

Theorists of Different Schools of Thought on The Impact of The Environment on Social Factors

Younes Falahinezhad¹, Shahla Kazemipour^{2*}, Ali Baghaei Sarabi³

1. Ph.D student, Department of Sociology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.
2. Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran (Corresponding Author).
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

Abstract

Environmental issues are one of the most important issues raised at the global and national levels in many countries around the world. Therefore, increasing public environmental awareness can reduce environmental issues and problems and lead to responsible behavior towards the environment. The present study aims to investigate the social factors affecting awareness of environmental hazards and environmental citizenship duties. From a qualitative perspective, it is based on content analysis, from a quantitative perspective, it is a descriptive survey. In today's world, environmental crises have become one of the most serious challenges facing humanity. Climate change, global warming, air and water pollution, forest destruction, biodiversity loss, and the waste crisis are just some of the issues that threaten the lives of humans and other living beings. These challenges have not only crossed geographical boundaries, but have also affected the social, economic and cultural dimensions of societies. In the meantime, the role of citizens as the main actors in interacting with the environment has received more attention than ever before. Awareness of environmental risks and commitment to environmentally friendly behaviors are two essential components that can lead to changes in people's attitudes and behaviors towards the environment and ultimately help reduce the negative consequences of human activities.

Keywords: environment, social factors, environmental risks.

Introduction

The environment is the environment that encompasses the life process and interacts with it. The environment consists of nature, human societies and spaces that are created by human thought and hands, and encompasses the entire living space of the Earth, that is, the biosphere (Sultani, 1992: 4). In the early stages, natural laws were recognized and proposed separately and abstractly. Humans gradually realized that natural forces in nature do not operate in isolation, but rather as a whole, what was later called the system of nature and in ecological terms, the ecosphere (Fathi and Farmahini, 2003: 12). The environment, according to various definitions, is the objective and external conditions that surround living organisms and can be classified into natural, (man-made) (human-made) and cultural types. It is clear that these types are not separate from each other and can be observed in relation to each other under the influence of humans. The built and cultural types of the environment directly reflect human behavior, and the natural environment has also changed throughout history under the influence of human activities such as agriculture, industrialization and urbanization (Fazli, Jafar Salehi, 2013: 23).

Finally, this research can be used as a basis for future studies in the field of environmental behavior and the role of social factors in shaping these behaviors. It is hoped that the findings of this research can help create an informed, responsible, and committed society to protect the environment, and ultimately, improve the quality of life of citizens and preserve natural resources for future generations. Today, environmental protection is one of the most important global issues, so that in some cases, the lack of proper maintenance or non-compliance with environmental protection standards in a country can threaten the health of the entire world. Excessive destruction

of forests, hunting of animals, environmental pollution through household, agricultural, and industrial waste, air pollution through the production and excessive use of polluting devices, excessive consumption of fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions and global warming, etc. are all among the issues that threaten the environment. In fact, environmental pollution, which, if ignored, can seriously threaten human life and survival, is an issue that has attracted the attention of global, international, regional and domestic organizations and communities, and environmental issues are one of the most important issues at the global and national levels in many countries around the world. Therefore, having sufficient information about the state of the environment in countries and examining the trend of environmental changes has been one of the issues of concern to global communities in recent years. Environmental Performance Index (2006, EPI). It is a new index for evaluating the environmental performance of governments, which was prepared experimentally and published in 2006 and contains important information about the approach of different countries around the world to environmental issues.

According to reports, Iran does not have an acceptable rank in the EPI index among 180 countries in the world during the period 2010 to 2020. Also, a look at the indicators related to the country's ecosystems and biodiversity over the past ten years shows the need for a fundamental review in promoting and cultivating environmental awareness, formulating stricter laws and regulations, monitoring the proper implementation of laws and regulations, and in short, "good governance in protecting the environment and biodiversity of the country." Iran ranked 88th in 2006, 91st in 2008, and 78th in 2010 out of 163 countries in the world with a score of 60. Iran's ranking has dropped 22 places from 88th in 2014 to 105th in 2016. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran has improved its position in the 2020 EPI ranking, with a ranking of 67th and a score of 48, compared to 2018 (80th), it is still far from the desired position.

While Iran has experienced coexistence with the environment in the past, with its abundant fertile lands and proper utilization of optimal management of soil resources, and has protected it for many years as the driving force of the country's economy, Iran is now among the countries where soil erosion is occurring at a high rate. Given that the areas Rural areas comprise a major part of the country's natural soil resources. Planning to address issues and apply efficient methods for their optimal exploitation and management can be the solution to many environmental, economic, and social problems in the field of sustainable rural development. Iran is one of the countries where the rate of soil and other natural resource degradation is high compared to other countries in the world and even the region. This situation has been created as a result of unfavorable natural factors such as steep slopes, irregular and torrential rainfall, and human factors such as inappropriate exploitation systems, the dominance of unprincipled and unscientific methods in agriculture, traditional irrigation methods, and poor management of soil resources. Ultimately, continuous and widespread soil erosion has created problems such as a sharp decrease in organic matter and soil depth, salinity, and alkalization, and ultimately, the spread of desertification in the country.

Part of the country's current environmental challenges stem from the government and the ruling sector, and part from the distance between our actions and life patterns from civilizational, cultural, and social beliefs and values. Unfortunately, today's Iranian actions with nature and the environment are not compatible with Iran's cultural and artistic background. Despite the fact that people have environmental knowledge and information, they do not have desirable environmental actions. Individuals in each society have different attitudes towards the environment, depending on their specific social, cultural, and personality conditions and requirements. These actions may be positive, environmentally friendly, and responsible, or, conversely, negative and against the environment (Hajizadeh Maymandi and Falakuddin, 2017: 22). Although Article 50 of the Constitution emphasizes the importance of preserving the environment, it is very beautifully written and other laws and regulations have been prepared and approved in accordance with it, but preserving the environment has remained only a slogan. One of the basic assumptions in environmental studies is that many environmental problems can be solved by increasing public awareness about the environment (Salehi, 2010). In other words, it is believed that environmental awareness is the key to solving many environmental problems (Bar, 2003). Therefore, awareness is considered a process that organizes, interprets, interprets, and communicates information obtained through the senses (Mohseni, 1379).

Today, researchers believe that increasing public environmental awareness can reduce environmental issues and problems and lead to responsible behaviors towards the environment. A destructive environmental behavior in a certain place and time can have many unwanted effects in other places and times and cause irreparable damage to future ecosystems and the lives of future generations. In such circumstances, achieving sustainable development

seems impossible, because the relationship between sustainable development and the environment is a two-way relationship, and neglecting the environment prevents the achievement of development goals (Gravandi and Afsharzadeh, 2011: 66); acquiring environmental awareness is the first step on the path to sustainability, and essentially the condition for the future survival of humanity is environmental awareness, the ability to understand the principles of environmental knowledge and living based on them (Frittev, 2007).

People who have more awareness about the environment are also more sensitive to the environment around them. Therefore, these people are likely to have a more positive attitude towards the environment, and their behaviors will be in the direction of preserving the environment (Salehi, 2008).

Importance and Necessity of Research

The environmental crisis is not just a simple and ecological issue, but in the present era it is caused by the lack of knowledge and awareness of humanity in sustainable environmental management, which is a social issue. On the other hand, the way of facing the environmental crisis is definitely decisive in the quality of life of the present and future generations.

One of the most important changes in contemporary thinking is the revision of people's understanding of the relationship between humans and nature; therefore, it raises the urgent need for a new concept of the relationship between nature and humans, between the natural environment and the man-made environment, and also the need for a new environmental culture.

Many scientists emphasize the need for a new interaction between humans and nature and the need for a new environmental culture. In other words, the only way out of environmental crises is not technology, but changing the attitudes and actions of individuals in society plays a vital role.

Environmental issues are considered as a consequence of social actions and actions of social actors. In fact, it refers to the important role of citizens' social responsibility in protecting the environment.

In Article 50 of the Constitution, the importance and status of environmental protection are best expressed and it is a reminder that environmental issues are a completely cross-sectoral matter and that all members of society, especially organizations and institutions, should, according to the ability and efficiency of their organizations, prevent any activity that leads to pollution and irreparable destruction of the environment as a public duty; therefore, achieving a healthy environment in any country is related to the awareness of the general public of that society, therefore education can be very effective in this matter. Education, information and awareness of the people is one of the solutions to protect the environment, and it is clear that if correct and fundamental measures are not taken to protect the province's habitat and natural resources, we will have more complex and intricate issues regarding the environment of the province and Iran in the future.

History of attention to the environment in the world

A lot of attention has been paid to environmental education and protection in the world, especially in the last few decades. An example of this is the numerous international conferences that have been held in this field. The United Nations has held several important international conferences in the field of environment that have examined the challenges and solutions related to environmental issues. Some of these conferences are mentioned below:

1. Stockholm Conference (1972)

The first United Nations conference in Stockholm on environmental issues and the adoption of a 26-point Declaration on the Human Environment, which emphasizes the issue of educating people of all age groups in the field of environmental protection and ecological balance and promoting scientific research on environmental issues, was held in 1972 (Fathi and Farmahini, 2003: 9). This conference is known as the first world conference on the environment and led to the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration, which set principles for environmental protection. Also, June 5 was named World Environment Day.

2. Earth Summit (Rio) (1992)

3. The twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment coincides with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in early June

1992. This conference focused its discussions on important issues such as the need to stabilize the climate and preserve the biodiversity of the planet. It stated that all parts of the world are environmentally interdependent and no country can separate its fate from the fate of the whole world (Brown et al., 1993: 201). This conference examined sustainable development and the environment, and its results included the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. Also, two important treaties on biodiversity and climate change were signed at this conference.

Johannesburg Conference (2002)

This conference was held under the title of the "World Summit on Sustainable Development" and focused on implementing the outcomes of the Rio Conference. Its aim was to address new challenges that had emerged in the field of sustainable development and the environment.

4. Paris Conference (COP21) (2015)

This conference was held to reach a global agreement to combat climate change, which resulted in the Paris Agreement. The aim of the agreement was to limit the temperature increase to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

5. Glasgow Climate Change Conference (COP26) (2021)

This conference continued efforts to implement the Paris Agreement and focused on issues such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing finance for developing countries.

6. 2022 Conference on Biological Diversity (COP15) in Kunming, China

This conference discussed the conservation of biodiversity and the development of agreements to preserve ecosystems and natural resources.

7. 2023 UN Water Conference in the United States

This conference discussed the challenges related to water and the provision of sustainable water resources and sought to provide solutions for better water resource management.

These conferences represent global efforts to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable development, and demonstrate the importance of international cooperation in this area.

Classical Sociologists and Environmental Issues

In 1970, at the beginning of the "Environmental Decade," sociologists realized that they had no coherent theory or research to guide them towards a distinct understanding of the relationship between society and the environment. While each of the classical pioneers of sociology—Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber—had an implicit environmental dimension to their work, this did not attract much attention, partly because American translators and interpreters preferred social structural explanations to natural and environmental explanations (Bottle, 1986: 8). One possible source of inspiration for contemporary sociologists' exploration of environmental issues, however, is the general law of classical social theory, which has survived to a considerable extent through Durkheim, Weber, and Marx. Each of these pioneers of sociology had, to some extent, important things to say about nature and society, although this was often not directly but implicitly and in the context of the philosophical and scientific debates of the time (Hannigan, 2006). Jarwikowski (1996) also believes that the study of the classical works of Durkheim, Weber and Marx is not enough for adequate theorizing in relation to contemporary environmental issues, and finally, Battel (2000) concludes that the legacy left by classical sociologists is very mixed and ambiguous. Some of the tools initially developed by classical theorists are needed, but overall the influence of the classical tradition on ecological questions and environmental forces was negligible; therefore, it is true that classical social theory has had a dubious and indeed problematic relationship with environmental issues.

Douglas's Cultural Theory

Mary Douglas, a prominent British anthropologist, has had a profound influence on the social sciences with her theories on culture and symbols. She has analyzed the cultural and semantic structures of societies, especially in

her books such as "Purity and Danger" (1966) and "Natural Symbols" (1970). Key concepts of Douglas's theory include:

1. Order and Disorder

Douglas believes that societies need rules to organize human behavior and experiences in order to maintain their social and cultural order. He introduces the concept of impurity as a symbol of disorder and purity as a symbol of order. In this regard, impurity represents a disruption in social and cultural boundaries that must be restored to order using rituals and laws (Fakouhi, 2003: 60).

2. Symbols

Douglas believes that symbols are tools that societies use to organize their experiences and behaviors. He emphasizes that no experience is so insignificant that it cannot find meaning in the form of cultural symbols. The human body also plays a central role in his theories as a social symbol, where everyday experiences can be analyzed as signs of social structures.

3. Culture and Education

Douglas emphasizes that human behavior is not only due to individual nature but also influenced by the cultural environment and social education. He contrasts this view with cultural materialism, where behavior is attributed more to material conditions (Fakouhi, 2003: 60).

Postmodern Sociologists

Postmodernism points out that today's problems require new solutions. Today's questions cannot be answered by using the methods of the past. According to Clegg (1992), postmodernism is a response to the fact that: Today there are many different and diverse phenomena to analyze. Phenomena that have not been formed based on the linear process of familiar problems of the past and are generally unrelated to the past. According to American sociologist Daniel Bell, postmodern society is the era of the glorious rule of technology and knowledge and the rule of technocrats.

Postmodernism or postmodernism has created fundamental changes in management theories, the most important of which are: 1- Transition from a simple and probable world to a complex and multiple view of reality 2- Transition from a hierarchical world to a multi-level or other hierarchical world 3- Transition from visualizing the world as a soulless and mechanical world to visualizing the world as a holistic one 4- Abandoning the belief in the fixed and personal nature of the world and accepting the world as an uncertain and indefinite place 5- Transition from the stage of believing in the existence of a direct and one-way cause-and-effect relationship to the stage of the existence of a cyclical and reciprocal cause-and-effect relationship 6- Transition from the metaphor of assembly or complex systems composed of a single thread with a number of simpler elements and accepting the metaphor of form and morphogenesis 7- Transition from the stage of pure objectivism, a position that was thought to be the subject of scientists and researchers, to the stage of deep thinking and perspective-taking.

Postmodernism has led to technological progress, which itself has had destructive effects on the environment, such as changes in the shapes of the earth's surface, changes in vegetation, changes in the nature of soils, waters, animal species, mining, and ozone layer depletion, etc. Two perspectives have been presented to resolve this environmental crisis. The first believes that a solution can be found through the selection and adoption of human institutions, with international cooperation being an important component of this way of thinking. The second group argues that the problem of changing the world should be faced only by abandoning the current forms of economic and social development and balancing the growth curve (Abdollahy, 2003: 3).

How postmodernists confront environmental crises

In his book *Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis*, Aran Geer, while combining the theory of culture and the philosophy of the environment, criticizes the current philosophies about the environmental movement and presents his controversial theory about the new postmodern worldview. He analyzes the links between environmental crises, the globalization of capitalism, and the fragmentation of modern culture. In this regard, he explains the paradox of growing concern for the environment and the limited achievements of environmental

movements and green groups, and by criticizing the basic approaches of philosophy in dealing with environmental crises, he presents his controversial theory of a new worldview of the modern rupture, a theory that wants to be the foundation and foundation of a successful environmental movement (Gir, 2001: 50).

The postmodern condition, accompanied by a lack of faith in modernity, progress, science, rationality, and enlightenment, actually expresses a kind of awareness and awareness of individuals that it is precisely these cultural and civilizational forms of the West that are leading humanity towards destruction and self-destruction. Commentators and interpreters of postmodern politics usually emphasize ecological resistances and environmental movements, along with feminist pragmatism, as a new form of politics. But the fragmentation of experience, the lack of direction and comprehensive perspectives, and the absence of grand narratives in postmodernism are in turn very serious and dangerous threats to the efforts and actions of environmentalists who are trying to present a global perspective on environmental destruction. Of course, postmodernism and environmentalism are of great importance to each other. However, little effort has been made to organize the discourse of postmodernism with the discourse of the environment. The reason for the failure to create a connection between these two discourses must be sought in the distinction and separation between the "two cultures", namely literature and science. Research on the postmodern situation has mainly focused on studies of literature and popular culture. Despite the important role that architectural theory and studies related to recent achievements in science have played in the popularization of the term postmodernism, these areas have not received much serious attention. On the other hand, research on the environmental crisis has also mainly focused on studies of science, technology, and sometimes economics. According to Aran Geer, this separation can be seen even in terms of the classification of works in these two fields And observed the difference: books and works related to postmodernism can be found in the library classifications on the shelves related to literature, literary theory and literary criticism, while works and resources related to the environment are usually seen on the shelves of scientific books. Articles related to postmodernism can usually be found on the shelves of art, literary and media publications. While environmental issues and problems are mainly discussed and commented on under scientific publications (Gir, 2001: 65).

Types of Environmental Action Models

Several models have been proposed to express the relationship between environmental tendencies and actual action. Among them, the theory of normative activation and the theories of rational action and planned action are most prominent (Ajzen and Fishbein). While these two models are not the only ones that exist to help explain the relationship between responsible environmental action and environmental attitudes, they are the most commonly used among the other models (Schwartz, 1980: 33).

Depending on which of these aspects and the prosocial or self-interest motivations the researcher feels have the greatest impact on the specific action of environmentalists, the theoretical model used can vary. Bamberg and Moser (2007) suggested that researchers who intend to study prosocially motivated environmental action often use the normative activation model, and those who feel that self-interest and self-interest are more important often use the theory of planned action. Normative activation theory and Schwartz's human values theory emphasize prosocial motivations and are based on Schwartz's altruistic action model (Schwartz, 1980: 33).

Planned Action Model (TBP)

The study of environmental actions has not only been discussed in global congresses and conventions, but also in various theories and models. One of the theories in the field of environmental actions was proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) as cited by Kaiser (1999) as deliberate action. Later, this theory was revised and expanded as the theory of planned action. According to this theory, the destination of an action is an unmediated antecedent of the overt action, which in turn is the intention to act subject to the person's attitudes and mental criteria for performing certain activities.

Attitudes do not only include the evaluation of specific consequences, but also an estimate of the probability of these consequences. Real information and knowledge are essential prerequisites for any attitude, but subjective criteria refer to the strength of normative beliefs and the motivation to apply these beliefs, and an individual's subjective criteria are an estimate of social and moral values.

In the revised theory (planned action), the influence of external factors or factors beyond the control of the individual is also considered. Environmental action is sensitive to a wide range of effects beyond the control of the individual. For example, outdoor temperature and house characteristics affect energy consumption. The cost of water affects water consumption. In other words, situational pressures make it easier or more difficult to perform environmental actions; therefore, the theory of planned action also includes action pressures beyond the control of individuals and is more useful in predicting environmental actions compared to deliberate action. Many issues related to environmental protection fall within the scope of collective activities (Mantizadeh, 135: 8).

The Responsible Action Model of Heins et al.

Another theory proposed by Heins et al. (1987) as cited by Qorb-e-Oglou and Ekvit (2003) is very similar to the Fishbein and Ajzen theory. This model is based on a meta-analytic review of 128 studies since 1970. In this meta-analytic review, the variables determining environmental action are categorized into three categories:

1) Cognitive variables 2) Psychological variables 3) Demographic variables

This meta-analysis identified that verbal commitment is one of the most important variables that has a close relationship with actual action. Commitment is also related to the knowledge, skills, and personality of individuals. Heins divided knowledge into two components: existing knowledge of the problem and knowledge about action solutions and their effectiveness. Skill refers to the ability to apply such knowledge to specific problems, but skill itself is not enough to evaluate action, but the individual must also want to do things right (this desire is through the locus of control, attitude and personal responsibility) and have a positive attitude towards environmentally responsible actions, in which case the individual will be more prepared for environmentally responsible actions (Fransson & Gärling, 1999:18). According to Heinz, the individual's desire for responsible actions alone is not enough to realize the action, because environmentally responsible action is also influenced by economic cues, social cues and the opportunity to choose different actions. Many everyday actions that have negative consequences for the environment are carried out in terms of habitual action (Fazli, Jafar Salehi, 2013: 20).

Schwartz's altruism model Schwartz (2007) argued that altruistic action will occur when individuals have personal norms regarding specific actions. We expect others to act in a morally appropriate manner and they expect us to act in the same way. Social norms shape our accepted personal norms, which are based on our deeply ingrained moral dispositions (Schwartz, 1980: 37). In this model, the transition from dispositions to actions is influenced by two variables: awareness of the consequences of the action and acceptance of responsibility for those consequences and outcomes. Schwartz (1973) suggests that, in addition to personal motives, altruistic motives are very important for carrying out group activities. In the altruistic model, it is assumed that if individuals' moral orientation is towards the comfort and well-being of other people, the individual values the beneficial consequences for others and is motivated to protect others from harm. Schwartz believes that altruistic action results from the operation of personal criteria and between the criteria A distinction is made between personal and social. In the past decades, a number of studies have used the altruistic model to understand human actions to improve the environmental situation. According to this theory, positive environmental actions are more likely to occur when an individual is more aware of the harmful consequences of environmental conditions for others. Also, the individual feels responsible for changing harmful conditions. In these situations, the individual experiences a sense of moral obligation to maintain or reduce harmful environmental consequences. This motivation is called personal criterion. The altruistic model falls within the scope of social psychological theories. This model was developed by Stern and Dietz (Stern, 2000:9).

Normative arousal theory

In contrast to the theory of planned action, which is essentially a general theory of action, the normative arousal theory (1977) was originally developed specifically for one type of action, namely altruism and helping. (This theory is interested in finding factors that predict the conditions under which people are inclined to help others; therefore, it considers environmental protection actions as a form of altruistic action, in which people are required to forgo personal interests in favor of the collective good (Abrahams and Stagg, 2009: 112). The basic assumption of this theory is that people help each other if they feel a subjective obligation to do so, which is what Schwartz and Howard call a personal norm. In addition to personal norm, two other factors in this theory, namely awareness of consequences and a sense of personal responsibility, influence pro-environmental actions. For example, people

who believe that energy consumption has negative environmental consequences and people who feel a sense of personal responsibility regarding these issues have a stronger commitment to help solve environmental problems through They show a reduction in energy consumption. (Abrahams and Stagg, 2009) This theory is called norm arousal because awareness of potential harmful consequences and a sense of personal responsibility activates an individual's personal norms, which in turn motivate action. This theory focuses heavily on the moral motivations for environmental action (Kloekner et al., 2013: 6).

Social Capital and Environmental Actions

The relationship between the environment and social capital is one of the new topics that has attracted the attention of environmental researchers. Hari and Stephen (2008), Katz (2000), Khoshfar et al. (2009) believe that levels of social capital have a significant impact on the environmental preferences of individuals and governments. The results of these studies show that high levels of social capital facilitate cooperation between individuals by reducing the costs of collective activities and that people participate more in collective activities, as a result of which they perform less individual and private activities that have negative environmental effects. The results of the study by Khoshfar et al. (2009) show that social capital has a positive and strong correlation with responsible behaviors towards the environment. This strong relationship between the amount of social capital of individuals (institutional trust, public trust, social participation, social security, and civic membership) and their responsible behaviors towards the environment indicates that norms of trust and participation, as well as the basis of security, have a significant impact on individuals' social actions towards the natural environment around them (Tavasli and Mousavi, 2005: 16). There is a vast literature on the concept of social capital, but a growing consensus in this field suggests that the current dominance of this concept owes much to the work of Robert Putnam. Putnam refers to public and private forms and the individual and collective worlds of social capital, but he explicitly states that a particular interest in external benefits and public benefits is social capital, and that success in overcoming the problems of collective action and opportunism that ultimately end in individuals is related to its broader social context, such that voluntary cooperation is best carried out in a society that has inherited a large social capital in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic participation (Nateghpour and Firouzabadi 2005: 62).

Environmental problems arise from problems of collective action (Steele 2008). From this perspective, collective action is required to protect the environment, while environmental theories and the social capital perspective provide a theoretical framework for understanding collective action. Wakefield et al. (2006) emphasize that the two perspectives tend to link local environmental conditions and the local social context for civic participation. Furthermore, government research has failed to address questions regarding the factors influencing environmental behavior at the individual level. Putnam believes that environmental social movements and social capital are closely related (Putnam, 2000). He points out that the development of environmental organizations has been among the most dynamic social movements and that membership in environmental organizations has increased dramatically over four decades, from about 125,000 in 1960 to 6.5 million in 1990. However, Putnam points out that this incredible growth does not reflect a deep but direct innovative consciousness (Putnam, 2000). Social capital is not a single phenomenon but rather phenomena or entities with two common characteristics: 1. They are a form of social structure; 2. The actions of members facilitate these structures. Coleman sees social capital in trust, information and efficient enforcement guarantees, authority relations, and the level of responsibility in the group (Sharapour, 2001). Pierre Boudreau mentions four types of capital: 1. Economic capital or productive assets 2. Economic capital or position and relationships in groupings and networks 3. Cultural capital or informal individual skills, habits, attitudes, language styles, educational levels, tastes and lifestyles; 4. Symbolic capital or the use of symbols to legitimize ownership of different levels of the three previous types of capital (Turner, 1998) In addition to the four types of capital, Bourdieu also refers to another type, political capital, which political elites acquire over years of political activity (Bourdieu, 2002).

Although there are numerous theories and perspectives in the field of studying the relationship between the environment and society, in this study we will focus on contemporary theories of environmental sociology because, as mentioned, classical social theories, with their limitations, lack a suitable conceptual framework for the purposes of the present study. Riley Dunlap and his colleagues believe that there are at least nine distinct comparative and comparative paradigms: human ecology, political economy, social structuralism, critical realism, ecological renewal, risk society theory, environmental justice, actor-network theory and political ecology (Dunlap,

2002: 46). Emphasizing the opinion of Dunlap and his colleagues, the risk society theory has been considered as the theoretical framework of the present study.

In general, environmental behavior is the behavior that an individual exhibits in dealing with the environment. Individuals in each society have a different attitude towards the environment according to their specific social, cultural and personal conditions and requirements. These behaviors may be completely positive, environmentalist and responsible or, on the contrary, completely negative and against the environment. Environmental behavior is behavior that consciously seeks to reduce the negative impact of one's actions on the natural and man-made world (including reducing energy and resource consumption, using non-toxic materials, reducing waste production). Responsible environmental behavior is a set of actions of individuals in society towards the environment that includes a wide range of feelings, desires and specific readiness for behavior towards the environment (Kolmus and Ageman, 2002: 3).

The results of this research show that high levels of social capital, by reducing the costs of collective activities, facilitate cooperation between individuals and people are more likely to participate in activities. They participate in collective activities; as a result, they do less individual and private activities that have negative environmental effects. Social capital can be studied from different perspectives, the following are dimensions that can help us better explain social capital: 1- Social trust, 2- Political participation, 3- Membership in social groups, 4- Religions and sects (Alavi, 2001: 37).

Environmental issues are among the new topics emphasized in sociology; these theories in different schools in this field are listed in the table below:

Table 1- Theorists of different schools in relation to the environment

School coordinates	Theories
Thomas Hobbes: Human life is only in a natural state when it is in an uncivilized and backward stage of social development.	Environmental modernism theories and social theories
John Locke: An instrumental valuation of the environment and a claim for private ownership of parts of the environment. An environment devoid of humans, untouched by humans, is worthless.	
Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Civilization has a cost. He considered nature and the natural environment to represent innocence, originality, and perfection, against the harmful effects of urbanization and the complexity of civilized life.	
Malthus: He believed that population growth threatened nature and food production and was in no way proportionate to such an increase, constantly threatening the prospects for progress. Giving more resources to the poor would only increase their numbers. Therefore, the government should not help the poor. If assistance to the poor were cut off, they would be motivated to find gainful employment and would be encouraged to have fewer children.	Progressive and Retrospective Social Theorizing about the Environment
The theory of evolution, through Charles Darwin's selection and Herbert Spencer's extension of these principles to social evolution, forms the next important link in the history of the relationship between the non-human environment and social theory. Living organisms adapt to their environments. As a result of the struggle for survival among organisms, those most adapted to their environment survive and leave more offspring. According to social Darwinism, government intervention in the natural struggle for survival among humans is limited because it would destroy the process of social evolution, the prerequisite of which is the survival of the fittest.	Social theory and the evolution of the natural environment
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and their Marxist political and social theory should be considered responsible for the intensification of exploitation of the natural environment with the slogan "Man can transform nature", which initiated capitalism but called for an end to man's exploitation of man and the distribution of the achievements of environmental exploitation in a more equal manner than capitalism. In a communist system, the exploitation of nature and the production of wealth,	Marxist social theory and the environment

goods and services will be so efficient and productive that it will satisfy the material needs of all people.	
John Stuart Mill had very original views on the environment, which later became known as the green or ecological approach and environmental ethics. Liberalism agreed with socialism on the relationship between society and nature and the pursuit of material progress, but his theories stood in opposition to this common and dominant view of industrial development.	Liberalism and early green social theorizing
A major part of Freud's theory concerns how civilization and social progress depend not only on the exploitation of nature, but also on the taming of some potentially destructive aspects of the inner nature.	Freudianism, human nature and the conflict with nature
Habermas showed that our only relationship with the natural environment is an instrumental and exploitative one, which is related to the specific nature of the human species.	Jürgen Habermas and the Question of Nature in Modernism
Anthony Giddens has addressed modernity and its consequences, the environmental issue, and the place of nature in his social theory, from economic and financial consequences to cultural consequences and global ecological issues that transcend national borders and have global effects. Hence, the spread of global ecological problems as one of the consequences of globalization is the spread of industrial capitalism throughout the globe, the creation of a global market, and the development of various communications.	Anthony Giddens' theory, globalization and the environment

Table 2 - Summary of factors affecting the occurrence of environmental actions

Factors affecting the occurrence of environmental actions	
Tarrant and Cordell; 1997 Zelzani, Chow and Aldrich; 2000	Respondent characteristics
Oli et al., 2001; Bamberg and Moser, 2007; Mantizadeh, 2014	Environmental awareness and concern, concept of individual responsibility, supportive social norms, positive attitudes
Partridge, 2000	Gender, socioeconomic status, cultural background and geography
Chillini, 2010	Education style, social norms, perceived effectiveness, past experiences, religion, cultural customs, places and institutions for monitoring, existing risks
Kalafatis, 1999; Mahon et al., 2006; Elsen et al., 2008; Gedin et al., 2011; Graves et al., 2013; Boutzagis et al., 2015 Hahn, 2015	Subjective norms, perceived action control, attitude, tendency to act
Stern, 1995; Brinot et al., 1998; Allen, 2005; Lima and Castro, 2005; Keeley et al., 2006; Klein et al., 2012; Price et al., 2014; Yazdanpanah et al., 2011	Cultural bias
Salehi, 2009; Qiu Yan and Yan Li, 2011; Molina et al., 2013; Lewis et al., 2013; Mentizadeh, 2014	Environmental knowledge, attitudes, and values
Coral Verdigo et al., 2003; Lee 2008 Davis et al., 2009; Ayman et al., 2014	Environmental attitude, place attachment, and commitment to the environment and its preservation

Although there are numerous theories and perspectives in the field of studying the relationship between the environment and society, in this research we will focus on contemporary theories of environmental sociology, because as stated, classical social theories with their limitations lack a suitable conceptual framework for the purposes of the present research.

Reilly Dunlap and his colleagues believe that there are at least nine distinct comparative and comparative paradigms: human ecology, political economy, social structuralism, critical realism, ecological modernization, risk society theory, environmental justice, actor-network theory and political ecology (Dunlap, 2002: 46). Emphasizing the view of Dunlap and his colleagues, the risk society theory has also been considered as the theoretical framework of the present research, including the theory of social capital, social participation and non-governmental organizations.

Conclusion

With the increase in environmental issues such as the energy crisis, climate change, waste and destruction of natural resources, and the increase in waste from urbanization and industrial development, human impact on the environment has attracted the attention of researchers because many of these problems are caused by direct and indirect consequences of human behavior. In this regard, one of the important variables is the individual's awareness of environmental issues. Awareness is a tool for overcoming ignorance or incorrect information and is one of the factors predicting environmental concerns and behavior of individuals.

The main purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the relationship between individual characteristics, social class, and responsible environmental behavior. The results of the research are discussed according to data analysis and based on theoretical foundations. Social and cultural awareness also plays an important role in shaping environmental attitudes. The cultural values and beliefs that are taught to individuals from childhood have a significant impact on their behavior towards the environment. In general, individual characteristics such as education, age, gender, personality, and social awareness have a direct impact on citizens' environmental awareness. To increase this awareness, it is necessary to design appropriate educational programs and promote a culture of environmental protection in society.

Increasing awareness of environmental risks and commitment to responsible behavior requires attention to social, economic, and cultural factors. Therefore, educational and promotional programs should be designed based on these factors in order to have a positive impact on citizens' environmental behavior.

References

1. Azad Aramaki, Taghi (2005) Social Changes in Iran, Tehran, Ettiyar Publications
2. Akbari, Amin (2004) The Role of Social Capital in Participation: Investigating the Effect of Social Capital on Political and Social Participation (Case Study: Farsanj Village, Saqqez Province), Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tehran.
3. Brown, Lester et al. (1993) The State of the World, translated by Hamid Taravati, Tehran: Arvin Publications, first edition.
4. Barry, John (2001). Translated by Nireh Tavakoli. Environment and Social Theories.
5. Beck, Ulrich (2008) The Society of Danger: Towards New Modernities. Translated by Reza Fazel, Mehdi Farahmandnejad. Third Edition
6. Bahram Soltani, Kambiz, (1992) Collection of Environmental Urbanism Topics and Methods, Center for Urban Planning and Architecture Studies and Research in Iran, first edition.
7. Putnam, Robert (2001). Democracy and Civic Traditions. Translated by Mohammad Taghi Afrooz. Tehran. Salam Newspaper Publications
8. Tajbakhsh, Kian (2005). Social Capital, Trust, Democracy and Development, Translated by Afshin Khakbaz and Hassan Pouyan. Tehran, Shirazeh Publishing
9. Tavassoli, Gholam Abbas. Mousavi Marzieh (2005). "The Concept of Capital in Classical and Modern Theories with Emphasis on Social Capital Theories". Social Sciences Letter. No. 26
10. Dresner, Simon (2005), Fundamentals of Sustainability, Translated by Mahmoud Daneshvar Kakhki, Siavash Dehghanian and Farrokh Dinghezli, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad Publications
11. Rezaian, Ali (1993). Organizational Action Management, Tehran: Tehran University Publishing and Printing Institute
12. Abedi Sarvestani, Ahmad; Shahvali, Mansour; Mohaghegh Damad, Seyyed Mustafa (2007). "The Nature and Views of Environmental Creation with Emphasis on the Islamic Perspective", Ethics in Science and Technology Quarterly, No. 5 and 2

13. Fazeli, Mohammad; Jafar Salehi, Sahar (2013). "The Gap of Attitude, Knowledge and Environmental Action of Tourists", Scientific Research Quarterly Journal of Tourism Management Studies, Year 8, No. 22
14. Fathi, Kourosh; Formmehini Farahani, Mohsen, (2003) Women's Environmental Knowledge for Sustainable Development, Tehran: Shahid Beheshti Printing and Publishing Center
15. Forotan Kia, Shahroz; Abdolreza Navah (2018) Environmental Sociology, Tehran: Andisheeh Ehsan Publishing House.
16. Fukuyama, Francis (2000). The End of Order (Investigating Social Capital and Its Preservation). Gholam Abbas Tavassoli. The Iranian Society, First Edition
17. Kolahi, Mohammad Reza, Fazeli, Mohammad, Salehabadi, Ebrahim and Rahbari, Zohreh (2006) A Comparative Study of the Effect of Various Energy Information Methods on Encouraging Electricity Consumers to Save Energy Research Institute Unpublished
18. Giddens, Anthony (2013) Consequences of Modernity. Translated by Mohsen Salasi. Seventh Edition. Center Publishing
19. Gir, Aren. Translated by Erfan Sabeti (2001). Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis. Cheshme Publishing.
20. Moharramnejad, Naser. Mahnaz Tehrani (2000). "A Review of Social Theories and Environmental Management". Human and Environment Journal. Volume 8. Number 1
21. Mohammadi, Shaaban (2014), Sociological Study of the Relationship between Social Capital and Responsible Environmental Behaviors (Case Study: Citizens 15 Years and Older in Ahvaz). Master's Thesis, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, supervised by Abdolreza Navah.

External sources:

1. Ajzen, I. (2006). Constructing a TPB questionnaire: Conceptual and methodological considerations. Retrieved 15.03.10 from <http://www.people.umass.edu/ajzen/pdf/tpb.measurement.pdf>
2. Arcury, T. (1990). Environmental attitude and environmental knowledge. Human organization, 49(4), 300-304.
3. Babcock, H. M. (2009) Responsible environmental behavior, energy conservation and compact fluorescent bulbs: You can lead a horse to water, but can you make it drink? Georgetown University Law Center, 37 (4): 943-974.
4. Bamberg, S. Schmidt, P. (۲۰۰۳). Incentives, morality, or habit? Predicting students' car use for university routes with the models of Ajzen, Schwartz, and Triandis. Environment and Behavior
5. Barr, S. (2003), strategies for Sustainability: Citizens and Responsible Environmental Behaviour, Area, 35 (3): 227-240.
6. Barr, S. Ford, N. J. & Gilg, A. W. (2003). Attitudes towards recycling household waste in Exeter, Devon: quantitative and qualitative approaches. Local Environment, 8(4), 407-421
7. Chan, R. Y. (2001). Determinants of Chinese consumers' green purchase behavior. Psychology & Marketing, 18(4), 389-413.
8. Dunlap, R. E. Van Liere, K. D. Merting, A. G. Catton, W. R. and Howell, R. E. (۱۹۹۲). Measuring endorsement of an ecological Worldview: A revised NEP scale. Paper Presented at: The Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, The Pennsylvania State University, and University Park.
9. Faiers, A. Cook, M. & Neame, C. (2007). Towards a contemporary approach for understanding consumer behaviour in the context of domestic energy use. Energy Policy, 35(8), 4381-4390.
10. Fransson, N. & Gärling, T. (1999). Environmental concern: Conceptual definitions, measurement methods, and research findings. Journal of environmental psychology, 19(4), 369-382.
11. Frick, J. Kaiser, F. G. & Wilson, M. (2004). Environmental knowledge and conservation behavior: Exploring prevalence and structure in a representative sample. Personality and Individual differences, 37(8), 1597-1613.