

Exploring the Factors Affecting the Consumption of Cultural Goods among the Youth of Yasuj

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Abstract

One of the most common methods to identify and represent oneself, especially in contemporary era, is cultural consumption. In cultural consumption, people often consume a variety of valuable goods and symbols, not because of their material value but due to their cultural one in order to create desirable images of themselves in the minds of others. In the meantime, the choice of a particular pattern of cultural consumption or cultural practices or preferences requires cultural resources or cultural capital; or in other words, cultural consumption needs cultural resources and cultural capital. In the present study, the statistical population including 15-29 year olds in Yasuj and a sample size of 379 people were selected. Amos software was used to analyze the data. The results suggested that, there is a relationship between independent variables (religiosity, cultural capital, social capital and socio-economic status), and the consumption of cultural goods. The output of the model also indicates that the variable of cultural capital (0.32) has explained the highest amount of variance of cultural consumption. Moreover, the variables of social capital and religiosity explained 18% and -18 %t of the variance of cultural consumption in the workplace.

Keywords: Religiosity, Cultural capital, Social capital, Socio-economic status, Consumption of cultural goods.

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1. Introduction

Consumption of culture and cultural goods can be defined as a non-economic and political activity, as commonly understood. It also implicitly includes free social activity. This activity, in its purest and most creative forms, leads to cultural creation, as what artists, poets, philosophers, thinkers and creators of written, audio and video images do. However, in its usual forms, it includes an activity in which a person, by consuming what has been created, becomes acquainted with the cultural matter. Besides, it helps people to improve and flourish their capacities. What is referred to as enlightenment can be the result of this type of cultural activity. Consumption of cultural goods is a dimension of cultural life that has been considered in this study, and is mainly related to the development of industry and culture and is more applicable to new societies than traditional societies and is concentrated on the use of media and cultural means (tools with which a cultural activity is performed).

The results and consequences of the consumption of cultural and artistic goods continuously affects the amount of the consumption, so that positive results leads to more and better consumption, and the weak results, causes a decrease in consumption, and society will be deprived of the desired results and consequences of their consumption. The consumption of cultural goods has a positive and constructive effect on members of society, while increasing the ability of creativity, innovation, initiative, patience, forbearance, and perseverance in the face of problems and issues. Furthermore, it improves the consumption of cultural goods and cultural capital which itself results in reduction of social anomalies. Moreover, individuals show their social status and dignity by the cultural consumption, through which, their behavior and reaction in social events can be explained and predicted. One of the important theoretical concerns in the field of sociology of culture is what factors determine the type and amount of cultural consumption of people.

The use of goods, such as housing, clothing, food, music, etc., is not only essential for the survival of human beings, but can also reflect their social status. Recognition of individuals' tastes and preferences in the consumption of goods, especially cultural goods, can determine the type and structure of social relations and the degree of interaction of people in different social

stratification. Yasuj as a city with ethnic and traditional context and as the center of the province is in a vague atmosphere in terms of consumption of cultural goods. On the one hand, traditional structures are still strong, and on the other hand, the expansion of communication has challenged this traditional environment. One of the important theoretical concerns in the field of sociology of culture is what factors determine the type and amount of cultural consumption of people.

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2.Review of Literature

Rezaian and Shariati (2007) have conducted a study on the consumption of cultural goods of rural households". Findings of the study showed that the residents of Qahan village spend 89% of their free time going to the cemetery

and going on a pilgrimage to Imamzadeh Hadi. Watching TV and talking included 29 percent while performing works of art and handicrafts was the activity with the lowest frequency. At the descriptive level, statistical tests also confirmed lack of relationship between the consumption of cultural goods and the place of employment.

Ghasemi and Samim (2008) have conducted a study on the relationship between social stratification and cultural consumption using data on musical consumption in Tehran. Findings from the survey indicated that: 1. there is a positive and significant relationship between class and status, and the amount of music consumption. 2. Status has a significant relationship with both qualitative components of cultural (musical) consumption, ie elite and mass consumption. 3. Class also has a significant relationship with only one qualitative component of cultural (musical) consumption, ie mass consumption. 4- Individuals with higher status have more tendency to consume music belonging to elite, while their tendency to consume music belonging to the mass culture is less, 5. Individuals in higher class have more tendency to consume music belonging to mass culture. 6. According to the results of regression analysis, status difference (difference in education, job status and lineage) can predict the amount and type of cultural (musical) consumption of individuals more than the class difference (difference in economic status).

Rashidpour (2009) studied the consumption of cultural goods among control students in Lorestan province. In this descriptive-survey type study, a researcher-made questionnaire was used, the content validity of which had been assessed by referring to experts and specialists. The statistical population of this study was 580 people including 290 students as control group and 290 students as non-control group, in Lorestan province in the academic year 2009. The limited members of the statistical population were all examined. The results showed that the consumption of most cultural goods among the control group was not at a good level. They had only a good performance for some goods, such as goods related to games and entertainment. Furthermore, there was no significant difference between the consumption of cultural goods of control and non-control students in most cases.

Zahra Shoja (2008) suggested that the variables of education degree and leisure time have an increasingly positive relationship with the consumption of cultural goods, however, the proportion of each is different. Moreover, the social class also showed a weak relationship with the consumption of cultural goods.

According to a survey conducted by the media center of research, studies and evaluation (2004), more than half of the respondents (54%) were highly interested in watching sports programs on TV, and 60% spend their free time watching sport programs.

Among the people of Colombia, the consumption of cultural goods is as much as the basic necessities of life (Herrera, 2004).

Social status plays a key role in distinguishing between active consumers of these goods, and those who are more inactive, are related to inactive styles (Alderson 2007).

3.The Theoretical Framework of Research

According to Bourdieu, cultural consumption varies depending on social classes and stratifications, the social environment in which one lives, the amount of symbolic capital available to each class, and the cultural criteria by which each class identifies and distinguishes itself. Therefore, the ruling class seeks to maintain its position through the strategy of differentiation and discernment to subsequently impose its taste and interest on other members of society and groups. The logic of distinction dictates that the distance between behaviors and cultural consumption remain distinct; thus, as soon as a cultural commodity becomes popular, it is replaced by a new cultural behavior belonging to the ruling class (Tavassoli, 2004, p.15).

According to Marx, economic structure is the foundation of society, and the pattern of consumption of cultural goods as part of culture is considered as a cultural superstructure of society. Social class is an objective manifestation of economic structure which is based on private property accumulating as a result of economic resources. These assets are not just simple personal property, but also resources that can be used to produce valuable things and accumulate wealth. Class, on the other hand, has an objective dimension referring to

mental factors and class self-awareness. The superstructure also consists of any structure that embodies the ideas affecting human life. Thus, the educational system and mass media are part of the superstructure that has become very important in the new era as a means by which people learn ideas and gain information. He also refers to the consumption of foreign goods called the art of globalization or globalization of consumption, which causes the needs of society not only to be met from within, but also to increase their dependence on foreign material and intellectual products by creating a new environment. For this reason, it promises the rise of world literature in the field of cultural thought.

In addition to the economic dimension of social structure, it also pays attention to the political and social dimensions. Among the social classes, the rich always try to monopolize the purchase of expensive goods and benefits of socially useful species and education as much as it deals with cost, because the use of expensive goods is exclusive to the upper classes of society. Although not all cultural goods, including radio and television, books, and newspapers are not much expensive, it is predicted that more expensive goods such as satellite, music, or theater and cinema be limited to the upper classes. Additionally, the popularity of different types of music varies among different stratifications. Meanwhile, differences between religions should be mentioned when considering cultural consumption, as in terms of piety, the use of cultural goods can indicate worldliness that can vary between different religions.

To determine social stratification, beside wealth, Weber refers to an equal level of community-approved credit and honor. Generally, according to Weber, stratification is based on three main factors: economic status with indicators of access to property, family, occupation, capital and place of residence, social status including lifestyle, consumption method, science and knowledge, housing, clothing and a particular form of training. The third dimension is the socio-economic status of power, which is not an objective and possessable phenomenon like property, but legal powers that usually have a specific role. Thus, most sources of power can be analyzed by the individuals' social role. In addition to objective criteria, Weber also cares about mental and personal

perceptions of people about their class position, because the effects of this personal perception are reflected in people's behavior.

Parsons believes in the cybernetic relationship and exchange of information and energy between subsystems, with culture at the top of information storage. When an organism encounters culture through the educational system or the family, it becomes cultured and elevated and takes on a cultural form upon internalization. This process transforms tendencies into cultural ones and integrates moral standards. However, in the new society and with formation of core families, the role of the family has lost its importance and the role of education, professional organizations and peer groups has become more prominent. After these steps, the personality is formed, which consists of basic tendencies. These tendencies force active individuals to accept or reject what is offered in the environment.

In terms of living, when the area of residence is the determining factor of the social stratification, people in low-income areas with high levels of education, employment and income follow a higher level of consumption-based lifestyle to validate the claim of merit. This can also include the pattern of consumption of cultural goods. Therefore, people's claim for a higher level of social status would be recognized.

Research hypotheses were:

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between socio-economic status and consumption of cultural goods.

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between cultural capital and consumption of cultural goods.

Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between religiosity and consumption of cultural goods.

Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between social capital and consumption of cultural goods.

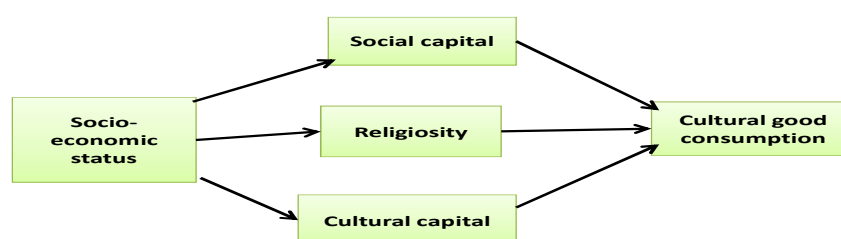


Figure 1. Division of social capital

4. Methodology

In the present study aiming to explore the socio-cultural factors affecting the consumption of cultural goods in Yasouj, a survey method was used. The most common technique in this method is to use a questionnaire. To measure variables and collect necessary data and information, the questionnaire was used and its items were compiled based on theoretical bases and conceptual definitions. The statistical population includes all 2731 young people aged 15-29 in Yasuj, with the sample size of 379 people. Stratified multi-stage sampling has been used in the research. First, the target clusters were identified using the clustering method and then the desired sample was identified using a simple random sampling method.

According to the information of Yasuj Municipality, the whole city was divided into five districts from which, three districts were randomly selected and each district allocated a part of its population to the the final sample. Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size. According to the calculations, the sample size was 379 people.

5. Findings

Findings showed that the mean age of the respondents was 36.75 years. Most of them (42%) had a bachelor's degree and 11% have a M.A or Ph.D. degree. Most respondents (37%) had less than 10 years of work experience. The majority of respondents (53%), had social support in the workplace. Most of

the employees (46%) have moderate efficiency. all the variables were tested separately in relation to the dependent variable, namely efficiency, and its results were examined. It should be noted that the Pearson test was used to analyze the hypotheses consisting of two distance variables. Since the statistics was conducted in the present study, only the value of the correlation coefficient is sufficient which indicates the intensity and direction of the relationship in the whole study population.

The data in Table 1 shows the value of the correlation coefficient between the independent variables of research and consumption of cultural goods.

1-Hypothesis No.1 stated that there is a relationship between socio-economic status and consumption of cultural goods. The data in the table show that the two variables of socio-economic status and consumption of cultural goods have a significant correlation.

2-Hypothesis No.2 stated that there is a relationship between cultural capital and the consumption of cultural goods. As can be seen in Table 1, a positive but not very strong relationship has been observed between these two variables. That is, when cultural capital is increased, consumption of cultural goods increased too.

3-Hypothesis No.3 stated that there is a relationship between religiosity and consumption of cultural goods. As can be seen in Table 1, a positive and almost moderate relationship is observed between these two variables. That is, as religiosity was increased, the consumption of cultural goods increased.

4-Hypothesis No. 4 stated that there is a relationship between social capital and the consumption of cultural goods. As can be seen in Table 1, a positive and almost moderate relationship is observed between these two variables. That is, as social capital increased, the consumption of cultural goods increased.

Table 1: results of Pearson correlation coefficient test between independent variables and cultural consumption

variable	Pearson correlation coefficient	Level of significance
Socio-economic status	0.321	0.001
Cultural capital	0.237	0.001
Social capital	0.277	0.001
Religiosity	0.311	0.001

5.1. Modeling Structural Equations Using Amos Graphics

Structural equation modeling is a very powerful and accurate tool in terms of methodology, which makes it possible to analyze complex phenomena in the human sciences. This method allows the analysis of information in a multivariate and related way and is in a higher position than regression analysis, path analysis and factor analysis. Although structural equation modeling is a combination of these analyzes, it cannot be reduced to any of them. In the measurement section, as can be seen from the model, the variables of latent variables are loaded on them relatively well. The structural part of the model also indicates that the variable of cultural capital (0.32) has explained the highest amount of variance of cultural consumption. Moreover, the variables of social capital and religiosity explained (0.18) and (-0.18) of the variance of cultural consumption at work respectively.

The model indices show the goodness of fit of the proposed theoretical structure with the observed data and the structural validity of the measurement device in question. Most of the comparative indices of the model also show values higher than 0.90, which means the capacity of the model to move away from an independence model and approaching a saturated model based on criteria defined for them. Since the criteria of GFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.9 and IFI = 0.9 are close to 1, it indicates high fit of the model, and the criterion of RMSEA = 0.06 indicates the poor performance of the residuals in the model. (Of course, since χ^2 statistics are completely influenced by the sample size and the sample size in this study is high, the significance or non-significance of χ^2 is not a good criterion for judging the model).

DF	P	Chi-square	AGFI	RMSEA	GFI	IFI	NFI	TLI	CMIN/DF
77	0.000	0.21185	0.89	0.06	0.91	0.9	0.88	0.9	3.223

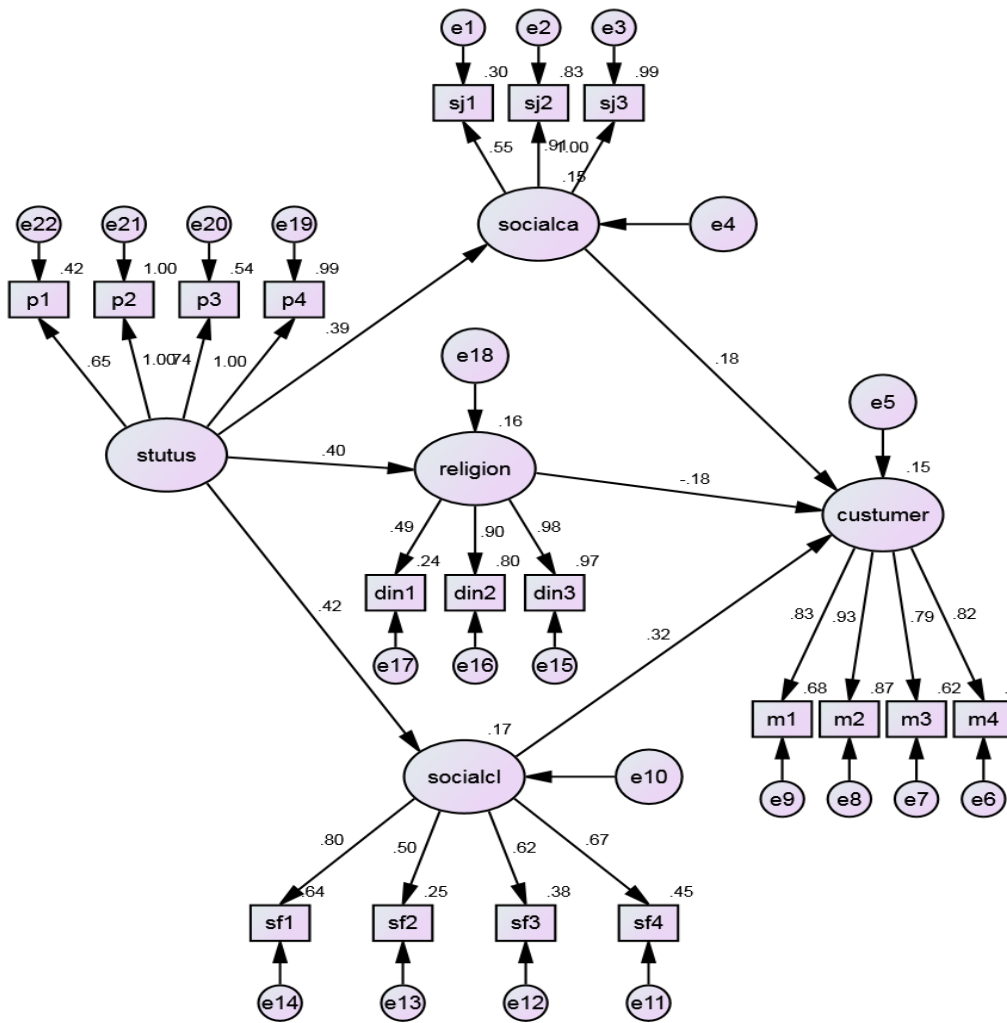


Figure 2: Model of the research

6. Conclusion

With the rising standard of living and welfare, the recreational and cultural needs for leisure time emerged, to the extent that governments, which at the beginning did not consider it their duty to intervene and participate in cultural and recreational affairs, turned interested to intervene in cultural affairs. Although it was first done in developed countries, gradually the governments

of developing countries, including our country, imitated this policy. The collection of book fairs, film festivals, plays, music, press, etc., showed the government's willingness to intervene in the consumption of cultural goods, as well as the people's increasing interest in the consumption of cultural products in Iran. Nowadays, various agencies in Iran, such as the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, the Radio and Television, Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, the Ministry of Education, etc., are generalizing the culture. By reviewing some statistics, the evolution of the consumption of cultural goods will be determined.

Cultural resources and capital are needed to select different types and methods of cultural consumption and, consequently, a particular cultural lifestyle. Besides, knowledge and education play an important role to access cultural resources and capital.

It is especially important in developing countries, including Iran, where education plays an important role in the social mobility of individuals.

Hypothesis 1 stated that there is a relationship between socio-economic status and consumption of cultural goods.

The data show that the two variables of socio-economic status and consumption of cultural goods have a significant correlation. Class differences also lead to differences in the type of selection. Each group decides on the consumption of cultural goods according to its own facilities.

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is a relationship between cultural capital and the consumption of cultural goods. As can be seen in Table 1, a positive but not very strong relationship has been observed between these two variables. That is, consumption of cultural goods has increased by increasing cultural capital. People dealing with cultural elements are more inclined to consume cultural goods.

Hypothesis 3: there is a relationship between religiosity and the consumption of cultural goods.

As can be seen in Table 1, a positive and almost moderate relationship is observed between these two variables. That is, consumption of cultural goods has increased by increasing religiosity. Religion, as a very important cultural

variable, can motivate a person to make more use of culture and related elements.

Hypothesis.4 stated that there is a relationship between social capital and the consumption of cultural goods.

As can be seen in Table 1, a positive and almost moderate relationship is observed between these two variables. That is, consumption of cultural goods has increased by increasing social capital. People are more likely to use cultural goods when interacting with those who care about culture.

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