



Identifying Moral Damages Caused by the Lifestyle of Students Affected by Cyberspace

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Abstract

Introduction: Identifying the moral damages of the cyberspace used by students can effectively play a role in the correct use of this space, with the understanding of this importance, the present study was conducted with the aim of identifying the moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by the cyberspace.

Material & Methods: The method of the current research is practical in terms of its purpose and it is mixed (qualitative-quantitative) in terms of data collection. The qualitative research method was content analysis with an inductive approach. The participants of the qualitative part of the research, the students of Islamic Azad University of Mazandaran province, who were aware and knowledgeable about the moral damages of cyberspace, the purposeful theoretical sampling method was used with 12 people. The estimation of the desired sample size was done based on the theoretical saturation of the data. The data collection tool in the qualitative part was a semi-structured interview. Triangulation method and Christiansen angle technique were used to check the validity in the qualitative part. The research method was descriptive-survey quantitative. The statistical population included all the students of Islamic Azad University of Mazandaran province (N=43), 399 were examined using stratified random sampling method through Cochran's formula. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. Data analysis was done using confirmatory factor analysis in SPSS22 and Amos statistical software.

Results: The results of the survey showed that the moral damages caused by the way of life of students affected by cyber space include emerging and classic social damages, educational-cultural damages, political damages, security damages, psychological damages, and physiological damages.

Conclusion: As a result, to reduce moral damages, it is possible to pay attention to the identified damages.

Keywords: Moral damages, Students, Cyberspace

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INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the virtual space and electronic services that have emerged as a result of the revolution in the field of information and communication in the human society have deeply affected all aspects of life, despite the fact that there are applications and benefits in the living and working environments of humans. There is abundance in communication and access to information, but one should not ignore its damages and disadvantages; Why the emergence of these technologies has caused growth and development in the personal, social, cultural, political and economic

fields, but on the other hand, it has also caused damage to these areas [1]. Depression, physical and sexual injuries, addiction, decreased creativity, dual personality, decreased self-control, and narcissism can be mentioned among the most important personal harms caused by cyberspace. In the social sector, it has caused damages in the axis of marriage, family, peace of mind, privacy, rapid spread of prostitution, rumor spreading, generation gap and responsibility; In the cultural sector, beliefs, beliefs, and lifestyle have been overshadowed [2].

In the era of globalization and with the emergence of new communication technologies, a virtual space has been created alongside the real space, which has a major contribution to the ways and patterns of daily life in the society and is highly influential, and the people affected by this space have different tastes and values. The rapid spread of mass media, especially virtual space, has changed people's lifestyle. The lifestyle affected by virtual space is one of the factors that affect people's health [3]. Considering that virtual space is the most popular and attractive means of communication and has attracted billions of users around the world. Today's societies are experiencing a new type of networking, a network that brings new capabilities and new opportunities and threats at the same time [4]. With the rapid development of Internet technology, virtual space has become an innovative work and life space in the contemporary world. Despite the many conveniences such as the speed of communication, the increase in entertainment and information that it has brought to humans, the security threat that cyberspace is facing has gradually become a serious problem that cannot be ignored [5,6]. Studies show that misinformation in cyberspace increases offline violence caused by social media in a country [7]. Researches also show that unethical behaviors among young people are emerging and growing under the influence of cyberspace, such as cyberbullying [8]. Based on this, studies with numerous evidences show that psychological problems and self-harm, as well as aggressive thoughts and behaviors and even suicide are increasing among young people and teenagers under the influence of cyberspace [9,10].

In this regard, the expansion of the use of the Internet as a global research laboratory and media in the service of research activities has led to the emergence of numerous emerging ethical and legal issues and issues [11]. In fact, in line with the advancement of technology and information, due to the increasing use of technology, new ethical crises have arisen [12,13]. Although virtual space has also brought many benefits and possibilities in scientific fields and has been able to improve the speed and accuracy of many things in the field of communication, and provide the basis for many scientific, industrial, cultural and social growth and developments, but the negative consequences have become the basis of many abuses of various

dimensions, especially in the case of moral issues [14]. This issue has raised various questions in this field today, which their investigation from an ethical point of view has led to the formation of a branch of ethics is called information and communication technology ethics, which is a subset of applied ethics in cyberspace. The field that has such issues and concerns and follows up on the mentioned cases is called cyber ethics, which usually has a questioning view of cyberspace [15]. Researchers state that technology is never value neutral, good technologies should always help promote values that are respected and maintained in societies, such as harmony. Therefore, cyber ethics evaluates to what extent and in what ways technology contributes to the coordination process, reliable technological development often leads to continuous negotiation and regulation of relations between humans, society and technology [16].

The modern emerging damages of cyberspace in the country are expanding due to the development of technologies, and in many countries, taking into account the increase of these technologies, plans have been made to prevent and deal with this damage; But in Iran, due to the rapid development of technologies and the development of the Internet and cyberspace, effective planning and solutions have not been devised to deal with such damages, and this has increased the scope of such damages throughout the country. One of the positive effects of the Internet is updating information, using scientific materials and accessing modern technologies, but in parallel with that, teenagers and young people tend to chat rooms, virtual love, fraud and abuse of girls and boys by presenting their personality. It has caused false marriages, internet marriages, information theft and extortion. People are always looking for short and quick ways to meet their needs and do not pay much attention to the correctness of the solution. For this reason, when most people on the Internet get answers to their questions in the shortest possible time, they unconsciously and even excessively resort to using this communication tool. Emerging harms and including moral harms in the virtual world due to the lack of obstacles, it is possible to deal with any message, especially messages that cause serious mental, psychological and social harms to people [17].

Based on what was discussed, the attractiveness of cyberspace on the one hand and the ease of activity in

this category of societies on the other hand, causes the relationship between membership and presence in cyberspace and changes in students' lifestyles to be a serious question for researchers in the field of culture, communications and higher education. With the knowledge that it is impossible to remove the media, especially the cyberspace, from the digital life in the current situation, because the amount of students' use of the virtual space is between 2-3 hours a day, but with the pathology of this space in the field of ethical issues and provide practical solutions to deal with it can be taken from this tool in order to realize the great goals of higher education; Therefore, the current research seeks to answer the question, what are the moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by cyberspace?

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The method of the current research is practical in terms of its purpose and it is mixed (qualitative-quantitative) in terms of data collection. In the first stage, through a qualitative study, the moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by cyberspace were identified. In this section, the method of qualitative content analysis with inductive approach was used. The participants of the qualitative part of the research, the students of the Islamic Azad University of Mazandaran province, who were aware and knowledgeable about the harm caused by the lifestyle of students affected by the cyberspace, were informed about the views and opinions of the students through a theoretical sampling method (n=12). The estimation of the desired sample size was done based on the theoretical saturation of the data. Based on this, the interview reached theoretical saturation with 11 people and another interview was conducted for more certainty. The desired characteristics for people to be experts included the following: knowledge of the approach to cyberspace harms, knowledge of the method of dealing with cyberspace harms, and knowledge of moral harms caused by the way of life affected by research cyberspace. The research data collection tool was a semi-

structured interview in the qualitative part. In order to comply with the principles of research ethics, during the interviews, the participants were asked to record their conversations, and after the end of the interview, the interview was carefully reviewed and returned to paper. After collecting the data obtained from the interview, the process of analyzing and summarizing the qualitative data began. These data were summarized and coded according to the research topic. As a result of coding and removing duplicate data and final summarization of data, related categories were identified and extracted, which were approved based on the opinions of experts. Then, the categories that purposefully expressed a more general category were identified and put together, and a general title that could include all of them was determined and named. To check validity in the qualitative part, triangulation method was used in the first place, in this regard, through gathering evidence from various sources, including various theories, various information sources, and validity experts, the validity was examined and confirmed. 2 participants were presented and the process of arriving at the codes, subcategories and main categories was explained to them, the findings of this work confirmed the general findings of the research. Also, Christiansen's angle technique was used to evaluate the validity and quality of the findings. In this regard, it was tried to make the breadth of information and the depth of information possible by continuous mental engagement with the data. To achieve this goal, after coding the data by the researcher, two people were asked to code some of the interviews to evaluate the accuracy and validity of the coding and the obtained categories, and finally the results of this section were similar. With the coding that was done in the previous step. In order to analyze the qualitative data, the theme analysis method, which is based on open coding, was used. At this stage, the data obtained from the

interviews were carefully examined, the main unit of analysis for open coding was the concepts, the transcripts of the interviews were regularly reviewed to find the main categories, categories, and subcategories.

In the second stage, a quantitative research was conducted, the purpose of this stage is to determine which of the identified factors are significant and which of them are not significant and should be excluded, in this part, from the descriptive-survey research method. used. The statistical population of this research includes all the students of the Islamic Azad University of Mazandaran province with a number of 43 thousand people according to the statistics obtained from the Vice-Chancellor of Education who were studying in the year 2021. Using stratified random sampling method, they were selected according to gender. In this regard, due to the possibility of some questionnaires not being returned, 420 questionnaires were distributed, and finally 399 questionnaires were used. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The said questionnaire included 71 closed-ended items based on a five-point Likert scale, a six-dimensional questionnaire of emerging and classic social harms (10 questions, questions 1 to 10), educational-cultural harms (14 questions, questions 11 to 24). political damages (8 items,

Table 1: Main categorization about pathology

Main categories	Subcategories
Emerging and classic social damages	Intergenerational gap (difference in values, norms and attitudes), concealment of identities in a network, playing new social roles in virtual networks, different self-representation, breaking of private spheres, the boom of chat rooms and the possibility of abusing this environments, reduction of social identity (reduction of homogeneity of people or ethnic groups), increase of social inequalities, reduction of effective social roles, reduction of social capital (trust)
Educational-cultural damages	Educational failure, ease of cheating in marital relationships, irresponsibility, imitability, immoral close relationships, changing the nature of the quantity and quality of free time, reducing face-to-face communication, changing the style of marriage, eliminating the stigma of relationships with the opposite sex, reducing per capita book reading, changing physical characteristics, changing oral literature, changing socializing and the network of kinship relationships, religious crisis.

questions 25 to 32), security damages (10 items, questions 33 to 42), psychological damages (23 questions, questions 43 to 65), physiological damages (6 questions, evaluates questions 66 to 71). The face and content validity of the questionnaire was approved by experts and professors, the value of the content validity ratio or CVR was equal to 0.79 and the content validity index or CVI was 0.65, which shows the adequate and appropriate reliability of the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient in a preliminary study on a sample of 40 people at 0.88. Data analysis was done in the quantitative section using confirmatory factor analysis in SPSS22 and Amos statistical software.

RESULTS

Findings of the qualitative section

In this stage, among the categories obtained from the previous stage, the most appropriate categories were selected, and based on the coherence and arrangement of the concepts, the categories were selected based on common and similar concepts, and a name was chosen, which has the most logical connection with the data that the category represents. is, had The results of Table 1 show the way of this coding.

Political damages	Political deception, transmission of political false information, reduction of national unity, reduction of trust in the government, change of concepts of power, reduction of political participation, political dissatisfaction, ethnic divergence.
Security damages	Disruption of safe life, the possibility of handing over private information, hacking of systems, entry of ransomware, plagiarism, information theft, financial theft, threat of intellectual property, rumor-mongering, influence of certain social trends.
Psychological damages	Dependence on social networks, low self-esteem, reduction of psychological capital, reduction of feelings towards the family, reduction of the quality of relationships in the family, self-inefficiency, justification, mood disorders, cognitive dissonance, reduction of individual identity (individual's inner understanding of himself), presentation different roles, increasing anxiety and apprehension for revealing virtual relationships, depression, social phobia, decreasing spiritual health, sense of shame and justification, insidious influence, reducing the happy life of students, unhelpful dreaming, changing personality, changing behavioral patterns. , reduction of stimulation threshold, deficiency in verbal communication skills, neuroticism, failure in thought control
Physiological damages	Changes in sleep processes, changes in feeding patterns, back pain, joint and muscle pain, vision damage, arthritis

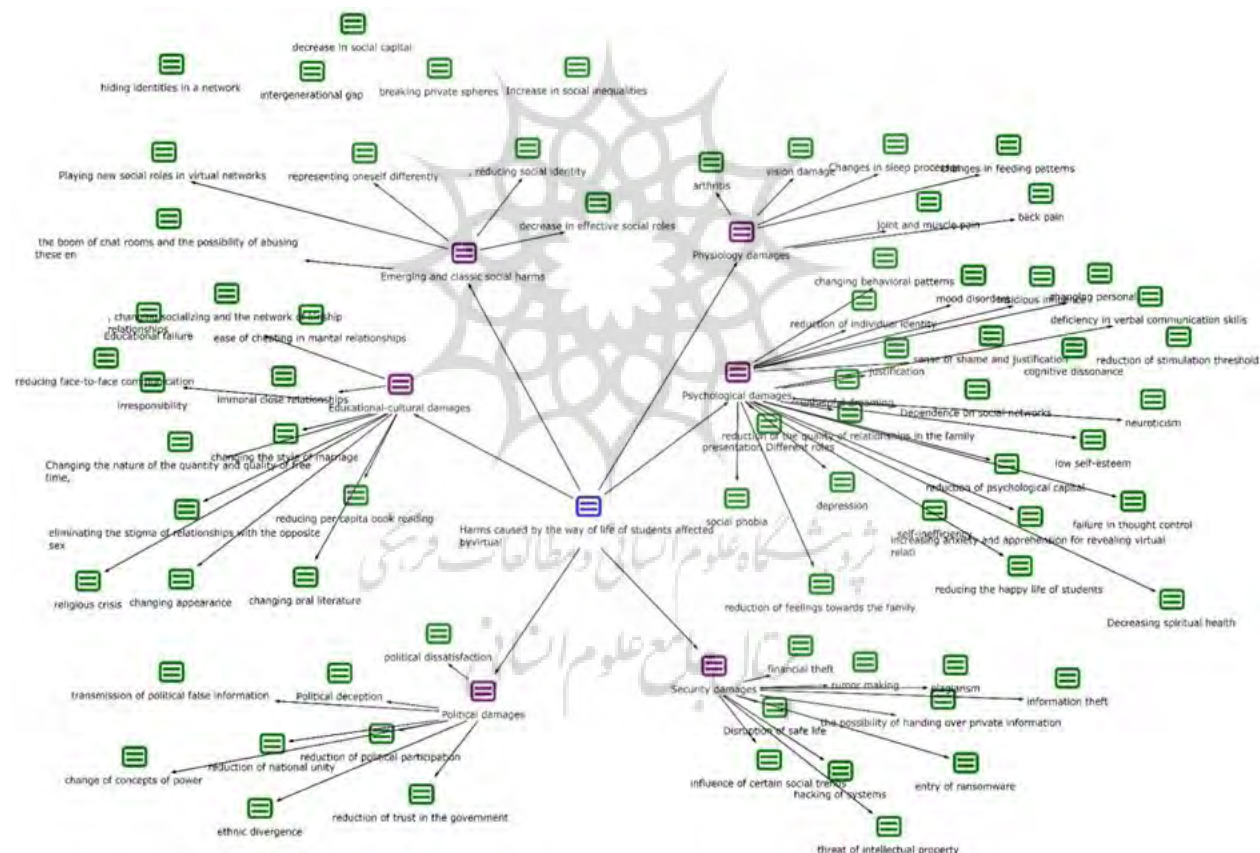


Figure 1: The main categorization model about pathology

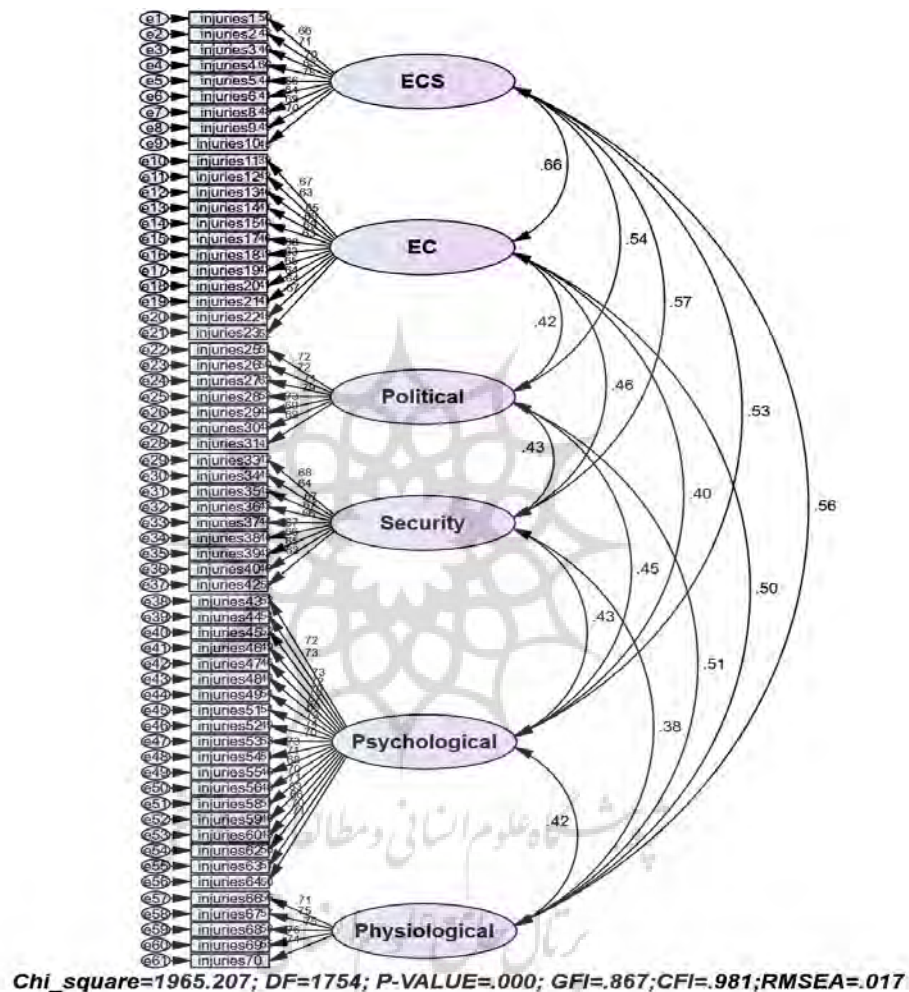
Findings of the quantitative section

In this part of the confirmatory factor analysis, the structure of moral damages caused by the way

of life of students affected by cyberspace has been investigated. Descriptive indices of variables related to moral damages are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive indices of variables related to injuries caused by students' lifestyles affected by cyberspace

Variables	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min.	Max.
Emerging and classic social damages	399	3.03	3.00	2.80	0.68	1.40	4.80
Educational-cultural damages	399	2.95	2.93	2.93	0.61	1.43	4.71
Political damages	399	3.00	3.00	3.13	0.71	1.13	5.00
Security damages	399	2.86	2.86	2.70	0.64	1.30	4.60
Psychological damages	399	3.08	3.08	2.87	0.61	1.57	4.74
Physiological damages	399	3.09	3.09	2.67	0.73	1.17	5.00

**Figure 2:** Measurement model in standard coefficient mode

The above figure shows the structure measurement model in the standard coefficients mode, the CFI and GFI values are 0.981 and 0.867 respectively, the RMSEA value is 0.017 and the chi-square ratio is also equal to the degree of freedom. It is a number less than 3 (1/120). As a result, the structure designed to measure the

damage caused by the way of life of students affected by cyberspace seems appropriate.

DISCUSSION

The unique features of the Internet, such as its provocative content, ease of access, ease and simplicity of working with a computer, low cost and visually stimulating, dimensions of

entertainment and entertainment, have all been well received by people [18]. During the past years, the study of students' morals in the university environment has been researched [19], with the understanding of this importance, the present study was conducted with the aim of identifying the moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by cyberspace. The analysis of research findings showed that the dimensions of moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by cyberspace include emerging and classic social damages, educational-cultural damages, political damages, security damages, psychological damages, and physiological damages. In the conducted researches, it shows that the harms of cyberspace include personal, family harms, social harms, educational harms, puberty harms and the possibility of suffering from mental disorders [20, 21]. In another research, they reached these results that the reasons for teenagers' tendency to use the Internet are the attractive features of the Internet, filling their free time, and the lack of a desirable identity. People who are addicted to the Internet face a series of physical, psychological, and social problems. Extreme users experience more psychological pressures such as anxiety, loneliness, and incompetence, and by diving into the virtual world, they have problems in communicating in the real world and lose their social skills [22]. In another study, it was reported that adolescents with cyberspace addiction showed signs of hyperactivity, depression, irritability and addiction [23]. In another research, it was found that virtual space has a significant effect on the social isolation of Internet users, users who have physical-emotional problems and feel social disgust, depression, loneliness, and have deficiencies use Internet interactions to solve such deficiencies. [24] In another research, it was reported that students prefer to spend a significant amount of time with the computer. It was also found that

spending too much time on the Internet can lead to the lack of development of social skills and the formation of addictive behavior and failure in school, mood changes and disconnection of social relationships [25]. In another study, it was reported that perceived acceptance by peers is significantly associated with cyber victimization, so that people who are perceived as having low acceptance are more likely to report experiencing cyberspace abuse. Participating in victimization of traditional deadlines in previous educational levels was one of the risk factors for harassment and punishment in cyberspace, so that if the probability of traditional victimization increases, the probability of cyberspace victimization increases [26]. These results can be consistent with the findings of the present study. In the explanation of this finding, it can be said that the emergence of new communication technologies in the present era, along with the developments that have occurred in the virtual space, have disrupted many social and academic functions in universities. One of the most important topics in the pathology debates of the higher education institution is the examination of the damages caused by the new educational developments. Developments that are the root of deep and fundamental changes in the type of relationships and values governing educational processes. Many of these developments and transformations are imposed on the higher education system from the outside. Ever since the Internet entered the academic space of students until today, despite all its merits and advantages, it has imposed a number of concerns on the higher education system in general and students in particular. A subject that is relevant in all societies and is not limited to a particular society or minority. Due to the special characteristics of the virtual space and the newness of this phenomenon, many students have not had the opportunity, possibility or ability to know this space and its applications in detail, and their lack of proper familiarity with

this space and against the use Their daily use of this space has created a confidential and private space, and they have access to various sites in this space without worrying and without feeling the presence of an external observer, and sometimes due to their age and personality characteristics and curiosities. be affected by the unhealthy spaces on the Internet and experience the moral damages related to it. The virtual space is changing the face of the daily life of societies, especially the young generation. The attraction of virtual space has caused many young people to choose the Internet instead of interacting with their peers and parents, which has caused harm. It is given that by developing ethical behaviors, its harm can be minimized.

Among the limitations of the current research is the limited statistical population of the research. So the research was limited to Islamic Azad University students. Also, the limitation of library resources and related researches in this field, due to the novelty of the research and the limited number of researches in the country, are among the limitations of the present research. Also, the outbreak of the Covid-19 disease faced time constraints in the process of collecting field data for the research. In line with the results obtained, it is suggested to inform and teach how to use the cyberspace correctly, use the capacities of visual, audio and written media for the institutionalization of cyber culture, hold training sessions by cultural centers for the purpose of training and informing students about new technologies, especially the Internet and virtual social networks. Also, holding educational classes in universities to inform students about the advantages and disadvantages of cyberspace and how to use them correctly, encouraging participation in social activities and strengthening such behaviors by officials in students, establishing strict rules. In order to deal with the criminals of internet crimes and

implement these laws, there are other solutions proposed by the present research.

CONCLUSION

The general results of the research showed that the moral damages caused by the lifestyle of students affected by cyberspace include emerging and classic social damages, educational-cultural damages, political damages, security damages, psychological damages, and physiological damages. Undoubtedly, the virtual space has changed both daily life and the educational environment. On the other hand, the way of life has undergone a transformation due to being entangled in the fabric of information and communication technology. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the positive and negative effects of this category without taking a defensive and aggressive position. Undoubtedly, the lifestyle related to the subject of cyberspace in the educational system will have immediate benefits from two points of view. First, changing the position of the use of virtual space and Internet social networks in the per capita consumption of members of Internet social networks; The change of cultural symbols related to the way of life as a result of membership and presence in Internet social networks, which includes materials such as: style of clothing, spoken literature of learners and the way of communicating with others in the educational environment. Second, many humanities experts and researchers believe that the introduction of the Internet into the educational environment, along with its indisputable advantages and merits, has caused a number of worries and concerns and has greatly affected the relationships of students in the educational environment. The high range of information and programs, the speed, attractiveness, and diversity of the publication range are among the characteristics of cyberspaces, which, if not used correctly, can be a serious threat to students in the educational environment.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues (such as plagiarism, conscious satisfaction, misleading, making and or forging data, publishing or sending to two places, redundancy and etc.) have been fully considered by the writers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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