

# A Study of the Role of Use of Cyber Social Networks in Family Identity (Case Study: Citizens of Tehran)

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## Abstract

The current study has been conducted aiming at assaying the influence of the scale of the use of cyber social networks on the social identity of the families of Tehran City. The number of the statistical population is equal to 2915543 and the sample volume has been calculated that a total number of 384 individuals have completed the researcher-made questionnaire. The sampling method is a combination of the sampling methods of simple random and cluster. The acquired results of the analysis of the data in the descriptive level suggest that the social identity of 94.1 % of citizens is at a positive and high level. The results of the test of the hypotheses show that the hypotheses suggesting the influence of the scale of use of cyber social networks on the social identity, individual identity and collective identity are confirmed and this influence is in a direct and positive form. The scale of use of cyber social networks respectively has the ability of prediction of variable changes of social identity in general mode (43 percent), individual identity (56 percent), unity versus external conditions (28 percent), individual feeling of one's individual psychological life (34 percent), collective identity (46 percent), commitment to value and normative order (44 percent) and belonging to social life (16 percent). The scale of the use of social networks has led to an increase in the social identity of the citizens of Tehran City.

**Keywords:** Cyber Social Networks, Social Identity, Individual Identity, Collective Identity, Citizens of Tehran City

## INTRODUCTION

Today a massive development is occurring in the domain of communications and information. This development, which is considered by many to be revolutionary in the domain of communications and the beginning of a new paradigm in the life of contemporary societies, leads to the emergence of the wonderful development of modern media in the contemporary world which has been expanded in a short time across the world. The most important form and the clearest product of it is the internet and cyber social networks.

Mass media via the internet have different effects in short and long terms. These effects resulted from the content of programs, influence the beliefs, values, information, skills, tendencies and external behaviors of people and in this way affect the attitudes of individuals towards their vocational position, consumption, politics, love, and family life and leads to the indirect control of the viewers and users.

New media are available easily through the internet to individuals with various lifestyles and social norms and leave numerous effects on the way of the use of the possibilities and their expansion and the family life, relations between the family members and the behavior of the individuals. In the process of such change and developments, the interpersonal relations become shaky, minds become awakened and behaviors are influenced insofar as Giddens states: the

internet is the heart of communicational revolution <sup>[1]</sup>. Upon a realistic look at the recent events in the cyberspace and the emergence of cyber social media on digital phones, it seems that the process of the use of this communicational means in the contemporary society enjoys an ever-increasing pace. Its cultural changes and effects even in short term are so much that one can conceive some points of weakness for the modern communicational means along with their points of strength; one of the significant outcomes of the expansion of the information technologies and modern communications based on it is the change of cultures. Thus, because of the creation and expansion of the information broadways, a new

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culture is emerging. Since the transfer and current of culture take place through communications, the domain of culture that includes the systems of opinions and behaviors undergoes through fundamental changes upon the emergence of technology. The best example of the negative consequences of the internet as the most important means of communication and information is the weakening of the values of the institution of the family. Family is the basic foundation of the society, constitutive cell of human life and the building block of society and the main center of the preservation of traditions, norms, and social values; a significant institution that is responsible for socialization and education of the future generation.

The process of socialization causes the individuals of the society to become similar and in the course of their life to follow common values. This process contributes to the formation of the individual towards playing determinate social roles in life. To put it otherwise, individual and social identity is not wholly individually grounded and its function is defined from the point of departure of the position of the individual in the society and its relationship with other individuals in the society with the same or different social position [2].

Individuals by becoming members and active in cyber social networks acquire an opportunity for reflection of their social, cultural and political identity and desires. Today values and identity of the family members (the youth, middle-aged, women and men) undergo numerous changes in the course of interaction with cyberspace. Values, which are the ring that connects the culture of each nation to the future generation and negligence of this significant entity, can lead societies to the identity crisis. The continuous presence of the users in cyberspace can distance them from their identity and this distancing from the world of realities will overshadow all layers of the life of individuals.

Researches show that there is a significant correlation between the scale of the use of internet and the personal, social and communicational aspects of identity; in other words, the more one's use of the internet increases the lesser important becomes the personal, social and communicational aspects of his identity [3]. Young in his study has concluded that those people who make more use of the internet and in this cyberspace reveal indeterminate identities or anonymity do not give importance to their identity, i.e. personal opinions, ideas and thoughts [4].

Expansion of social space and generalization of many of the private affairs and intertwining of the world have caused the members of contemporary society in the selection of coherent identities to be faced with difficulties and even crises and so their identity to be cracked. Thus, we are not witnessing the quite and continuous process of the transfer of identity from one generation to another; rather in the contemporary world, we are more witness to the identity crises and the same extent to the identity reconstructions. The

prevalence of modern information technologies among societies has undoubtedly been influential on the way of life of people and as a result, the behavioral patterns of Iranian women and men are influenced by the rapid promotion of the modern culture of other nations and western societies. Culturalization is not merely related to physical and sensory environments around us; rather in line with it, individuals also take advantage of cyber environments and become assimilated to it [5].

In past societies the sources giving form to the identity were pre-determined and the identity of individuals was more of an attributive aspect and this caused the individuals of a society not to face so much change and transformation because of identity finding. In fact, in past space played a key role in the creation of the social identity of individuals; because individuals lived in a small and closed environment and their social identity took form through face-to-face relations with the people around in a fixed environment. Individuals had a lesser relationship with the outside world and aboriginal-local traditions formed a huge part of their identity. However, because of the emergence of the new information and communicational technologies, the role of space became less colorful; because new media and communicational technologies can detach the individual from his own space and connect him with the world [6]. To state the matter differently, contemporary culture has become free from the temporal and spatial content under the influence of modern media and is rootless because of time and space and this is a feature of modern times [7]. As a result, individuals are faced with diverse sources of identity and the latter has become non-local and global.

As Giddens shows, one of the most important factors of the emergence of identity crisis in current societies is the expansion of the industry of communications and cyberspace. Cyberspace and its various tools as the ever-free environment, which has been experienced by humanity have weakened traditional and normal identity sources in societies and created hindrances before its function. For this reason, it seems that social, collective, religious and group identities in contemporary Iran are each one faced with a type of identity crisis [8]. Having said these and given the fact that statistical population of the current research is Tehran City where, as the capital and megacity, includes individuals with diverse ethnicity and identity who have migrated to this city from various cities with different cultures; one can say that the study of the scale of influence of the use of cyber social networks on identity changes of citizens of Tehran city can be of avail and helpful. Now given the title of the research the cyber social networks that are used by the Tehraners refer to cyber social networks, which can be used in the form of the software applied on digital cellphones. Given the features of the statistical population and the use of citizens from cyberspace, we seek to answer the question of whether the scale of the use of cyber social networks has any influence on the identity of families in Tehran City? In other words, if the

use of this space has caused the separation of individuals from their real identity and nearness to the cyber identity?

## BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF RESEARCH

Given the title of the current study, we provide a short review of the relevant studies conducted inside and outside Iran:

Doran (2002) in research entitled “A Study of the influence of the experience of cybernetic space on social identity in three levels of family, peers, and society” has concluded that the internet does not influence social identity <sup>[9]</sup>. Hakimi (2010) in a study titled “Influence of social networks (focusing on Facebook) on Kurdish culture and identity” using Robertson's global theory of localization has concluded that with the expansion of cyberspace and formation of social networks has become more and more prevalent <sup>[10]</sup>. The goal of setting the Kurdish identity concerning globalization is showing that Kurdish identity in the age of globalization is a global-local identity and has been taken into account more than the past. Ghorbaninia Mirak Mahaleh and Khazaei (2013) in a study entitled “Investigation of the influences of cyberspace and social networks on the identity and lifestyle of youth” using review and documented method and use of library sources have reached the conclusion that given the development and growth of media technologies and the increase of the use of media tool including internet and social networks we can be witness to the emergence of identity and cultural changes as well as some transformations in the lifestyle of the individuals specifically the youth in the society. Kafashi and Fallahi (2014) in a study entitled “Influence of the use of cyber social networks on the social identity of the youth of Tehran City” have concluded that there is a reverse relationship between the use of cyber social networks and the identity of the users <sup>[11]</sup>. If there is a positive correlation between religious identity and social identity of the users. Khodayari *et al.* (2014) <sup>[12]</sup> in a research entitled “Scale and type of the use of cyber social networks among the students of Islamic Azad University of Region 9 of Mashhad” using survey method and the tool of questionnaire have reached the conclusion that there is a relationship between such variables as diversity and expansion, scale of trust, information and easy communication, gender and academic discipline of the students and the scale of the use of cyber social networks and 55.3 percent of the students of Islamic Azad University of Mashhad make lesser use of cyber social networks. Khoshsaafa and Kafashi (2016) <sup>[13]</sup> in a study entitled “A study of the relationship of cyber social networks and family values among the citizens of Bojnurd city” using survey method and questionnaire have reached the conclusion that the indices of anonymity, user history, scale of use and interactivity of communications in cyber social networks respectively 1.069, 0.822, 0.494 and 0.163 have managed to explain the dependent variable and had the utmost influence on family values. Kazemi Vardanjani (2015) <sup>[14]</sup> in his research entitled “influence of cyberspace (Viber) on the formation of social identity (case study: students of social

sciences branch of central Tehran) which has been conducted based on quantitative method (survey) has reached the conclusion that social identity can be predicted from the scale of the use of Viber but from the motive of use of Viber we cannot make this prediction and the results of Pearson Coefficient show that cyberspace influences 4 aspects of social identity (religious, ethnic, national and global identities). Hosseinpur and Momeni (2017) <sup>[15]</sup> in research entitled “Influence of cyber social media on the identity of the institution of the family” using survey method and questionnaire tool have concluded that there is a significant relationship between cyber social networks and the identity of the family as an institution. Thus, some features of cyber social networks including interactive environment, intimate space and sense of satisfaction, cyber groups and societies and the content and productions of social networks have an undeniable influence on the identity of the family and the values of this sacred institution. The studies of Afonso (1998) indicate that the use of the internet creates a sense of misery, social solitude, loneliness, and distance from family and in general decrease of mental health. This distance from family and friends is a type of mental state that is called social solitude. Jessica Marry Witack (2008) in her MA thesis at George Town University entitled “How online identity influences the offline relations” assays the online social relations and the way that identity influences the formation and preservation of friendly relationships in digital world and then she continues to study the issue that how Facebook influences the relations in real world. The analysis of this research has been done based on a survey of 644 undergraduate students at George Town University focusing on the use of different technologies for interaction with various members of social networks specifically the use of the members from the Facebook for the formation of the relations and their preservation <sup>[16]</sup>.

Today what is related to modern information technology and constitutes a cyber geographical space is called cyberspace <sup>[17]</sup>. The most important goals of the individuals or users in cyberspace seek consist of relation with each other, education, recreation, facilitation of affairs, commerce and communications <sup>[9]</sup>. Social networks are spaces in the cyber world, which have been created for interpersonal relationships at different levels. Creation of collective and interpersonal relations, the formation of cyber gatherings and information exchange are among the most renowned theories of the functions of these spaces <sup>[18]</sup>.

Technological attitudes consider the role of modern media in social relations and their consequences to be decisive and in the final analysis, they regard technology to be substantial for social relations and its developing forms <sup>[19]</sup>. Numerous theories have paid serious attention to modern media. For example, one can refer to the Social Presence Model, which considers the individual nature of computer communications to be the factor that provides the ground for lesser social effects. The term social presence has become prevalent since the second half of the 1970s. 10 years later Sproul and Kessler

found out that computer communications lack those social symptoms that enable the agents the situation of interpersonal relations. Thus, computer relations do not take form in a social vacuum where individual identities of people disappear. People are interested in express themselves in a more free and open way. John December (1997) in his theory of computer-mediated communications suggests, "People are connected through computer-mediated communications given their access to the cyber communication software. Understanding the way of relationship and its use for the description of our identity, creation of relations and preservation of it and finally the formation of communities are three cases which are important in computer-mediated communications" [20]. It is needless to say that given the aforementioned issues, identity, relations, and society take form through relations and one can say that it takes form through multidimensional and multifunctional processes of social interaction.

As to the internet and its influence on identity, one can state that the internet has the capability through which individuals can build new selves in new worlds. These affairs may not exist in the material world at all or the individual would think personally that he cannot touch them. These make the use of cyberspace more fascinating for the users [21]. Even there is the possibility of the introduction of oneself in various websites in different forms. Insofar as each time, it reveals itself in a different form. TV and other media lack this specific feature of cyberspace. Overall, internet identity or cyber identity is not consistent with normal views regarding identity. Normal views of identity seek to generalize the concept of identity and integration of it and its general influence on the individual [22].

However, having said these, in cyberspace the use of such definitions for identity becomes difficult and following the expansion of identity borders, the borders between the real and imaginative identity on the internet becomes vitiated. Anyway, the internet and social networks are the outcomes of the ontological breakup and the ever-increasing complication of individual differences and are totally in line with it. Today even the members of the families and neighbors rarely have a unique meaning of identity in their mind. This makes the identification of authenticities harder every day. Given the latter point in the current study, we seek to assay the influence of cyber social networks on the social identity of the family and not their cyber identity.

In addition to the internet, cyber social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, Viber, Tango, Line, etc., seek to create cyber societies. These cyber societies based on their structure and definitions naturally have different cultural, political and social values; insofar as these virtual societies have managed to redefine such concepts as a friend, relationship, family, identity and even particular issues like the way of greeting. Although the users themselves play a striking role in the formation of these societies, the laws of these cyber societies and the discourse governing them play

a significant role in the influence and formation of the identity of its members.

Identity is a very complicated notion that cannot be understood in the right form and for this reason, it enjoys specific relativity. As an answer to the question of the nature of identity or as an effort for offering a specific definition of it from different perspectives, there are various points of view. One can consider the identity to be one's consciousness of himself, which is not the result of the continuation of individual actions rather the individual must create it continuously and support it in his activities [23]. Then, thus conceived, identity is not something that comes to existence all of a sudden rather identity is something that every person acquires over time and reveals part of his character via it [24].

The concept of identity simultaneously establishes two possible relations between individuals or things, similarities, and differences. Having an identity, i.e. uniqueness, but from two different aspects: being similar to others in one's level and being similar to one's own over time [25].

According to Giddens, social identity refers to the meaning of features that are attributed to an individual by others. These features can be considered as signs that show the identity of every determinate person. At the same time, these features relate this latter person to other individuals who have the same features and qualities. Moreover, social identities have a collective aspect. They decide how and from which point of view people are similar to others. If social identities show, the way people are similar to others. Personal identity distinguishes us from others as individuals. Personal identity implies the personal growth and evolution through which we create a unique meaning of ourselves and our relationship with the surrounding world [1].

Given the definitions that have been made of identity, one can conclude that identity is a social construct. It is not a fixed or essential quality rather it is built and then changes in interaction with others. Secondly, identity is associated with a sense of belonging. Thirdly, the issue of identity is related to our difference with others. Part of knowing who we are is that who we are not. Fourthly, since identity is an acquired thing it is flexible and even in some societies, it is more flexible than other places [26].

Many believe that the most important factor of identity is "meaning" and it is the meaning that continuously in the age of information is reverberated in the historical memory of the changing societies though in a gradual fashion. Castles given the significance of meaning the age of information and the effort of various social activists for reaching a specific meaning compares it with the old notion of "function" which is applied by the governing institutions. This identity is resulted from social norms and is dependent upon the relations, combination, and arrangement of individuals, institutions and social organizations. Identity is the source of

meaning for self-activists and is built by them through the process of individuation [27].

The main question of the aforementioned theory is that why people use the media and for which purpose they use them? The answer that can be shortly given to this question is that people use the media for the sake of acquisition of guidance, peace, consistency, information, and formation of personal identity (McQuail, 2006: 104 quoted from Mahdizadeh, 2010) [28, 29].

This theory not only considers the audience to be active rather it also insists on his needs and motives for the use of media and suggests that values, interests and social role of the audience are important and people based on these factors choose what they want to see and hear [29]. The main hypothesis of the latter pattern is that the audience more or less seeks to find content in an active form that provides the utmost satisfaction. The degree of this satisfaction depends on individual needs and interests. The most people feel that the real content satisfies their needs the more probable it is their interest in choosing that content. It is noteworthy that most models of use and satisfaction leave the element of the sender aside in the process of collective communication. These models generally begin with factors that influence the selection of audiences from the content of media.

It should be noted that the totality of the needs and motives of the audience in using the media can be arranged under four major categories:

- 1- Awareness and Information: People use the media to become aware of the information and news regarding their surrounding world and supervision of their social environment.
- 2- Social use: people in the process of communication consider the media their associates and companies and

make use of the content of the media for communication and dialogue with others.

- 3- Personal identity: People make use of the media for the acquisition of awareness, finding behavioral patterns and reinforcement of personal values.
- 4- Recreation and escape from reality: people make use of the media for recreation and escape the problems of daily life and emotional catharsis.

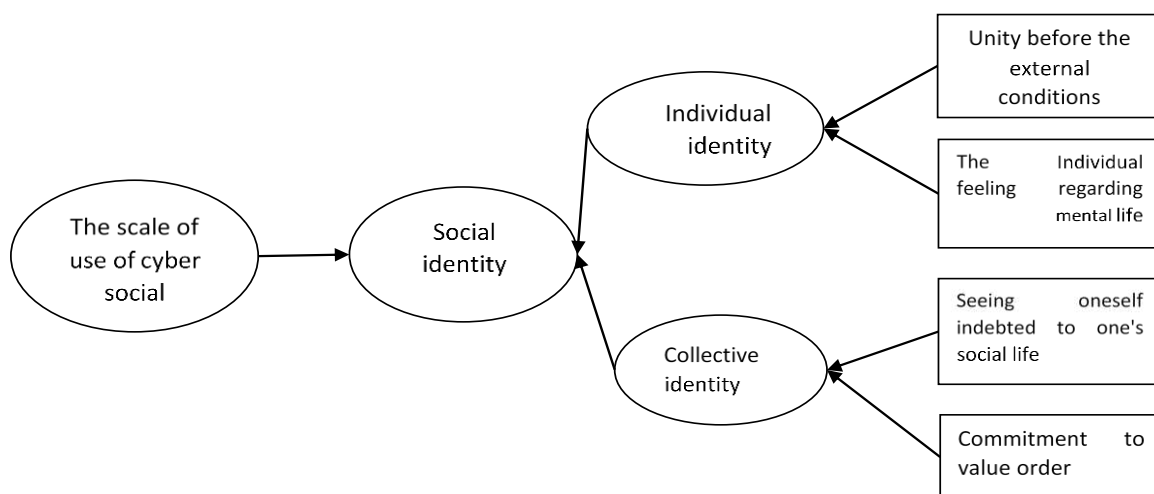
Given the theoretical framework of the research which includes the theories of Giddens, John December, Slevin, Bell, Castles, Vindal et al. the following hypotheses can be deduced:

### Research Hypotheses

- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the social identity of the citizens of Tehran City.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the individual identity of the citizens of Tehran city.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the unity of citizens of Tehran city before the external conditions.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the feelings of the citizens of Tehran city regarding mental life.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the collective identity of the citizens of Tehran city.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the belonging of the citizens of Tehran City to social life.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the commitment of the citizens of Tehran city towards value and normative order.

### Conceptual Model of the Research

The research model has been depicted using the theories raised within the theoretical framework.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Model (Researcher Made)

Conceptual and operational definition:

- Cyber social networks: internet social networks are the basis or a set of bases, which provide the ground for the users to be able to share their interests, ideas and activities and see others doing the same with the theme. A social network is a set of web-based services that enable the people to create public or private descriptions or establish relationships with the members of the network, share their sources, and from among the public descriptions of others find new links. In the current research, the scale of use of social networks is compared with the scale of their use by the users.
- Social identity: social identity is an identity that an individual acquires in the process of socialization and concerning social groups or units, which are active in society. The most specific one of them is the social group or unit or domain which is referred to as "we" and he considers himself to belong to it from an emotional point of view and in respect of commitment and duty [30]. In the above research social identity is, on the one hand, a feeling that the individual has towards the continuation of his mental life, a type of unity and integrity before variable and changing external conditions. On the other hand, collective identity is the index of the domain of social life to which one refers as "we" and feels commitment towards it. Social identity not only makes the social relation possible rather gives meaning to people's life. Moreover, it is a process for self-knowledge of the social activists through which meaning-building is done.

**METHOD**

The current study is a quantitative research based on data collected and analyzed through a fieldwork. The technique used in this study is survey type. In fieldwork we use the tool of questionnaire for data collection. Before the beginning of the survey, the questionnaire was distributed among the statistical sample. The statistical population of this study is the citizens of Tehran city. Since there is no possibility of the study of views of all citizens then in the next stage in this research the sample selection was done based on cluster sampling. Simple random sampling is the basis of probable sampling methods; in this sampling method, the samples are merely under the influence of random factors and the possibility of the inclusion of all cases of the statistical population in the sample is equal. Given the fact that for simple random sampling, one's access to the framework of sampling is necessary, then in this stage, Tehran was chosen as the sampling framework and after allocation of codes from one to five to the five geographical directions of Tehran (north, east, west, center and south) with the simple random sampling method using drawing method five regions (2, 5, 4, 12 and 16) which were culturally, economically and socially different were chosen. Given the statistical number of the population (2915543) the sample volume that was calculated by the Chocran formula as 384 subjects were distributed equally among the regions and in the final stage, the

questionnaires were given to the subjects (users of cyber social networks) for collection of raw data. We need to note that 375 questionnaires completed by the subjects were analyzed.

**Data Collection Tool**

In the current research, the tool of variables measurement is the questions of the questionnaire; which have been designed based on the theoretical framework of the research, empirical background, definition of variables and concepts. The questionnaire includes three parts; first demographic questions; second, questions regarding the independent variable, i.e. scale of use of virtual networks; and third, questions related to the evaluation of the dependent variable of social identity.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**A. Descriptive Findings:**

Descriptive results of the analysis of variables suggest that from among the totality of statistical population, 45.1 percent belongs to men while 54.4 percent belongs to women; from the point of view of age, more than 50 percent of the citizens have had an average age of 33 years; from the point of view of education most of the citizens who have allocated 36.8 percent of the population to themselves have undergraduate education and from the point of view of marriage status 38.1 percent is single while 61.3 percent is married; 94.1 percent of the citizens have positive and high level of social identity and collective identity (80.8 percent in a middle and upper-middle level) is of more priority than individual identity (68 percent middle and upper-middle). The average scale of use of cyber social networks for the citizens is 1 hour and 36 minutes through day and night.

**B. Inferential Findings**

- Main hypothesis: Scale of use of cyber social networks influences the social identity of citizens of Tehran.

**Table 1.** Results of the test of the hypothesis of the scale of influence of using cyber social networks on social identity.

Statistics	R=Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig
Numbers	0.660	0.436	287.076	<b>0.000</b>

Given the data provided in Table (1) with 99 percent confidence, a significance level of the test of the hypothesis of the scale of the use of cyber social networks on social identity is equal to Sig.=0/000. Given the fact that the above number is lesser than the agreed level (Sig.≤0/05) one can state that the hypothesis is confirmed (hypothesis H1 is confirmed and hypothesis H0 is denied); given the predicting coefficients one can say that the scale of use of cyber social networks respectively have the capability of changing the variable of social identity up to 43 percent. Overall, the scale

of the use of social networks has led to an increase in the social identity of the citizens of Tehran.

- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the individual identity of citizens of Tehran.
- The scale of use of the cyber social networks influences the unity of citizens of Tehran city before the external conditions.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the feeling of citizens of Tehran city as to their mental life.

**Table 2.** Results of Test of the hypothesis of the influence of the scale of cyber social networks on individual identity and its aspects.

Statistics/ hypotheses	R=Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig
Influence of the use of social networks on social identity	0.561	0.314	170.616	<b>0.000</b>
Influence of the use of cyber social networks on the unity and integrity of citizens of Tehran before external conditions	0.533	0.284	148.215	<b>0.000</b>
Influence of the use of cyber social networks on the feeling of citizens as to their mental life	0.346	0.120	50.746	<b>0.000</b>

Given the data of Table 2 with 99 percent confidence, significance level of the test of the hypothesis of influence of the scale of the use of cyber social networks on individual identity in general and its aspects, i.e. unity before the external conditions and individual feeling as regards one's own mental life is equal to Sig=0/000. Given the fact that the above number is lesser than the agreed number )Sig≤0/05( one can state that the above-mentioned hypotheses are confirmed (hypothesis H1 is confirmed and hypothesis H0 is denied); given the predicting coefficients one can say that the scale of the use of cyber social networks respectively have the ability of prediction of changes of variables of individual identity (56 percent), unity before external conditions (28 percent) and an individual's feeling as to his own mental life (34 percent). Overall the scale of use of social networks causes the increase of individual identity and unity before external conditions and strengthening the feeling of the individual as regards his own mental life.

- The dcale of use of cyber social networks influences the collective identity of citizens of Tehran city.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the belonging of citizens of Tehran city to social life.
- The scale of use of cyber social networks influences the commitment of citizens of Tehran city to value and normative order.

**Table 3.** Results of test of the hypothesis of the influence of cyber social networks on collective identity and its aspects.

Statistics/ hypotheses	R=Beta	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig
<b>Influence of the use of cyber social networks on collective identity</b>	0.678	0.460	318.167	0.000
<b>Influence of the use of social networks on individuals belonging to social life</b>	0.404	0.163	72.839	0.000
<b>Influence of the use of social networks on the commitment of individuals to value and normative order</b>	0.665	0.443	296.393	0.000

Given the data of Table 3 with 99 percent confidence, level of significance of the test of hypothesis of the influence of the scale of use of cyber social networks on collective identity in general and its aspects, i.e. belonging of individuals to their social life and people's commitment to the value and normative order is equal to Sig=0.000. Since the above number is lesser than the agreed number Sig≤0/05 one can state that the above hypotheses are confirmed (the hypothesis H1 is confirmed and hypothesis H0 is denied); given the predicting coefficients one can state that the scale of the use of cyber social networks respectively have the capability of the prediction of variables of collective identity (46 percent), commitment to value and normative order (44 percent), and belonging to social life (16 percent). Overall the scales of the use of social networks cause the increase of belonging of citizens of Tehran to social life and increase of committing them to value and normative order.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Modern technologies have penetrated into human life in various forms and the speed of the change and transformations of these technologies specifically in the domain of communications and media is in a form, that in some cases even the opportunity of planning and thinking is taken from all. This can be vividly seen in the domain of cellphone; a device that can provide many needs of humanity enjoying the possibilities. Accordingly, digital cellphones its social software not only create new relationships and weaken many of the values rather strengthen many of them. Thus, aspects of the use of social networks of the cellphone in its turn have turned to a culture and way of life as a cultural product that provides the possibility of selection of numerous choices. The fundamental factor in the formation of social identities is human interactions. When one interacts with another individual, he finds his own identity as a member of society. Identity is defined in the context of social interactions. The emergence of modern communicational technologies has created a fundamental change in human relations.

The results of the conducted analyses show that the use of cyber social networks has a positive influence on families or in other words, the citizens and this is not in line with the results of the theoreticians in the domain of communications like Castles, Vindal, Slevin and etc. who insist on the negative influence of internet and cyberspace on social identity. Given the conceptualization of social identity and its aspects that include two individual and collective aspects and given the mentioned hypotheses driven from the theoretical concepts, one can state that the scale of the social identity and its aspects among the citizens of Tehran has been in a degree higher than the average state. Upon a look at the test of hypotheses of the research, one can state that the use of cyber social networks is considered a means for strengthening the social identity of the citizens. Despite various studies that have been conducted in this regard and endorse the negative effect of the cyber social networks on the social identity of the users and underline the identity crisis and the formation cyber identity, the findings of the current study suggest the existence of a positive influence of the modern media on the social identity of the citizens who use the cyber social networks. This is itself a sign of hope in the developing society of Iran where in spite of the consequences and damages of cyberspace due to the lack of the media literacy people are taking advantage of this space. Upon a look at the aspects of social identity, it is evident that the scale of the use of social networks leads to an increase in the individual identity and in other words, the increase of the unity before external conditions and strengthening of the individual feeling as to one's mental life; given the events which have taken place in the Middle East and International Level, we are witness to the sense of patriotism and strengthening of sense of nationalism in current Iranian society and one can take part of this sense of integrity back to the cyberspace and circulation of the data and news of various sources that strengthens the analysis power of individuals, and at the end among the current statistical sample it has led to the strengthening of the unity and individual identity. On the other hand, the scale of the use of social networks increases the sense of belonging of the Tehraners to their social life and makes them more committed to their value and normative order. Now given the results of the current research and its comparison with background one can state that the results are in line with the results of Hadad Ranjbar and Ahmadi (2011), Qorbani Nia Mirak Mahaleh and Khazaei (2013), Kafashi and Falahi (2014), Kazemi Vardanjani (2015), Hosseinpur and Momeni (2017) as regards the direct and indirect influence of cyber social networks while they are not in line with the results of Doran (2002).

### Suggestions

- Given the fact that most of the users of cyberspace are teenagers and the youth we need to cultural activity for decreasing the consequences of it; thus, information and education of the correct use of this technology can be effective.

- Use of such potentialities as visual and audio media, newspapers, journals and magazines for the institutionalization of cyber culture in families.
- Families given the existence of expansion and diversity of communication in cyber networks and its effects with time allocation and planning seek to add to the scale of relationship and intimacy and help the members to feel this sense in real-world, not in cyberspace; because cyberspace in the absence of media literacy can have vicious effects for the users.
- Program and content producers identify the needs of their audience and inform the families as regards the evil consequences of the immoral contents in cyber networks proceed to produce and disseminate appropriate content in this space.

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