

Students' Value Priorities and Their Socio-Cultural Determinants in Upper Secondary Schools in Shiraz City

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Article Info	Extended Abstract
Article type: Research Article	Objective: Values, as one of the most fundamental dimensions of adolescents' social personality, play a decisive role in shaping their attitudes, behaviors, and individual and social choices. Adolescence, particularly during upper secondary education, represents a critical stage in the process of value socialization, during which young people redefine their value systems through interaction with key social institutions such as family, school, and the media. In societies undergoing transition, including Iranian society, the coexistence of traditional elements with emerging cultural patterns and global lifestyles has led to diversity and, at times, conflict in the value priorities of the younger generation. Therefore, identifying students' value patterns and the socio-cultural factors influencing them can provide a clear picture of society's cultural orientations and their implications for educational policymaking and social development. The main objective of the present study was to examine the value priorities of upper secondary school students in the city of Shiraz and to explain their socio-cultural determinants. Specifically, the study investigated the roles of gender, educational system, family socio-economic status, and media use in shaping students' value priorities. Focusing on Shiraz, one of Iran's major cultural and educational centers, allows for a more precise analysis of the relationship between social structures, the educational institution, and value transformations among adolescents.
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	Methodology: This study adopted a quantitative approach and employed a survey method. The statistical population consisted of all upper secondary school students enrolled in public and private schools in Shiraz during the 2024-2025 academic year. A multistage cluster sampling technique was used to select the sample: first, schools were chosen as primary clusters, and then students were randomly selected from within these clusters. Based on Morgan's table, a sample size of 400 students was determined, which is statistically sufficient for generalizing the findings to the study population. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of two main sections. The first section included background information and socio-cultural



variables such as gender, type of educational system, family socio-economic status, and level of media use. The second section measured students' value priorities based on Allport's six-dimensional value model (theoretical, economic, social, aesthetic, political, and religious values). All items were measured using a Likert scale. Content validity was confirmed through expert review by specialists in sociology and education. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results indicated that Cronbach's alpha values for all research constructs exceeded 0.70, demonstrating acceptable reliability. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 24, and descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation tests, and multivariate regression analysis were employed to test the research hypotheses.

Findings: Descriptive findings revealed that the observed means of all value dimensions were higher than the theoretical mean of the scale, indicating a relatively high level of value orientation among students. Among the different value dimensions, aesthetic and economic values had the highest mean scores, whereas religious and political values had the lowest. This pattern reflects a stronger tendency among students toward values related to lifestyle, personal enjoyment, and material success, alongside a relative decline in the importance of institutional and formal values. The results of correlation analyses showed a statistically significant relationship between gender and students' overall value priorities. Gender differences were also significantly associated with economic, social, political, and religious value dimensions. The educational system demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with overall value priorities and most value dimensions, highlighting the important role of schools in the process of students' value socialization. Media use was not significantly related to overall value priorities; however, it showed a positive and significant relationship with religious values. Family socio-economic status was significantly associated only with social and political values, while no significant relationships were observed with other value dimensions. Multivariate regression analysis indicated that, after controlling for other variables, gender and the educational system accounted for the largest share of variance in students' value priorities. In contrast, the effects of family socio-economic status and media use were more limited and selective.

Conclusion: The findings indicate that the value system of upper secondary school students in Shiraz is undergoing a form of value transition, in which individual-oriented, aesthetic, and economic values have gained greater prominence compared to traditional and institutional values. This situation can be analyzed within the broader context of cultural transformations, the expansion of modern lifestyles, and changes in the functions of social institutions. The prominent role of the educational system in shaping value priorities underscores that schools remain one of the most important arenas of soft biopolitics and value reproduction in society. Gender differences further reflect distinct patterns of value socialization among female and male



students. The results emphasize the necessity for educational and cultural policymakers to pay closer attention to value transformations among adolescents. Designing educational, curricular, and cultural programs aligned with students' values and needs can contribute to strengthening social capital and enhancing the alignment of the educational system with broader social changes. This study provides a valuable foundation for future research in the sociology of education, youth studies, and cultural policymaking. Values constitute one of the most fundamental dimensions of adolescents' social personality, and their formation is influenced by a combination of individual, familial, educational, and media-related factors. In transitional societies, understanding the value priorities of the younger generation can offer an accurate picture of cultural orientations and the trajectory of social change. These findings can be beneficial for educational and cultural policymakers in designing programs that correspond to the values and needs of the new generation.

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