In traditional communities, work division between men and women is performed based on tradition and gender. Men are expected to meet their family ends by working out; in return, women are responsible to stay at home, care children, handle home affairs, cook, and provide ease and comfort for husband and other family members. But nowadays, the change of traditional roles of women and their increasing demand to participate various areas has been turned into an ignorable reality for Iranian community. Such a situation which is due to the evolution of values system, the increase of public information, the growth of civil demands, the promotion of women’s education, and the change of economic-social structures during the recent decades has caused a change in their life style (Fazeli, 2003: 8). However, employed women have more opportunities and situations and they progress with different styles and methods due to their tastes, interests, conditions, and needs. Such that, it can be claimed that women, today, have tended to certain life styles and tastes due to achieving new social positions and more economic-cultural capitals.

According to new sociologists such as Anthony Giddens, since compared to men, women participated in less productive jobs in under development countries and they are mostly involved in home works of family without any wage, there is a possibility that they show their social and identity distinctions based on life style and consumption way. Therefore, in under development and traditional communities, women are mostly regarded as consumers and it is argued that since they are involved in home works and have no social role and position, their identity distinctions can be found based on life styles. However, due to the evolution of values during the recent years, women have had more participation in social areas such as occupational areas in Iranian community. Such a situation which is due to the evolution of values system, the increase of public information, the growth of civil demands, the promotion of women’s education, and the change of economic-social structures during the recent decades has caused a change in their life style (Fazeli, 2003: 8). However, employed women have more opportunities and situations and they progress with different styles and methods due to their tastes, interests, conditions, and needs. Such that, it can be claimed that women, today, have tended to certain life styles and tastes due to achieving new social positions and more economic-cultural capitals.

However, due to value and attitude evolutions in Iranian community during the recent decades on the one hand, the development of women employment has caused their economic and social independency. It seems that employed women are experiencing a different life compared to household women. Therefore, in the present paper, life style of employed women and household women are compared in terms of special indices of life style such as consumption preferences, social relations, free time, and body management and control. The main research question can be stated as follow:

**Keywords:**
Life style, Social relations, Consumption preferences, Leisure, Body supervision, Age, Education, Family income.
1. What is the difference between employed women and housewives in terms of life style components including consumption preferences, social relation, leisure, and body management and control?

2. Is there any relation between women’s life style and some variables such as age, education and family income?

Related literature:

In a study entitled the effect of occupational position on women’s life style, Rafat Jah (2008) concluded that higher occupational position and economic capital of women leads to the decrease of their social relations. Furthermore, free time amount in women with average job positions have been higher than those with low and high positions. But, women with higher job positions allocate more time of their leisure to sport and consuming cultural products. In this study, no relation was found between women’s job position and attention to physical aspects and body management and control. Finally, it was found that women with high job position, compared to those with low positions, are far from consumption orientation, especially luxury consumption and pay more attention to the usefulness of products.

Kordi and Hadizade (2012) revealed that there is a difference between the life style of employed and unemployed women and such a difference is evident in the dimensions of social relations, body management and purchasing pattern. Additionally, the research results indicated that there is a significant relation between age, education and family income and life style. Also, job position of women was introduced as an influencing factor in their life style. Age of people and the type of activity and then, income and education explain life style somehow. Finally, women’s education was found to have the main role in their life style.

In a study entitled as life style and body management, Khaje Nouri et al. (2011) investigated the relation of two concepts of life style and body management among women. As they found, in two-variable analysis, all life styles are associated with body management as well as body deformation.

In a research entitled leisure, culture and life style, Antony Veal examined the relation of the patterns of spending free time, cultural level and the way of life style formation in England. As it was revealed, age, gender and economic-social parameters play a significant role in forming life styles in community.

In an article titled the social place and cultural products consumption, Torche (2007) concluded that the type of economic activity and individuals’ job position in Canada is related with the style of consuming cultural products. Also, their income and education influence the style of consuming cultural products.

Theoretical principles:

Since the studied issue of the present project includes various dimensions, theoretical principles of the research involve various hypotheses. Therefore, theories related to life style, leisure, social relations, consumption preferences, and body management are initially reviewed and then, the theories proposed by Bourdieu, Veblen and Bocock are discussed as the theoretical framework of the study.

Life Style and Leisure:

The term of “leisure” refers to “to be allowed or free”. Sometimes, leisure is regarded as an opportunity for resting and recreation. But often, people spend their leisure in personal work, reading, individual growth, serious education, discipline, or writing (Torkildsen, 2003: 108). Featherstone considers the relation between new life style and leisure and the formation of personal identity important (Heywood, 2001: 379). Pariz considers leisure as a social phenomenon involved in social necessities and well can be regarded as a personal imagination from overall life style (Torkildsen, 2003: 107).

Life Style and Social Relations:

Giddens believes that life styles are behaviors turned into routine life stream; streams manifested in dressing, eating, actions, and desired environment for visiting others (Cockerham, 1997: 32). From this perspective, it is concluded that action ways and desired environment to visit others or in general, social relations is one of the indices of life style.

Life Style and Consumption Preferences:

According to Bourdieu, different elements of life style in each class are consistent with each others; i.e. knowing the taste of people regarding something like music and book allow analyzers to predict their other selections such as food or attitude towards reproduction control (Giddens, 2009: 171). Bourdieu consider life styles as the result of manner and manners are regarded as a function of various experiences such s official education and official education causes some stable tendencies to create certain consumption patterns (Bocock, 2002: 99). Simmel emphasizes on a category like mode in analyzing consumption orientation in modern society. As he believes, consuming commodities and creating life styles gives individuals identity on the one hand and is distinctive on the other hand. Simmel considers life style as one of the methods which is sought by individuals in relation with society (Cockerham, 1997: 134).
According to Veblen, consumption, leisure and keeping up with the joneses which is unique to welfare class of society is now prevalent all through the social structure such that each class place the life style of the higher class as its pattern. Accordingly, the members of each class place life style and behavior of the higher class as their pattern and try to behave according that pattern (Coser, 2003: 363).

Melvin believes that Weber applied the term of life style to refer to behavior methods, dressing, speaking, thinking, patterns, and attitudes (Kamali, 2000: 107).

**Life Style and Body Management:**

According to Bourdieu, body discipline is essentially related with social competency of individuals. More than being a revival, such a fact is a cultural stream and one of the current behavioral features in daily life. Moreover, Bourdieu pays attention to physical state as well as dressing as a space for life style such that he considers body as the most unquestioned manifestation of class taste (Bourdieu, 1984: 190).

Giddens believes that body, today, is a reflection of the present world, i.e. body building regimes and paying attention to adornment and body health during the recent modern age has influenced body. Life planning and regulation and the creation of some alternatives to select life style have been mixed with each other. It is not fair to interpret such a phenomenon as the change of ideal pattern of physical appearances (the prevalence of thinness) or the reflective effects of commercial advertisements. It is due to the fact that people are responsible to design their own bodies and this responsibility is more felt by moving towards modern society (Giddens, 2009: 152).

**Theoretical Framework:**

Given that each of the mentioned theories investigates only one aspect of the studied subject, they cannot well explain the considered issue. Therefore, it seems that the theories of Bourdieu and Veblen can better present a clear image of the present research scope.

As the consumers of certain products, women have special place in researches related to life style. Hence, many social researchers have been concerned with explaining life style with respect to the role of gender. On the other hand, considering the wide presence of this group in social areas, especially in market, it seems that there are various life styles for women. Accordingly, employment status of women is of influencing factors in life style such that in the literature of classic and contemporary sociologists, the mechanism between these two variables has been discussed.

As Veblen believed, people in different jobs have different life styles and those with key jobs in society pretend as if their thought and behavior is superior over others and it is determined by their job position. These people have higher income and accordingly, different life style is their honor and pride. In their selection, for example, in dressing, leisure, make up, etc., hey show that they differ from other. According to Weber, job is one of the most important factors of social layers which are closely associated with life style. He introduced life styles to refer to the ways of behavior, dressing, speaking, thinking, attitudes, and patterns (Veblen, 2004).

Bourdieu (1984) asserted that life style derives from social class. In other words, each class dress in a specific manner, drink a specific drinking and has different sport and leisure (Grnow, 1997: 21). He believes that taste specifies social class. Bourdieu revealed that different classes and groups tend to various tastes in music, food, etc. (Smith, 2001: 137).

Similarly, explaining the place of women’s activity type, Bocock (2003) asserts that women find job to provide consuming commodities. Additionally, given that higher jobs are related with educational qualifications, women’s educational levels influence their life style. Regarding the influence of education in life style, Sobel (1983) indicated that three variables of income, education and job interactively influence life style.

Therefore, in the present study, employed and unemployed women have been considered as the main explaining factor of the difference in life style in this group.

**Research Hypotheses:**

1. There is a significant difference between consumption preference of employed and household women.
2. There is a significant difference between body management of employed and household women.
3. There is a significant difference between the way of establishing social relations of employed and household women.
4. There is a significant difference between the way of spending leisure of employed and household women.
5. There is a significant difference between age, education and family income and life style in women.

**Methodology:**

The present project is a survey research. The statistical population included all 25-50 years old employed women and housewives living in Qom. Using multi-stage clustering sampling method, 380 people was selected as the statistical sample. In the study, the required data was gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire. The validity of the employed questionnaire was evaluated using content and face validity though polling university
professors’ opinions. To evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach’s alpha was used (α = 70%). To analyze the obtained data, descriptive statistics such as mean and inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation coefficient, two-variable and multi-variable regression test were applied.

**Findings:**

The first hypothesis: there is a significant difference between consumption preferences of the employed and household women.

As shown in Table 1, the mean of consumption preferences in the employed women and household women are 22.81 and 41.52, respectively. In other words, the employed women are far from consumption orientation and reversely, the household women have a high consumption orientation. In the first hypothesis, the significance level equals 0.000, indicating that there is a significant difference between the employed and the household women in terms of consumption preferences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed women</td>
<td>22.81</td>
<td>-17.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household women</td>
<td>41.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first hypothesis: there is a significant difference between body management of the employed and household women.

Shown in Table 2, the mean of body management in the employed women and household women are 15.38 and 26.09, respectively. In other words, body management of higher importance for the household women. In this hypothesis, the significance level equals 0.000, indicating that there is a significant difference between the employed and the household women in terms of body management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed women</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>-17.361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household women</td>
<td>26.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third hypothesis: there is a significant difference between establishing social relations of the employed and household women.

As shown in Table 3, the mean of establishing social relations in the employed women and household women are 26.32 and 16.32, respectively. In other words, the employed women have higher social relations compared to the household women. In this hypothesis, the significance level equals 0.000, indicating that there is a significant difference between the employed and the household women in terms of establishing social relations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed women</td>
<td>26.32</td>
<td>17.403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household women</td>
<td>16.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fourth hypothesis: there is a significant difference between the way of spending free time of the employed and household women.

According to Table 4, the mean of the way of spending free time in the employed women and household women are 30.86 and 57.11, respectively. In other words, the household women have more free time compared to the employed women. In this hypothesis, the significance level equals 0.000, indicating that there is a significant difference between the employed and the household women in terms of the way of spending free time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed women</td>
<td>30.86</td>
<td>-16.961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household women</td>
<td>57.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fifth hypothesis: there is a significant difference between education, age and family income and life style of women.

According to Table 5, there is a significant difference between education, age and family income and life style of women but the intensity of the relation is average. Also, there is a significant reverse relation between age and life style. There is also a direct and significant relation between life style and family style. Totally, there is a significant relation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, all the research hypotheses are confirmed.
Table 5: The correlation between the variables of age, education and family income.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Pearson correlation coefficient</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.309</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.227</td>
<td>0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income</td>
<td>0.301</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the research findings revealed, in the first stage, education was found to have the highest separation correlation with life style. In fact, this variable by itself explains 29% of the variance of life style variable. Therefore, education is the most important influencing factor in life style. Entering the variable of family income into regression equation, R2 was reached to 43%. In fact, there is a significant positive relation between the amount of family income and life style. In the third stage, age has the most effect on life style. Entering this variable to regression equation, R2 was reached to 51%. Given Table 6, this model can explain 51% of the variance of life style through these three variables.

Table 6: Regression test results to explain the variance of women’s life style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.259</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income</td>
<td>0.219</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.192</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion:**

The purpose of the present study was to compare life style between employed women and housewives. In this regards, 380 people were selected as the statistical sample. Theoretically, the theories of Bourdieu, Veblen and Bocock were discussed as theoretical framework. Based on the theoretical framework, 5 hypotheses were proposed and investigated. To test the research hypotheses, t-test, Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariable regression were employed. According to the research findings, consumption preferences of employed and unemployed women were different. Such a finding is consistent with the results reported by Sazgara (2003). The mean of consumption preferences was higher in housewives. Also, a significant difference was found in body management of employed and unemployed women. It is also consistent with the result obtained by Nourbaksh and Atash Pour (2005). The mean of body management in housewives were higher than employed women. Additionally, testing the third research hypothesis revealed that there is a significant difference between social relations of employed women and housekeepers. It is consistent with the finding of Kordi and Hadizade (2012) indicating employed women have more social relations compared to housekeeper women. Finally, a significant difference was found between the way of spending free time in employed women and housekeeper women. It is consistent with the result reported by Rafat Jah (2008) indicating that housekeeper women have more leisure relative to employed women.

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