

## The Relationship between the Usage of Virtual Social Networks and Social Indifference of Tehran Citizens

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**Abstract:** Social indifference is a situation in which people avoid socio-political participation, social responsibilities, altruistic activities and active and civil involvement in social issues, ignoring the facts around them. This research is applied in term of purposes and in a description survey method, and has been conducted with the aim of investigation the relationship between virtual social networks and social indifference. The statistical population of the study was the citizens of districts 1 and 2 of Tehran and 400 people were selected using cluster sampling. The results showed that the rate of indifference is moderate to high and there is a relation between the usage of virtual of social network and social indifference of citizens and the age, sex and socio-economic variables are related to social indifference. According to the results of this research, background study, and theories proposed; citizens who have a high degree of diversity in the use of social networks, has influenced their behaviors, and this is a tow-way relationship that in some cases causes social indifference in the real space, but due to the freedom and ignorance of the cyberspace, people in cyberspace have more commitments than each other. That means, warm and intimate relationships have been transferred from the real social environment to the cyber and virtual environment.

**Keywords:** Social Indifference, Virtual Social Networks, Social-Economic Base.

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### Introduction

Social indifference is one of the undesirable elements do modern culture, which is reflected in the overemphasis on personal preferences, and individualistic interests in contemporary urban life and it considered as an obstacle in creating and stab lashing positive social affairs, and it leads to weakening or even stopping the national development process. In recent years, anomic conditions and anomalies have been seen in society, a situation in which, according to Durkheim, social norms and previous moral guidelines are not effective norms. It is normal that in such situation, social relations are damaged, and social indifference manifests itself as one of its examples. Social indifference indicates numbness, pessimism, reluctance and other words, a kind of social depression In a society where social capital is low due to the indiscriminate use of virtual society networks, the frustration and indifference of any member or group of society due to social alienation, feeling of ineffectiveness, dissatisfy actin, and dis trust of others will cause fragility in the social structure and gradually make members of social networks pessimistic about all social processes and will leave them frustrated with the future and social isolation away from any social contact (Mohseni and Sedaghati, 2011: P. 4).

Therefore, ignoring the individual or group relations of social elements will be the cause of the collapse of any structure or environment in which human beings. As an influential factor with decision-making

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power measuring the role of virtual social networks on social indifference is very important. In the case of Tehran, this issue is doubly important because Tehran, as the largest metropolis in Iran, can be prone to social indifference and spreading the culture of individualism but in the meantime. The question that comes to mind is whether the extent and diversity of the use of virtual, social network is related to social indifference (Sashitittal, Jassawalla, Markulis, 2012, 175).

### **Literature review**

A comparative study of social indifference among students of Isfahan and Yazd universities, showed that there is no significant relationship between students social indifference and in came, gender and marital status, but there is a significant difference between the degree of social indifference in terms of university, and in both universities there is a significant relation between independent variables (abnormality and effectiveness) with social indifference (Zare shahabadi and Shahab Samani, 2019; P. 95). The effects of social networks on the interactions of teenage girl have been studied in non-profit schools of Tehran's district one education department, the results showed that the social network such as telegram and Instagram affect the social interactions of teenage girls of non-profit schools in Tehran's district one education department. In general, all members of a social network which a person interacts, affect the person's subconscious mind (Athari and Yaghmouri, 2016; P. 170).

Sociological analysis of the impact of abnormalities on social indifference among the citizens of Babul over 18 was studied, and the results show that social indifference was greater among women than men, social indifference also decreases with age and income. There is a significant and direct relation between the variables of anomaly and social indifference (Navabakhsh and mirzapouri, 2015, P. 57). Same study among students at the university of Isfahan point out that indifference man's a lack of interest in behavior or action as well as withdrawing and not participating in social issues (Ghazizade and Kian pour, 2015, P. 62). However, social indifference conducted on Tehran citizens indicates that there is a moderate high level of social indifference in Tehran citizens (Mohseni and Sedaghatifard, 2011, P. 5).

Also, the mean of abnormality, feeling of relative deprivation individualism, cast-reward analysis, indicated that these factors were above average and the mean of social trust, social effectiveness, social satisfaction and civic commitment were low. Bivarite analyzes showed difference between gender and social indifference and with men showing higher social indifference. There is also a difference between ethnicity and social indifference (Kurdish people have the least and Arabs have the most social indifference). The research results of 18 year-olds in Dezful shows that the individual's desire for formal social participation activities such as volunteering in organizations, parties and associations, desire to participate in elections, etc. is lower and participation in unhealthy social activities such as the help for the poor and disabled is more based on these results. It can be said that the existing indifference is more to the socio-political structure and formal institutions of society rather than in the formal structures and institutions. One of the most important factors affecting social indifference is social capital, which has a negative relationship with social indifference. This means that as social capital increases among the members of society, social indifference in that society will decrease, while with the advent of social networks and their permeation of social life, social capital has decreased (Nabavi, Novah, Shirzad, 2013, p. 6).

Indifference is on the rise in western societies, and people are less likely to engage in political actions, such as voting in elections, because they see the way to deal with this suspicion of the people and provoke them in the position of political activists as a process of consultation and face-to-face discussion aimed at resolving these pessimism (Schou, 2015, p.54). Social isolation and loneliness among adults and their neighborhoods in the United States have been studied and found that social isolation and loneliness are associated with wide-ranging mortality outcomes among older people. The results also showed that people who did not live alone and those who lived closer to the city center were less likely to feel isolated and lonely (Jesika and Lindsey, 2018, P. 29).

To counteract the indifference of the students, students at a school in a suburb of Maryland were examined in a three-year qualitative study. Based on the social learning and cognitive development

theories of Vygotsky and Piaget, student indifference and the learning environment at school were examined from the perspectives of 8 former students and their parents. The results show that students expressed their reason for their indifference by saying that they had limited choices, that curricula were not rigorous, and that students who had academic or behavioral problems were less likely to receive appropriate support (Joe, Jacobs., 2009, pp. 103). The indifference and social non-involvement of under graduate business students and evidence shows that students, social indifference has a negative impact on educational outcomes. Qualitative research was initially conducted among a sample of under graduate Business students to identify the history and consequences of learning indifference and social non-involvement, and the key concepts of the hypotheses were identified. The purpose of this survey was to test a conceptual model, based on qualitative data. The study of results shows that high level of anxiety in social involvement and students' inability, lead to indifference or lack of social involvement (Zareivand, Ghodrati, Arfaei Moghadam, 2020, p. 130).

Black people, who are more racially agnostic and more ethnically conscious, are more caught up in indifference than others. It is evident that all societies and social groups are somehow indifferent, which can take many forms of social and political participation and in groups such as nurses, students, university students and union members (Verba and Nye, 2009, P. 23).

A study of indifference in Africa described indifference to sociopolitical ethnicity, the researcher attributes indifference to sociopolitical issues in the Canyon capital to ethnic subcultures. Inequality and exclusion due to the unequal distribution of political, economic and social opportunities lead to class differences and ultimately to indifference from the lower classes of society (Ross, 1975, p.298).

### **Methodology**

In the context of social exchange theory, human's views social behavior as a two-way exchange between individuals that can lead to positive and negative outcomes. In this sense, it raises several issues, including that of success, motivation, the value of deprivation saturation, and the issue of condoning aggression. If the sense of responsibility is one-sided and comes exclusively from the people in society, and does not force society to meet the material and spiritual needs of people in that society, then that is what people's desire to do. The behaviors of volunteers become certainly decrease and gradually fade. Therefore, social indifference is not a one-way street where we expect people in society to take responsibility and participate in community problems. Society, in turn, needs to provide people with incentives for altruistic behavior (Tavassoli, 2012, P. 57).

In a society in transition, the so-called era of the human "in transit" or inner guide, is a time when society's culture tends to create people who are guided from within. So while the certainty of tradition in the social core of modern man is declining, an individualistic era is beginning for him, which culminates in the dominance of existential thinking. Depending on the content of this thought, everyone has to find their own way, come up with motives and stimuli and find an actor's reaction. The excessive emphasis on will at this time weighs heavily on man, such irresponsibility is a source of fear. In this period marked by rationalism, calculation and social rationality, people in society suffer from individualism and indifference, which is when they reach their peak (Sedaghati fard, 2013, P.35). The difference between Marx's charm and Lukach's objectivity lies in its extent, but Lukach applied the notion of objectivity to society as a whole, including the state, lower and economic sectors; According to Lukach, people have developed into a belief in life and life and the objectivity of social structures in a process of alienation. He affirms that in capitalist society man believes that social structures have a life of their own; hence these structures have acquired an objective character. In capitalist society, man sees social reality as a natural phenomenon alien to him and is always caught up in the laws of this reality. In this case, man limits his activity to the constant search and implementation of individual laws based on his personal and selfish interests. Modern man is the object of events while creating them, not their subject (Mirza pouri 1395, P.104)

Optimistic theorists (Chery, Fourkel, Stone) believe that the computer screen, indeed a new way of realizing users' rational fantasies and instinctive wants or needs (Tourkel, 1997, P. 124). Social media,

as a low-bandwidth medium, offers more opportunities to engage in interpretation processes. Imagination and claim of the interacting parties as face-to-face interaction. In general, the main theme of the postmodern vision, like the Tourkeland stone, about the identity effects of cyberspace revolves around the axis, which allowed the user to get rid of the body and many other limitations, and this allows various aspects of cyberspace to flourish. Himself that he does not have. Could express before (Kowsari, 2007, P. 14). Negative theorists (winfmatz, drifus, bawman, taminson) believe that interactions and communications in the virtual world are peculiarities. They believe that virtual interactions ultimately lead to social isolation and downsizing. User interactions in the real world, especially in terms of quality and increasing internet usage in general, are antisocial with a decrease in social communication, especially close and intimate communication with family, close friends, etc.

Moderate theorists (Miller, Thompson, Gafman) believe that virtual communities honor their membership in virtual networks by meeting users' needs. Some of the social network needs according to these moderate thinkers are: 1. distraction (getting rid of the problem and forgetting about emotional issues), 2. Personal relationships (companionship and social benefits), 3. Identification (character reference, value augmentation, and discovery of reality), 4. Monitoring (information needs) that makes the media more efficient and effective. Therefore, on the idea of the proposed theories, it may be argued that the brand new world wherein we stay is an international that has grown to be absolutely individual, conforming to the context and the policies that govern them, attitudes and altruistic behaviors and attitudes and civic Behaviors in its far shaped below the impact of latest technologies. A world that has impacted the way we interact and communicate, able to create species from total participation to total isolation. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of this research.

**Research methods**

This research was conducted based on the purposes applied and the scalable descriptive research method. The statistical population was the citizens of districts 1 and 2 of the city of Tehran, selected from a cluster sample of 400 people. A questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. In this study, to determine the reliability of the questionnaires tested among 50 individuals from the statistical population, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the research variables was obtained above 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability.

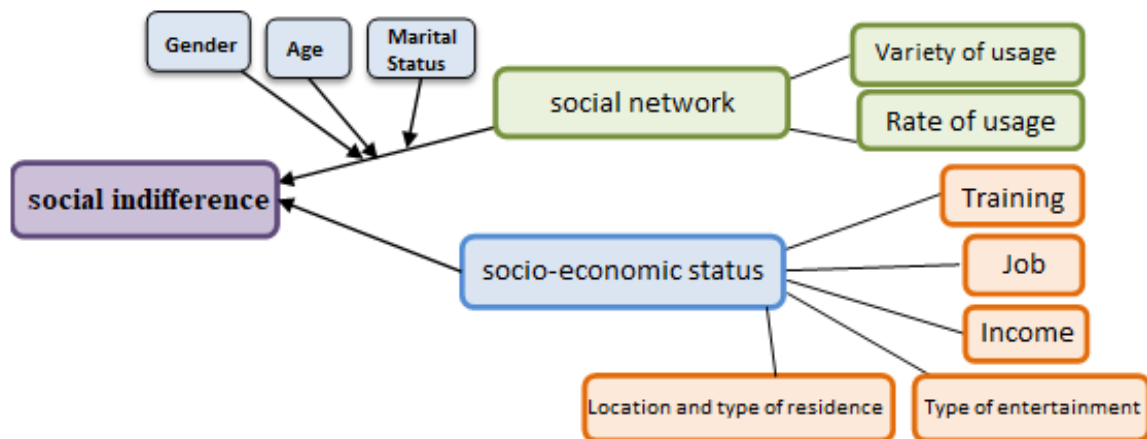


Figure (1): Conceptual Model of Research

**Research findings**

For this study, 55% of the respondents were female on 45% of the respondents were male. 12.5% of the respondents in this sample belong to the age group of 20 years and younger, 24.2% of them belong to the age group of 21 to 30 years, 25.8% belong to the age group of 31 to 40 years, 20.5% of them belong to the age group of 47 to 50 years and 17% belong to group of more than 50 years. 43.5% of the respondents were born in the countryside and 56.5% of the respondent were born in the center of the

province. 34.8% of respondents are single, 56.2% are married and 9% are divorced. 70.2% of the respondents are employed and 29.8% of the respondents are unemployed 14.5% of respondents have a diploma degree or under diploma, 21.3% have an associate degree 30.5% have a bachelor's degree, 23.5% have a master's degree and 9% have a doctorate 9.5 % of them have an income between 3 million and one hundred and 4 million tomans, 18/25 have an income between 4 million and 100 hundred to 5 million tomans, 21/2 % have an income between 5 million and 100 hundred to 6 million. tomans and 6/5% have an income of more than 6 million tomans. 32/8% of respondents have rented housing, 14/8% have joint property, 25/8% have organizational housing and 26/8% of respondents have private property. 43/5% of them are persians (Fars), 24/8% are turks, 14/8% are Kords, 10/8% are Lors and 6/2% are other ethnic groups.

**Hypothesis No. 1:** *There is a relationship between the amount of use of virtual social network and social indifference in terms of socio-economic status.*

Table (1) shows the amount of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of socio-economic status of the respondents and without controlling them. There is a positive and moderate correlation between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of the socio-economic status ( $r=0/417$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ) without controlling the socio-economic status, there is a positive and moderate correlation between these two variables ( $r=0/408$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social indifference is real relationship and the probability of a relationship between socio-economic statuses with both variables is low. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

*Table (1): Analysis of the correlation between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of socio-economic status*

Socio-economic status	The amount of the use of the use of virtual social networks	Social indifference	variables
.130 .009 398	417 .000 398	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	408 000 397	1000 . 0	Pear so correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 2:** *There is a relationship between the diversity in the use of social networks and social indifference with the control of the socio-economic status of the respondent and without controlling them.*

There is a positive and very strong correlation between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference with the control of socio-economic status ( $r=0/787$ ) and ( $p=0/000$   $p<0/05$ ). Without controlling the socio-economic status, there is a positive and very strong segregated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0/785$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the probability of a relationship between socio-economic statuses with both variables is low. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table (2): Analysis of the segregated correlation between the degree of diversity of use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of socio-economic status**

Socfo economic status	The amount of the use of the use of virtul social networks	Social indifference	variables
.130 .009 398	.787 .000 398	1000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	785 000 397	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 3:** *There is a relationship between the amount use of virtual social networks and social indifference in term of gender.*

To test the relationship between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference in term of gender, we use a discriminant correlation. This type of correlation is the most accurate type of correlation between variables. Segregated correlation is the correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable by controlling the effect of other independent variables. Table 3 shows the amount of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with and without controlling the gender of the respondents. There is a positive and moderate correlation between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with gender controls ( $r=0.417$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Without gender control, there is also a positive and moderated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0.414$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the possibility of a relationship between the genders with both variables is low. Therefore this hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table (3): Analysis of the segregated correlation between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the gender control**

Socio-economic status	The amount of the use of the use of virtul social networks	Social indifference	variables
.086 .085 398	417 .000 398	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	414 000 394	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 4:** *There is a relationship between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social indifference in term of age*

Table 4 shows the amount of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with and without controlling the age of respondents. There is a positive and moderate correlation between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with age controls ( $r=0.417$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Without age control, there is also a positive and moderate segregated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0.413$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the possibility of a relationship between age with both variables is low. Therefore this hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table (4): Analysis of the segregated correlation between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the age control**

Socio-economic status	The amount of the use of the use of virtual social networks	Social indifference	variables
.085 .090 398	.417 .000 398	7000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	413 000 397	7000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 5:** *There is a relationship between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social indifference in term of marital status*

Table 5 shows the amount of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of virtual social network and social indifference with and without controlling the marital status of respondents. There is a positive and moderate correlation between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference with marital status controls ( $r=0/417$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Without marital status control, there is also a positive and moderate segregated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0/415$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the use of virtual social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the possibility of a relationship between the marital status with both variables is low. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table (5): Analysis of the segregated correlation between the amount of use of virtual social networks and social networks social indifference with the marital status control**

marital status	The amount of the use of the use of virtual social networks	Social indifference	variables
.047 .344 398	.417 .000 398	1000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	413 000 397	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 6:** *There is a relationship between the diversity in the use of social networks and social indifference in term of gender*

Table 6 shows the degree of diversity of use of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of social networks and social indifference with the control of the gender of respondents so and without controlling them. There is a positive and very strong correlation between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference with the control of gender ( $r=0/787$ ) and ( $p=0/00$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Without controlling the gender, there is a positive and very strong segregated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0/787$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference is real relationship and possibility of a relationship between gender with both variables is low. Therefore, this this hypothesis is confirmed  
Table 6 Analysis of the segregated correlation between the degree of diversity of use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of gender.

**Table (6): Distinctive correlation analysis between the diversity of social media use and social indifference with gender control**

gender	The degree of diversity of use of social networks	Social indifference	variables
.086 .085 398	.787 .000 398	1000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	413 000 397	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 7:** *There is a relationship between the diversity in the use of social networks and social indifference in term of age*

Table 7 shows the degree of diversity of use of segregated correlation between the variables of the use of age of respondents and without controlling them. There is a positive and very strong correlation between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference with control of the rage ( $r=0/787$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ) without controlling the age, there is a positive and very strong segregated correlation between these two variables ( $r=0/788$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p, 0/05$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the possibility of a relationship between age with both variables is low. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table (7): The analysis of the segregated correlation between the degree of diversity with the control of the age**

age	The degree of diversity of use of social networks	Social indifference	variables
.0865 .090 398	.787 .000 398	1000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	788 000 397	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

**Hypothesis No. 8:** *There is a relationship between the diversity in the use of social networks and social indifference in term of marital status*

Table 8 shows the degree of diversity of use of segregated correlation between the variables of use of social networks and social indifference with the control of the marital status of the respondents and without controlling them. There is a positive and very strong correlation between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference with the control of marital status ( $r=0/787$ ) and ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ). Without controlling the marital status, there is positive and very strong segregated correlation between these two variables ( $p=0/000$ ,  $p<0/05$ ) and ( $r=0/788$ ). Therefore, the relationship between the degree of diversity of use of social networks and social indifference is a real relationship and the possibility of a relationship between marital status. with both variables is low. Therefore. this hypothesis is confirmed.



**Table (8): Analysis of the segregated correlation between the degree of diversity of use of virtual social networks and social indifference with the control of marital status**

Marital status	The degree of diversity of use of social networks	Social indifference	variables
.047 .344 398	.787 .000 398	1000 0	Pearson correlation Significance level Social indifference degrees of freedom none
	788 000 397	1000 . 0	Pearson correlation significance level Social indifference Degree of freedom Socio-economic status

### Conclusion

The result of this study are in line with the results of no vabakhsh and Mirzapour (1394) which showed: social indifference is more in women than men, and also the rate of social indifference decreases with increasing age and income. It is also coordinated with the study of Mohseni and Sadeghti Fard (2011) whose research results indicate that: there is an upward average level of social indifference in Tehran citizens and there is a difference between gender and social indifference, so that men show higher social indifference between ethnicity and social indifference. The results of this study with the work of Verba and Nyc (2009) indicate that: blacks who attribute themselves more to their main race and have a higher ethnic awareness than others, have more participation. This study is consistent with research that shows that all societies and social groups around some kind of social indifference.

Ross (1975) showed that indifference is directly related to ethnicity he attributed the cause of indifference to socio-political issues to ethnic subcultures and inequality and exclusion caused by the unequal distribution of political, economic and social opportunities leads to class difference and ultimately the indifference of lower classes of society, that this research is coordinated to them. The results of this study are consistent with research of Jessica and Lindsey (2018), which shows that those who have a good economic and social status are less isolated. According to the results of this research. background and theories, citizens of the metropolis of USA, who have a high rate and variety in the use of social networks has influenced their behaviors, and this effect has a two-way relationship that in some cases has caused social indifference in real space, but due to freedom and less ignorance in cyberspace, people have more obligations to each other in that space, that is, warm and cordial relationships have been trans formed from real social environment to the cyber environment and cyberspace.

### Suggestions

1. The present study was conducted among the citizens of Tehran and at a smaller level among the citizens of two regions. It is suggested that this issue be researched at the level of whole society. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of social indifference, another suggestion in this regard is that the subject be studied from the perspective of other experts in the mentioned sciences.
2. Enhancing civic commitment by calling on government officials to treat the people honestly and inviting citizens to participate in social activities people honestly and inviting citizens to participate in social activities and the correct recognition of collective and national values in order to create collective interest seems necessary.
3. In future research, Qualitative method, especially field study methods, for better comparison, for better and more results, and to call members of society to prefer others and altruism, and to consider social and legal rewards for altruistic activities in social processes with education, In the main social in the main social institutions, In the direction of more socialism, which is the opposite of excessive individualism. Considering the indicators of social participation in development planning at the micro, medium and marco levels for future research. Providing

social and cultural contexts among the masse crowd by designing and formulating related programs to expand the culture of positive social interaction.

4. Increasing the sense of efficiency and effectiveness in society by involving people in the socio-political destiny and appropriate propaganda for the maximum participation of social individuals, which requires long-term plans and frequent fulfillment of the promises of government officials. Studying the ways to increase the feeling of social satisfaction by meeting the material and immaterial needs of citizens, especially by the government and its economic activities and reducing the feeling of relative deprivation by establishing a balanced system of social inequality and further reduce of social discrimination and class divisions.
5. It is suggested that the necessary backgrounds (including encouraging people to participate in public benefit works, establishing cooperatives, encouraging people to participate in cultural, economic, and social activities) be provided to strengthen the social participation of individuals, which results in strengthening social solidarity.

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