

# FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

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## Studying the Youth Lifestyle with an Approach to Order and Security



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**Abstract.** Social security is among the essential indicators of the human community foundation, both based on the social conventions and the normative approaches. The main objective of the present study is the survey of the relationship between the modern life styles and the youths' risky behaviors. The data required for the present study have been collected through the use of questionnaire and based on a surveying method. The questions are all formulated based on the study theoretical framework and the study hypotheses. The study population includes the youngsters ranging in age from 18 to 35 years of age from the city of Abadeh (Iran) from among which a total number of 286 individuals were selected as the study sample volume and they were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaires. In this study, 44.8% of the sample population were female and 55.2% were male. 44.8% of respondents were less than

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25 years, 34.7% of respondents were 25 to 30 years old and 20.5% of respondents were older than 30 years. Also, 61.9% of respondents were single and 38.1% were married. The results of the current study indicated that there is no statistically significant difference between the employment and marital status and risk taking. But there was found a significant difference between gender and risk-taking. The main hypothesis proposed in the present study deals with the survey of the relationship between youngsters' modern life styles and risk-taking (risky driving) and according to the results obtained in the present study it was observed that the religiosity ( $R=0.423$ ), entertainment-centeredness ( $R=0.222$ ), adventurousness ( $R=0.180$ ), cultural consumerism ( $R=0.204$ ), socialism (communitarianism) ( $R=0.293$ ) indices were in a statistically significant relationship with risk-taking in a 99% confidence level; but the indices such as aestheticism ( $R=0.073$ ) and health-seeking ( $R=0.031$ ) were not found in a statistically significant relationship with risk-taking in the youths.

**Keywords:** Lifestyle; Order and security; Risk-seeking; Youth.

### Introduction

One of the important, complicated and novel concepts in the today's world and of a great use in political, social and economic discussions is the subject of security. Security and safety are the most fundamental human needs [1]. The individual's subjective and objective security depends on the social security and it is enumerated as one of the underlying and vital scales in safeguarding and preserving the essential values generally accepted by the society [2]. Barry Buzan was the first person who put forth social topics in a codified manner. Buzan classifies social security into five categories: military, political, economic, social and bioenvironmental security. In Buzan's idea, because the social security is proposed within a terrestrial territory it is of a secondary importance in respect to the national security [3]. What is focused on by the national security experts as social security, societal security and socialized

security has also been indicated to be implying the necessity for the existence of security and safety regarding the society. Because societal security is not so much common an expression, there is sought aid from the term social security to elaborate on such a concept [4]. One of the social security indicators is the safety and security on the roads and the streets. The security and safety on road depends highly on the way the road users make use of it while driving their own vehicles. The driver's behavior has been recognized as the main factor in the occurrence of the road incidents in Iran and in the global level. 90% to 95% of the road accidents in Iran have been found to be related to the human factor and particularly the driver's behavior [5]. After the industrial revolution, the vehicles and automobiles were considered and introduced as being the indices of civilization and driving was rendered necessary for satisfying various life needs. In Iran, road accidents are the



first reason behind deaths and mortalities in the age group below 40 years of age and over 71% of the total mortalities in such an age group is connected to the traffic accidents; this has caused the human factor, amongst four reasons of human, road, vehicle and the environment, to be considered as the most significant reason behind the occurrence of the accidents in Iran [6]. In this regard, many of the researchers believe that driving and the contingent risk of accident should be looked for in the individuals' life context since behaviors selected and exhibited by the individual while driving is a reflection of the way s/he lives, thus driving can be linked to the other behaviors demonstrated by the individuals. Life style can be defined as the system of the positive and negative choices made by an individual within the structural limits. Life style possesses two positive and negative (healthy and risky) aspects.

A great many of the researches indicate that the individuals choosing the healthy life style exhibit less risky behaviors. Cockerham believes that "life style is a collective pattern of the healthy behaviors based on the people's choices and corresponding to their life situations". These choices are effective on the people's health-related behaviors" [7]. Since the city of Abadeh is situated along the highway connecting the two provinces of Isfahan and Fars and more importantly it is located along the path connecting the northern provinces to the southern ones; learning about the youngsters' life styles is

necessary therein because such a life style is of a great influence on their driving style and, especially, risky driving. Particularly, because, besides safeguarding the citizens' safety, according to the special situation of the city, it is expected that the passengers and travelers choosing this route and the city for taking their trips or the ones who enter the city will find it more peaceful and convenient.

#### Literature review

Abaneh (1994) in an article evaluated the driving behavior and the effects thereof on the traffic in the city of Accra, Ghana, and realized that the drivers play a significant role in the occurrence of traffic-related problems on the urban roads. Wallace (2003) in a study dealt with the survey of the external visual factors' role on the drivers' distraction when driving their own automobiles and came to the conclusion that the quality and the way the external factors such as the signs and billboards positioned along the roads, for example if in an irregular and confusing manner, can be a cause of the drivers' distraction [8]. Shakeri Niya and Mohammad Pour, (2009), has come to the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between mental health, aggression, personality type and driving habits in the drivers [6]. Share Pour et al. (2010) consider gender as the most important factor in analyzing the driving accidents and they indicate that the accident rates and the tendency for highly risky driving is in a lower level in women in respect to the men [7]. Ferdowsi and Ahmadi, (2010)

in an article dealt with the comparison of the psychological factors such as precision, aggressiveness, personality and the time to react in the randomly and non-randomly selected women drivers, randomly selected women and men drivers and also the non-randomly selected women and men drivers [9]. But Ahmadi, (2011) in an article has come to the conclusion that there is no significant relationship between the two male and female genders regarding the aspects such as driving violations and the driving violation rates are very high for both of the genders [10]. In a study conducted by Gorjiyan et al. (2014) choosing the risky life style has been found to be the contributing factor in the occurrence of the driving accidents [11]. Garrusi et al. (2014) found out that there is an inverse and significant correlation in an intermediate level between the various attitudes regarding the driving regulations and both of the driving behaviors aspects. There was also found an inverse and significant relationship between some of the personality characteristics and intentional mistakes. The relationship between internal non-control perception and driving violations was also found to be negative [12].

### **Theoretical framework**

Driving behavior is a conduct which is chosen by the driver in the form of a pattern of driving on the road [13]. In the social definition paradigm (super-structuralism) in contrast to the other two important sociological paradigms, that are the social reality paradigm and the social behavior

paradigm, the actors and the way the social reality is constructed by them, also the definitions and the interpretations made by them of the situations are emphasized and, generally, there is offered a creative image of the actors. From the school of symbolic mutual interaction perspective as one of the schools in social definition paradigm, the human beings play an active role in socialization process.

In the opinion of such a school's experts, socialization is not a unilateral process during the course of which the actors merely turn into someone more of information receivers, rather the actors do not fully accept whatever they acquire in such a social instructional process due to reasons such as their capability to think and rethink and, instead, they interfere in and manipulate the process based on the temporal and spatial expediencies and situations [14]. Social supervision (social control) is, in fact, a term used to point to the socialization process expansion. Such an inspection and control refers to the methods and the tools which are being applied in the society in order to make the individuals adapt to the expectations of a special society or group of the social control mechanisms [15]. There are various classifications presented in this regard: 1. formal and informal mechanisms, 2. internal and external mechanisms, 3. value, affective, economical, harsh and supernatural mechanisms, 4. remote and near (adjacent) control [16]. Internalization of the driving norms and regulations and keeping bound to



them is usually carried out in a bilateral and constant process and the drivers should not be seen as a sole receiver and implementer in internalizing such norms and putting them into practical use, rather they should be considered as active participants. Regarding the contents of such norms, they are considered as enacting and executing parties who deal with the temporal and spatial aspects of the norms and regulations enforcement in a continuous process and they also deal with the interpretation and giving meaning to such regulations and then try to internalize or not internalize the new norms and regulations, to preserve or not preserve the previously internalized norms and also adhering to or not observing such internalized norms.

Some of the researches adopting a psychological approach have shown that the driving behavior is comprised of three cognitive (incorrect evaluation of the danger such as wrong estimation), affective (including the affective needs and deficiencies such as personality immaturities, seeking for supremacy, challenge and competitiveness, risk-taking) and sensory-motor or behavioral (performance error or slips) aspects. Also, some of the studies have pointed to the relationship between the life style and the driver's behavior. Some others have underlined the social attitudes and variables which are posited from a sociological attitude and are therefore expressive of the individual's propensities, perceptions and feelings while driving in an interaction with the others such

as their standpoint in respect to the law, police and violation and also aggressiveness, social satisfaction and having an understanding of the national and religious identity; and, finally, some of the other studies have made a reference to the structural and background factors which are linked to the socio-economic variables from the sociological points of view and also they have been found to be associated with the variables related to the environment and the driver's role such as the driver's age, gender, education level, marital status and so forth [17].

The theory of external or direct control is in conjunction with the theory of making reasonable choices. Homens considers the mutual social action as an economical exchange because he is of the belief that the individuals think of the advantages and disadvantages and the consequences of the actions they are intending to accomplish and the choice of performing an action occurs when the individual evaluates the outcomes as being positive and prosperous. Being committed to the society objectives and values based on the internal control deters the individuals from getting engaged in the offensive and criminal behavior through feelings of guilt, culpability and shame [18]. Behravan classifies the factors effective on the highly risky driving behavior into three categories:

- Firstly, the additive factors including the social needs (the theory of the needs and the symbolic mutual interactions), aggressive

driving behavior (the theory of aggression and failure), fatalism (neutralization theory) and illegality (the theory of external social control).

- Secondly, the reductive factors including the legality (the internal social control), the sense of religious and national identity (symbolic mutual interaction), life satisfaction (the theory of justifiable social action), type of the attitudes towards the police (symbolic mutual interaction), the contingency of being caught and punished (reasonable action).

- Thirdly, the basic controller factors (the theory of normative weakness) [17].

Life situations reduce the choices opportunities. Life situations are mostly the very individuals' socio-economical statuses. Therefore, some of the people have more choices and options in contrast to the others. According to the stress put by Bordio on the importance of the structure, any concept of the healthy style is in need of paying particular attention to the opportunities. The life opportunities influence the life styles in two ways [15]: 1) socio-economical and 2) perceptive boundaries which are derived from socialization and gaining experience of a certain social environment. The choices made by the actors and operators in structural areas lead to the regeneration of the social structures. According to what is put by Bordio, the choices made by the actors as regarding the transportation and traffic and other fields are all suggestive of the various

classes' tastes and verves revealed within the framework of a certain life style; such a zeal and taste is rooted in the manners [7]. On the other hand, highly risky driving among the youth (according to the Geizer's theory) is indicative of a certain type of life which should not be considered as necessarily healthy [19]. Healthy life style is one of the aspects of the life style and it is comprised of self-selected forms of consumerism such as certain choices regarding food type, clothing, countenance, automobile, forms of leisure time activities and so on; in the meantime, Cockerham moves well beyond such items and enumerates the very decisions made concerning the type of the food to be consumed, fastening the seatbelt, individual hygiene, brushing and so forth as part of the healthy life style. In his idea, the choices related to the health, are placed within an area of the structural situations. To put it differently, the choices can be corroborated or constrained by the individual's life opportunities. He knows the healthy life style as a system of choices made by the individual according to his or her social status and life opportunities (situations) are considered by him as the social structural forms within which the people live. In Cockerham's mind, life style is a collection of the positive (healthy) choices made by the individual in the structural areas. Making choices which is connected to the topic of functionality, as Cockerham states, takes place within the structural areas such as age, gender, marital status and socio-economical bases [15].



### Research hypotheses

1. It seems that there is a significant difference between employment, marital status, gender and risk-taking in youth

2. It seems that there is a significant relationship between education, parental and individual income and risk-taking in youth

3. It seems that there is a significant relationship between modern life style characteristics of youth and their risk-taking

### Defining the concepts

Background variables include gender, employment status and marital status, education level, parents' income rate and the individual's income rate.

The independent variable in the present study is the youngsters' life style. The indices of interest in this concept are religiosity, aestheticism, recreation-centeredness, adventurousness, cultural consumerism, socialism and seeking for health. The items, including participation in appealing to God, dirge ceremonies and birthday jubilation, group praying, going to mosque, visiting the fellows of the graves, saying prayers have been inquired in the religiosity index. In aestheticism, items such as putting on beautiful and fashionable and extraordinary garments, purchasing cosmetics and body products, listening to the pop music, watching romantic and satellite TV movies, listening to the music and CDs have been the focus of the inquiries. In the recreation-centeredness index items such as driving after drinking alcoholic drinks, the use of sedatives,

smoking cigar and taking psychotropic pills, taking part in parties, being a member of clubs and staying out of the home and in the adventurousness index items such as looking attractive, acquiring a feeling of authority, gaining peacefulness, driving purposelessly and roaming around and driving with friends and in cultural consumerism index items such as the use of internet, visiting museums and theaters, listening to classical music, playing musical instruments, watching social films, reading romantic literary works going to cafes and in socialism index items such as paying attention to the global peace issues, human rights, bioenvironmental problems and political discussions and debates and in health-seeking index items such as playing sports, having interests in group sports, going to the stadiums, doing individual physical activities, physical education activities were investigated. The dependent variable in the current study is adventurousness which includes items such as making use of mobile phones while driving, driving with higher speeds, entering the no-crossing streets, not fastening the seatbelt, being careless about the driving signs, the use of audio CDs when driving, disallowed overtake, not observing the legal distance, fast overtake and coming upon another car abruptly.

### Methodology

The data required for the present study have been collected through the use of questionnaire and based on a surveying method. Sampling was multistage random

sampling. The study population includes the youngsters ranging in age from 18 to 35 years of age from the city of Abadeh (Iran) from among which a total number of 286 individuals were selected as the study sample volume and they were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaires. The questions are all formulated based on the study theoretical framework and the study hypotheses. The questions validity rates have been computed based on Cronbach's alpha scale and they are as follow: for religiosity it has been estimated to be equal to 0.93, for aestheticism it is 0.85, for recreation-centeredness it is calculated to be 0.81, for adventurousness a validity rate of 0.89 was obtained and for cultural consumerism it is computed to be equal to 0.85 and for socialism it is equal to 0.78, for seeking health it is 0.85 and for the dependent variable, risk taking, it is estimated to be equal to 0.92. Data were analyzed by using SPSS software and t-test and regression statistics was used to examine the research hypothesis.

**Results**

In this study, 44.8% of the sample population were female and 55.2% were male.

44.8% of respondents were less than 25 years, 34.7% of respondents were 25 to 30 years old and 20.5% of respondents were older than 30 years. Also, 61.9% of respondents were single and 38.1% were married.

**The first hypothesis test: It seems that there is a significant difference between employment, marital status, gender and risk-taking in youth**

According to the T (*Table 1*) (1.8) and its significance level (0.073), the difference between the averages of the unemployed and the employed was not significant and the hypothesis was rejected. According to the T (6.702) and its significance level (0.000), the difference between the averages of the female and male was significant, and this hypothesis was confirmed. Also, according to the T (0.085) and its significance level (0.932), the difference between the averages of the single and married was not significant and the hypothesis was rejected.

**The second hypothesis test: It seems that there is a significant relationship between education, parental and individual income and risk-taking in youth**

Table 1. The mean differences test between variables of employment, gender, marital status and risk-taking

		Abundance	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	t	sig
Employment	Unemployed	165	39.806	9.391	0.731	1.800	0.073
	Employed	102	37.686	9.288	0.918		
Marital	Female	119	42.974	8.610	8.610	6.702	0.000
	Male	148	35.797	8.767	8.767		
Gender	Single	165	38.957	9.248	0.719	0.085	0.932
	Married	102	39.058	9.657	0.956		





The results showed that, the education variable had a 4.2% (*Table 2*) correlation with risk-taking. Based on values of  $F=0.460$  and  $\text{sig}=0.498$ , there was no significant relationship between the two variables.

Parental income had no correlation with risk-taking variable, also there was no significant relationship between the two variables ( $F=0.000$  and  $\text{sig}=0.997$ ). Individual income had correlation with risk-taking variable, but based on values of  $F=0.328$  and  $\text{sig}=0.567$ , there was no significant relationship between the two variables.

**The third hypothesis test: It seems that there is a significant relationship between modern life style characteristics of youth and their risk-taking**

The results showed that, religion-oriented had a 42.3% (*Table 3*) correlation with risk-taking. According to the values of  $F=57.699$  and  $\text{sig}=0.000$ , there was a significant relationship between religion-oriented and

risk-taking ( $p<0.01$ ). The aestheticism had a 7.3% correlation with risk-taking, also there was no significant relationship between the two variables ( $F=1.420$  and  $\text{sig}=0.233$ ).

Entertainment-oriented had a 22.2% correlation with risk-taking. According to the values of  $F=13.732$  and  $\text{sig}=0.000$ , there was a significant relationship between entertainment-oriented and risk-taking ( $p<0.01$ ). The adventurous had a 18% correlation with risk-taking, also there was a significant relationship between adventurous and risk-taking ( $F=8.857$  and  $\text{sig}=0.003$ ) ( $p<0.01$ ). Cultural consumption variable had a 20.4% correlation with risk-taking. According to the values of  $F=11.496$  and  $\text{sig}=0.001$ , there was a significant relationship between the two variables. ( $p<0.01$ ).

Society-oriented variable had a 29.3% correlation with risk-taking variable. According to the values of  $F=24.884$  and  $\text{sig}=0.000$ , there was a significant relationship between

Table 2. Bivariate regression analysis between education, parental income, individual income and risk-taking

Items	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> ad	t	sig	F
Education	0.042	0.002	-0.002	0.679	0.498	0.460
Parental income	0.000	0.000	-0.004	0.574	0.997	0.000
Individual income	0.035	0.001	-0.003	0.004	0.567	0.328

Table 3: Bivariate regression analysis between the indices of modern lifestyle and risk-taking

Items	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> ad	t	sig	F
Religion-oriented	0.423	0.179	0.176	7.590	0.000	57.699
Aestheticism	0.073	0.005	0.002	1.195	0.233	1.429
Entertainment-oriented	0.222	0.049	0.046	-3.706	0.000	13.732
Adventurous	0.180	0.032	0.029	-2.976	0.003	8.857
Cultural consumption	0.204	0.042	0.038	3.391	0.001	11.496
Society-oriented	0.293	0.076	0.082	4.988	0.000	24.884
Health-seeking	0.031	0.001	-0.003	0.511	0.610	0.261

society-oriented and risk-taking ( $p < 0.01$ ). Health-seeking variables had a 3.1 % correlation with risk-taking, also there was no significant relationship between the two variables ( $F = 0.261$  and  $\text{sig} = 0.610$ ), and the hypothesis was rejected.

### Conclusion

Social security is among the essential indicators of the human community foundation, both based on the social conventions and the normative approaches. The approaches in the first set consider the social security as being a result of the social contracts and conventions between the human beings and the proponents of the second approach know it as an outcome of the normative, cultural structures which are of a determinative influence on the individual well beyond the individual's own power. If the human beings in a society break the contracts and the collective conventions or if they are found violating the normative orders they are said to have damaged the social security depending on the importance and value given to the related conventions and norms. According to the idea that the technology has become an integral part of the human social life and also that an array of certain values, norms, personal experiences, beliefs and habits can be effective on its application and also because it has been known to make social and cultural changes in the societies, the risk-taking rate (highly risky driving behavior) based on the type of the behavior shown can be different in a comparison between

the developed countries and the developing countries and the various cities in Iran. Of course, due to the lack of having access to the comparable information for the entire cases of the highly risky driving behavior and also as a result of the differences in the assessment scales adopted by the current study we only sufficed to the survey of the relationship between background demographic factors and the life style with the highly risky driving behavior. According to the importance of the mechanization process and its penetration into every aspect of the people's daily lives and the effects it has on the people's lives and the significance of driving and highly risky driving behavior, the current study is seeking to find an answer to the question that whether there is a relationship between the life style and the risk-taking behavior (highly risky driving behavior)? The investigation of the results obtained herein indicated that there is no significant difference between the employment and risk-taking and the hypothesis was rejected, consequently. Also, there was found a statistically significant mean difference between the gender and the risk-taking and thus the hypothesis was confirmed. These findings are corresponding with the results obtained in the studies which dealt with the evaluation of the gender differences and highly risky driving behavior; for instance, the research performed by Haghshenas et al. (2008) [13], Share Pour et al. (2010) [7] and Cockerham (2004) [15] confirmed the existence of a significant



difference between the gender and the highly risky driving behavior. There was no significant mean difference shown between the marital status and the risk-taking and the hypothesis was accordingly rejected. The findings obtained herein are all contradicting the results obtained in the studies undertaken by Younesian and Moradi who indicated that there was a relationship between the marital status and risk-taking. The results of the bivariate regression analyses demonstrated that there was no significant relationship found between the individual's income and the risk-taking behavior and the hypothesis should be correspondingly rejected. This finding is not consistent with the results obtained in the studies conducted by Younesian and Moradi (2005) who indicated that the relationship between the drivers' performance and their education level and the model of the car used by them has been statistically significant and they also have been found to be conforming to the results obtained in the studies carried out by Haghshenas (2008) [13].

The main hypothesis proposed in the current study was the survey of the relationship

between the youths' modern life style and their risk-taking and based on the results obtained it can be observed that the indices of religiosity ( $R=0.423$ ), recreation-centeredness ( $R=0.222$ ), adventurousness ( $R=0.180$ ), cultural consumerism ( $R=0.204$ ), socialism ( $R=0.293$ ) are in a significant relationship with the risk-taking in a 99% confidence level; but the indices of aestheticism ( $R=0.073$ ) and seeking for health ( $R=0.031$ ) are not in a statistically significant relationship with the risk-taking. These findings have been found to be corresponding with the findings obtained in the studies performed by the other scientists and scholars, as a specimen, Cockerham (2005) showed that there is a direct relationship between the alcohol consumption and smoking marijuana with driving behavior in the adolescents [19]. In this regard, Beg points out that the men who spent less time for recreation and leisure time activities were less involved in accidents or the men who had a lower rate of alcoholic drinks consumption in contrast to the women of the same age also showed a lesser rate of road accidents.

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