This a researcher-made questionnaire with 25 items using a Likert scale (totally disagree 1, disagree 2, no opinion 3, agree 4, and strongly agree; 5).

**RESULTS**

Table 5 shows descriptive indexes (frequency and percentage) used to explain the variables under study. Besides, Table 6 shows descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation of lifestyle components (eating habits, exercise, health responsibility, stress management, interpersonal support, and self-actualization).

**Table 5: Frequency and percentage of the sample based on marital status**

Grouping Statistics	Marital status		Education	
	Single	Married	BA	MA
Frequency	16	34	14	36
Percentage	32%	68%	28%	72%

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**Table 6: Mean, standard deviation for components of lifestyle (eating habits, exercise, health responsibility, stress management, interpersonal support, self-actualization)**

Statistics Components	Mean	SD
Eating habits	31.38	7.48
Exercise	32.06	8.03
Responsibility for health	22.01	4.95
Stress Management	14.14	3.58
Interpersonal support	17.10	5.95
Self-actualization	19.38	4.39

To investigate the relationship between Internet addiction and lifestyle, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used, the results of the test are presented in Table 7:

**Table 7: Correlation between Internet addiction and lifestyle components**

Variables	Lifestyle components						Lifestyle
	Eating habits	Exercise	Health responsibility	Stress Management	Interpersonal support	Self-actualization	
Internet addiction	0.21	0.22	0.17	0.07	0.02	-0.11	0.16

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. As the results indicate, there is no significant relationship between Internet addiction and lifestyle. Similarly, there is no significant relationship between Internet addiction and lifestyle components (eating habits, exercise, health responsibility, stress management, interpersonal support, and self-actualization).

To explore the relationship between the use of satellite programs and the lifestyle and the results of the test are presented in Table 8:

**Table 8: Correlation between the use of satellite channels and lifestyle components**

Variables	Lifestyle components						Lifestyle
	Eating habits	Exercise	Responsibility for health	Stress Management	Interpersonal support	Self-actualization	
Role of satellite channels	* 0.35	0.17/	0.23	0.11	- 0.12	0.04	0.19

P < 0.05

As the results indicate, there is no significant relationship between the role of satellite channels and lifestyle. However, there is a significant relationship between the role of satellite channels and lifestyle components (eating habits, exercise, health responsibility, stress management, interpersonal support, and self-actualization).

To determine the relationship between Internet addiction and the role of satellites channels with family flexibility, Pearson correlation coefficient was used whose results are presented in Table 9:

**Table 9: Correlation between Internet addiction and the role of satellites channels with family flexibility**

Variables	Internet addiction	Role of satellites channels
Family Flexibility	-0.12	0.07

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As the results indicate, there is no significant relationship between the role of satellite channels and family flexibility.

Independent samples t-test was used to determine the difference between Internet addiction among single and married participants as shown in Table 10:

**Table 10: Mean scores for Internet addiction among single and married participants**

Internet addiction	Number	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Single	16	88.32	22.65	48	-0.72	0.82
Married	34	93.50	25.26			

The results indicate that there is no significant difference between Internet addiction among single individuals with the mean score of 88.32 and Internet addiction among married participants with a mean score of 93.50 ( $P \leq 0.05$ ).

Independent samples t-test was used to determine the difference between Internet addiction among participants with B.A and M.A degrees as shown in Table 11:

**Table 11: Mean scores for Internet addiction among participants with B.A and M.A degrees**

Internet addiction	Number	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
B.A Participants	14	89.41	24.47	48	0.27	0.47
M.A Participants	36	91.42	21.101			

The results indicate that there is no significant difference between Internet addiction among the participants with B.A degree (Mean = 89.43) and Internet addiction among the participants with M.A degree (Mean = 91.42) at the significance level of  $P \leq 0.05$ . Independent samples t-test was used to determine the difference between the role of satellite channels among single and married participants as shown in Table 12:

**Table 12: Mean scores for the role of satellite channels among single and married participants**

The role of satellite channels	Number	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Single people	16	97.91	15.48	48	-0.44	0.52
Married	34	100.06	16.91			

As the results indicate, there is no significant relationship between the role of satellite channels among single participants (Mean = 97.91) and married participants (Mean = 100.06) at the significance level of  $P \geq 0.05$ . Independent samples t-test was used to determine the difference between the role of satellite channels among participants with B.A and M.A degrees as shown in Table 13:

**Table 13: Mean scores for the role of satellite channels among participants with B.A and M.A degrees**

The role of satellite channels	Number	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
B.A Participants	14	94.21	15.19	48	-1.23	0.57
M.A Participants	36	100.31	15.92			

As shown in the table, there is no significant relationship between the role of satellite channels among the participants with B.A degree (Mean = 94.21) and the participants with M.A degree (Mean = 100.31) at the significance level of  $P \geq 0.05$ .

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### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

As can be seen in Table 7, there is no significant relationship between the Internet addiction and lifestyle. Similarly, there is no significant relationship between the Internet addiction and components of lifestyle (eating habits, exercise, health responsibility, stress management, interpersonal support, and self-actualization). This is in line with the results of a study by Bastani et al., (20013) who found the effect of the level of using the Internet and satellite channels are different for various aspects of social behavior. Similarly, the present study showed that the use of the Internet and satellite channels has no influence on youth behavior in the family. However, this finding is not consistent with Maheriet al., (2012) who found a significant relationship between the Internet addiction and the healthy lifestyle in that people addicted to internet have more unfavorable life conditions than ordinary users. Besides, people addicted to the Internet have gained lower scores in terms of mental growth, health accountability, interpersonal relations, stress management, physical activities, and eating habits than ordinary internet users. Besides, Mohammadi (2012) in a study entitled "Internet social networks and youth lifestyle: A case study of Largest Virtual Iranian Community", observed that there is a relationship between membership in the internet social networks and the spending time on other social activities. Besides, most respondents stated that they were objected by other family members for the spending too much time on using the internet. There was also a relationship between the membership in the internet social networks and factors such as relationship with the opposite gender and the way the members talked in the outside environment. However, this is not in line with the findings of the study. One possible explanation is that most families in our community are religious and the Internet is mostly used for gaining information and looking for news. Besides, websites with unethical content are filtered by the Iranian government so young do not have access to such websites. Furthermore, young people are aware of the possible dangers of using unethical websites through mass media. As a result, the Internet use has less impact on individuals' lifestyle and its components. As shown in Table 8, there is no significant relationship between the exposure to satellite channels and lifestyle components. In contrast, of the lifestyle components only there is a significant relationship between the exposure to satellite channels and eating habits. In addition, the findings of the present study are in line with Bastani et al., (2013) who conducted a study on "The impact of using the Internet and satellite channels on youth social behaviors; Comparing users and non-users in Isfahan". The results indicated that the impact rate and the quality of using the Internet and satellite channels are different on various dimensions of social behavior. Besides, it was noted that the use of the Internet and satellite channels does not affect the youth behavior in the family while it affects their behavior with their friends. This can be explained by the fact that since our society is a religious society and families begin to make their children familiar with religious issues at early childhood so children are less likely to turn to social evils. Besides, religious families in Iranian community often do not use satellite channels or unethical satellite programs. In addition, young people are aware of the possible dangers of using unethical websites through mass media. As a result, the Internet use has less impact on Iranian families.

As shown in tables 10 and 11, there is no significant relationship between the Internet addiction among single and married individuals and between people with B.A and M.A degrees. In other words, there is no significant relationship between the use of the Internet and satellite programs among single and married female students. This may be due to the fact that since both groups are educated people, they are aware of the dangers of unethical websites. In addition as our society is a religious society there is no significant relationship between the Internet addiction among people with B.A and M.A degrees.

Finally, as shown in tables 12 and 13, there is no significant relationship between the use of satellite channels among single and married individuals and among those with B.A and M.A degrees. This finding can be explained in the light of the fact that since both groups are educated people, they are aware of the dangers of unethical websites. In addition as our society is a religious society there is no significant relationship between the Internet addiction among people with B.A and M.A degrees.



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