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Do Generations Differ When it Comes to Green Values and Products?

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With billions of dollars up for grabs, it is essential that companies understand how to best reach the United States consumers in one of the fastest growing merchandise categories: green products. There are three reasons why understanding the green consumer is more important than ever. First, companies are producing more green products (Lu, Bock, & Joseph, 2013; K. T. Smith & Brower, 2012); second, customer demand has increased for these products and services (Borin, Lindsey-Mullikin, & Krishnan, 2013; Lu et al., 2013); and third, government agencies are encouraging green products through regulations and incentives (Akenji, 2013; Kiger, 2013; Neslen, 2016).

Consumers are growing increasingly concerned about sustainability, and this has resulted in increased green marketing and environmentally friendly products (Coleman, Hladikova, & Savelyeva, 2006; Lu et al., 2013; McKay, 2010; Ottman, 1998) and an expected doubling of spending on green products to around \$500 billion per year (Borin et al., 2013). Researchers estimate that 13.1% of shoppers are willing to spend as much as 50% more for some products because they are green (Lu et al., 2012; Oliver, 2007; Wisner, Bolinger, Holt, & Swezey, 2001).

For many companies, in addition to growing concerns about our planet, they are attracted to the idea of greater green products' manufacturing because they now account for 10% of new products coming into the marketplace (K. T. Smith & Brower, 2012). With consumers spending billions of dollars each year on green products and services, marketers need to be able to better understand these consumers (McKay, 2010). Does *one size fit all* when it comes to marketing green products? That is, do consumers generally respond to a green message in the same manner regardless of their demographics? One way to look at demographics is through applying a generational cohort framework. Investigating green marketing efforts in light of generational cohorts offers additional insights because no two generations are alike. Each generation differs in the type of products and services they need and want, responds differently to marketing messages, and "sports" different shades of green (Anvar & Venter, 2014; K. T. Smith, 2010; K. T. Smith & Brower, 2012). By understanding these differences, marketers can better position a product for a specific generation.

Background

The idea behind examining generational cohorts is that each cohort shares cultural, political, and economic experiences, outlooks, and values (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Reisenwitz & Iyer, 2009). Rather than separately considering specific elements, a generational cohort approach sums up the aggregate values of an entire generation was used. This can lead to more robust conclusions because differences noted among generations need to be strong enough to appear in spite of the large range of ages (and consequently, values, incomes, experiences) represented. Generally, each generation shares common characteristics, and these traits are usually quite different from one generation to another. For example, generational cohort analysis has been applied to an eclectic group of research including internet satisfaction, volunteerism, brand loyalty, work orientation, risk aversion (Reisenwitz & Iyer, 2009), mobile data services (Yang & Jolly, 2008), work attitudes (Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009), consumer values, personality traits, and responses to advertising appeals (Loroz & Helgeson, 2013), retail attributes, retail format preferences, and satisfaction and loyalty (Brosdahl & Carpenter, 2012), to name a few. However, although there have been numerous studies on green products, green marketing, and consumer behavior, there is a gap in the research knowledge that investigates whether a generation's reported "greenness" actually translates to green product purchases.

In order to objectify greenness, Haws, Winterich, and Naylor (2014) designed the Green Consumer Values scale (GCVS), which assigns a green score to a person based on six survey questions. Across six studies, the authors demonstrated that their method of measurement captured green consumption values in a "reliable, valid, and parsimonious manner" (Haws et al., 2014, p. 336). The authors claimed that the higher a score an individual achieves on this scale, the more likely that person is to purchase green products (Haws et al., 2014).

This study takes a three-pronged approach. After each of the generations is assigned a GCVS Score to determine the "greenness" of the generation, respondents are asked a series of six questions about their views on the environment. This study then compares the responses of each of the three generational cohorts to find similarities and differences. Knowing this information can help managers better target each generation in a way that would be most effective for that group of consumers. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to help marketers and managers better understand customers' beliefs and needs. By better understanding customers, companies can offer products and services with features and attributes that customer's want.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Do generations differ in their green values?
2. Is there a correlation between the green values of generational cohorts and their purchasing of green products?

3. Do generations differ on the number of green products they purchase?

Theory of Generational Cohorts, members of each generational cohort are influenced by the current events and shared common experiences during the time in which they came of age, generally defined as the years between 17 and 23 (Guillot-Soulez & Soulez, 2014; K. T. Smith & Brower, 2012; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Schewe, Meredith & Noble, 2000). The experiences that each generation endures influence their beliefs (Parment, 2012; Straughan & Roberts, 1999) and ultimately their actions (Holbrook & Schindler, 1989, 1994; Parment, 2011, 2012; Schindler & Holbrook, 1993; Schuman & Scott, 1989). This pattern has been repeated time and again. For example, people who grew up during the Great Depression formed a belief that resources were not to be squandered (Berkup, 2014; Schewe & Noble, 2000). Baby Boomers (born 1944 -1964) who grew up during high drug use in the 1960s tried to protect their children from illegal drug use (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 338). Similarly, those coming of age when the Rolling Stones rose to fame continue to enjoy rock and roll into their older years (Schewe & Noble, 2000). Studies have even shown those who grew up drinking Coca-Cola still prefer it over other products introduced later on in their lives (Schewe & Noble, 2000).

With respect to environmental issues, Millennials (born 1980 - 1994) and Baby Boomers both experienced major environmental issues during an influential age (Fajersson & Sampol, 2013; Snyder et al., 2011; Straughan & Roberts, 1999). For example, during an international oil embargo in the early 1970s, dubbed the Energy Crisis, Baby Boomers were in their teens to young adult years as panic at the pumps ensued. This experience changed the attitude toward energy sources and created an anxiety about their financial future (Schewe & Noble, 2000). Because of this oil crisis, Baby Boomers became more aware of their environmental footprint. Likewise, the Millennial Generation has also experienced major environmental issues during their formative years. Climate change, caused in part by global warming and deforestation, and other disasters that have caused environmental pollution are threatening the financial security of Millennial's futures (Miller, 2012). Because of Millennials' experiences that include the Deepwater Horizon disaster, the melting of polar icecaps, and fracking, they have formed a belief that wind and solar power provide clean alternative energy sources that will not further harm the planet (Miller, 2012). A study of Generation X (born (1965 -1979, however, found that they are less concerned for the environment. Take, for example, one of the important environmental issues facing the world—climate change. Gen Xers do not believe climate change is an important issue (Miller, 2012).

The political environment is also important during a generation's coming of age. The Baby Boomers grew up at a time when government officials were passing new laws to protect the environment. Then America took a conservative turn under President Ronald Reagan as Generation X was coming of age. Many environmental issues went underground (Hower, 2013). But ultimately the tides shifted again and the environmental

movement was rekindled and came back strong at a time when the Millennials were coming of age (Daniels, Krosnick, Tichy & Tompson, 2011; Dunlap & Mertig, 1992). Given their environmental experiences and the political environment, Baby Boomers and Millennials are expected to demonstrate stronger pro-green attitudes than Gen Xers, as measured by the GCVS (Haws et al., 2014).

The second research question examined the possible correlation between the greenness of the cohorts of a generation and their purchasing choices. Previous research has found that stated behaviors can mirror actual behaviors (Holbrook & Schindler, 1989, 1994; Parment, 2012, Schuman & Scott, 1989). A study by Soonthonsmai (2001), based on the Theory of Reason Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1970, 1988), found that a stated intention to purchase a specific product was a major predictor of the actual purchase. In addition, studies based on the Theory of Planned Behavior have found those stating that they will do something often perform that behavior (Albarracin et al., 2001; Fielding et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2013; Synodinos & Bevan-Dye, 2014). The GCVS used in this study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Haws et al., 2014) and has been very reliable in predicting green consumer behavior based on a respondent's stated intention (Haws et al., 2014), so it is hypothesized that there will be a strong positive correlation between scores on the GCVS and the number of products purchased during a 30-day span.

The third research question explored the number of green products purchased based on generational identification. Previous research has shown that beliefs based on experiences can influence behaviors (de Run & Ting, 2014; Duh & Struwig, 2015; Guillot-Soulez & Soulez, 2014; Hinesly, 2012; Kim et al., 2013; Mainieri et al., 1997; Oliver & Rosen, 2010). For example, if a person believes that they can make a change in their health status, they will begin to act in a way that promotes the attainment of better health, such as getting more rest, eating fresh food, and exercising (Fila & Smith, 2006).

The same theory applies to environmental beliefs. Attitudes toward the environment can be strong predictors of consumers' actions to protect the environment (Oliver & Rosen, 2010). Political policies were more environmentally friendly (Kemp, 1990; Daniels, Krosnick, Tichy & Tompson, 2011; Hower, 2013; Dunlap & Mertig, 1992) and significant environmental events happened more during the formative years of Baby Boomers and Millennials compared to that of Generation X (Bamberg & Moser, 2007). Therefore, Baby Boomers and Millennials are more likely to score higher than Generation Xers on a scale that ranks environmentally friendly beliefs and, consequently, will also score higher on a scale that measures behaviors. Thus, it is hypothesized that Millennials and Baby Boomers will report having purchased more green products in a 30-day span than Generation X.

Methodology

Participants

A total of 1,215 participants from the three largest generations of U.S. consumers—Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials—were surveyed via email using the web-based version of Sawtooth Software. The participants, who were divided nearly equally from the three generations and between genders, were from almost every U. S. state. The survey panel included 408 Millennials, 400 Generation Xers, and 407 Baby Boomers. Among the Millennials, 202 were male, 204 were female, and 2 identified as “other.” There were 200 male and 200 female Generation Xers. The Baby Boomers were made up of 205 males and 202 females.

The survey panel firm called Research Now was used to recruit online participants for the study. If participants did not fit within the age requirements for one of the three generations, if they did not complete the survey, or if they did not answer a question correctly that was used to make sure they were paying attention, their responses were not included in the study. There were 879 people excluded from the study because they did not finish the survey, they were not born within the three specific generations, or they failed an attention question.

Variables

The GCVS consists of six questions that are assessed on a 7-point Likert-type scale, where 1 represents *strongly disagree* and 7 represents *strongly agree*. The six questions are then averaged to form a score that represents the respondent’s environmentally friendly consumption values. The higher the score, the more inclined the person is toward environmentally friendly behaviors, including purchasing green products (Haws et al., 2014). The questions are the following:

1. It is important to me that the products I use do not harm the environment.
2. I consider the potential environmental impact of my actions when making many of my decisions.
3. My purchase habits are affected by my concern for our environment.
4. I am concerned about wasting the resources of our planet.
5. I would describe myself as environmentally responsible.
6. I am willing to be inconvenienced in order to take actions that are more environmentally friendly.

Survey Administration

Using Sawtooth Software’s web survey platform, data were collected from online participants. In order to test the software and questions, a pretest was given to 75 participants using Amazon’s Mechanical Turk, a web service that allows participants to complete surveys. After selection based on the pretest, the participants were then linked

to the survey on Sawtooth Software's website. Slight revisions, including rewording some of the survey questions to make them easier to understand, were made to the survey questions based on feedback from the pretest participants.

Once linked to the survey site, respondents saw a welcome screen that explained the survey and the time estimated to complete it. The survey's purpose to facilitate a study on consumer behavior and buying habits for academic research was explained. Respondents were assured that their answers would be kept confidential and were asked to answer the questions honestly. The researcher's email address was provided in case respondents had questions or concerns; however, no one contacted the researcher via email. Neither green products nor environmental concerns were mentioned in the introduction, so respondents would not be aware of the types of questions that would follow.

The survey first asked respondents to select a range of years in which they were born. Next, the survey asked where respondents obtained most of their information, how much influence they have over purchasing items for their household, which green products they had purchased in the past 30 days, which green products they already own, and which green products they plan to purchase in the next 12 months.

The survey's next section included the GCVS, in which respondents scored the questions on a scale of 1 to 7. These questions rotated, so the respondents saw them in different orders. After that, respondents were asked questions regarding where they obtained most of their information about the environment. This was followed by an attention question asking the respondents to respond to the statement, "According to current science, the earth is flat." If respondents did not strongly disagree that the Earth is flat, they were exited from the survey, and their responses were not included.

The questions were formatted to make them easy to read with very little text on the screen at one time. A status bar showed participants their progress throughout the survey. After answering a question, respondents were not allowed to return to a previous question in the survey to prevent the changing of answers. The Sawtooth Software allowed respondents to complete the survey on a computer or smartphone.

Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability

Validity is the certainty that a survey measures what it is supposed to measure and that the findings can be generalized beyond a particular study (Shavelson, 1996). To improve the validity of this study, the survey instrument was used for a pilot study in which 75 participants using Amazon's Mechanical Turk were chosen to complete the survey. Respondents were asked for feedback and were observed to identify any unclear wording, formatting issues, or misunderstanding of questions and response expectations. Based on this feedback, minor adjustments were made to the final survey. In addition, four experts in the field of marketing and statistics were consulted to provide

feedback on the wording of the survey questions and the overall design of the survey. The reliability of the survey instrument was checked with a Cronbach Alpha, which was performed using SPSS. The alpha coefficient is .917, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

Results

The results of this study found that there are significant differences between generations in some areas of buyer behavior related to green products. Each research question and hypothesis will be presented and examined in detail.

Research question 1: Do generations differ in their green values?

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the generational cohorts and the green score obtained from questions targeting their environmental beliefs. The independent variable, the generation, included three levels: Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers. The dependent variable was the GVCs score. The ANOVA was significant, $F(2,1212) = 9.32, p = .000$. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the means. Because Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was significant ($p = .000$), Dunnett's C test, which is a test that does not assume equal variances among the three groups, was used. There was a statistically significant difference ($p = .05$) in the means between the Millennials and Baby Boomer (with the latter having a mean score of 1.95 points more than the Millennials), the Gen X and Baby Boomer (with the latter scoring 1.89 more than the Gen Xers), but not between the Millennials and the Gen X. (Gen X scored only .06 more than Millennials.)

Once it was determined that the overall GCVS Score was significant, another ANOVA was run to investigate the differences in individual variables among the three generations to determine if just one dependent variable was explaining all of the differences. An ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the generational cohorts and each of the six questions. The independent variable, the generation, included three levels: Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers. The dependent variable was each of the following questions:

1. It is important to me that the products I use do not harm the environment;
2. I consider the potential environmental impact of my actions when making many of my decisions;
3. My purchase habits are affected by my concern for our environment;
4. I am concerned about wasting the resources of our planet;
5. I would describe myself as environmentally responsible; and
6. I am willing to be inconvenienced in order to take actions that are more environmentally friendly.

The ANOVA was statistically significant for each of the six questions. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the means.

For question 1, there was a significant difference ($p = .05$) in the means among the generations, with the Baby Boomers scoring higher than both the Millennials and Xers. In general, Baby Boomers felt more strongly about using products that do not harm the environment than the younger generations. There was no significant difference between the way Generation Xers and the Millennials felt about that same question.

For question 2, there was a significant difference ($p = .05$) in the means between the Boomers and younger generations, with the Baby Boomers again scoring higher than the Millennials and the Xers. There was no significant difference between Generation Xers and Millennials. Baby Boomers felt more strongly that their decisions will affect the environment than their younger peers.

For question 3, there was a significant difference ($p = .05$) in the means among the generations, with Baby Boomers scoring higher than both of the younger generations. There was no significant difference between Millennials and Generation Xers. Baby Boomers felt more strongly that their concern for the environment affected their purchase habits than the two younger generations.

For question 4, the pattern of significant difference ($p = .05$) continues with the Boomers scoring higher on the GVCS than the Millennials and Xers. Again, there was no significant difference between Millennials and Generation Xers. In general, Baby Boomers felt more concerned about wasting the resources of the planet.

For question 5, there were significant differences ($p = .05$) among the three generations with the oldest generation attaining higher scores than the younger ones. There was no significant difference between the Millennials and the Xers. The Baby Boomers felt more strongly about describing themselves as environmentally responsible.

For question 6, there was significant differences ($p = .05$) in the means between Generation Xers and Baby Boomers, with Baby Boomers scoring higher than Generation X. There was no significant difference between Baby Boomers and Millennials or between Generation Xers and Millennials. This is the only question in which the Boomers were not statistically different from the Millennials; yet, they were significantly different than the Xers. Both the Baby Boomers and the Millennials felt more strongly than Generation X that they were willing to be inconvenienced in order to take actions that were more environmentally friendly.

In summary, five of the six individual questions shared the same pattern of Baby Boomers scoring higher than Millennials and Generation Xers, with the two younger generations attaining scores of a similar nature. This finding was not expected. However, the last question that focused on whether someone would be willing to be inconvenienced in order to perform an environmentally friendly action was answered differently. Both Millennials and Boomers scored higher than Xers, showing they would

be willing to be inconvenienced for the sake of the environment. This last question is the only one that partially behaved as hypothesized.

Research Question 2: Is there a correlation between the green values of generational cohorts and their purchasing of green products?

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to determine the relationship between the scores on the GCVS and the number of green products purchased during a 30-day span. The correlation was significant, $r(1213) = .34, p = .000$. However, this was not as strong a positive correlation as was hypothesized. It was a weak positive correlation. Although people who scored higher on the GCVS tended to buy more green products during a 30-day span, they did not buy them in the quantities expected.

Research Question 3: Do generations differ on the number of green products they purchase?

An ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between the generational cohorts and those who purchased green products from four or more categories over a 30-day period. The independent variable, the generation, included three levels: Millennials, Generation Xers, and Baby Boomers. The dependent variable was four or more green categories. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(2,1212) = 2.61, p = .074$. Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences among the means. There was no significant difference in the means between the Millennials and Baby Boomers, the Gen Xers and Baby Boomers, or between the Millennials and Gen Xers. The hypothesis that Boomers and Millennials would purchase more green products than Gen Xers was not supported. There was no significant difference in the purchasing behaviors of the three generations.

While each generation purchased similar amounts of green products, the question was raised whether they were purchasing from the same categories. For all generations, locally grown produce was purchased with the highest frequency, and hotels were chosen with lowest frequency. The generations differed in their frequency of organic food, cleaning supplies, and light bulbs. In order to determine whether the percentages of each category were significant, independent sample t -tests were conducted.

Millennials vs. Generation Xers. The first analysis considered the Millennials versus Generation Xers. In regard to locally grown produce, light bulbs, and public transportation, there were significant results. In the categories of locally grown produce and light bulbs, people in Generation X on average purchased more than the Millennials. For public transportation, Millennials on average used public transportation more than those in Generation X. Between these two generations there were no significant differences in the amount of organic food or green cleaning products purchased or the number of stays at green hotels.

Millennial vs. Baby Boomers. The second analysis considered the Millennials versus Baby Boomers in regard to organic food, locally grown produce, green hotel stays, and public transportation and yielded significant results. For these four statistically significant categories, the Millennials were more environmentally aware than the Boomers. Although the overall finding was not significant, there were areas that Millennials purchased more green products than the Boomers, which is an interesting finding in light of the first research question which revealed that Boomers had higher green scores than Millennials or Xers. There were no significant differences between the two generations and the amount of light bulbs or green cleaning products purchased.

Generation Xers vs. Baby Boomers. The third analysis considered Generation Xers versus Baby Boomers. In regard to organic food and public transportation there were significant results with the Generation Xers engaging in each category more than Baby Boomers. Again, it is somewhat surprising to see that for these two statistically significant questions, Generations Xers scored higher than Boomers. There were no significant differences between the two generations in regards to the number of stays at green hotels or the amount of locally grown produce, light bulbs, or green cleaning products purchased.

Discussion

Study Results Compared with Prior Literature

Using the generational cohort perspective, this study compares the three largest generations of U.S. consumers—Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials—to determine which claim to be more environmentally friendly and which actually choose green product attributes.

Previous research has shown that generations behave differently due to events that occurred during their coming-of-age years (A. Young & Hinesly, 2012). Specifically, in regards to this research, Baby Boomers and Millennials both came of age during a time of environmental awareness (Delafrooz et al., 2014), so it is hypothesized that they would react similarly when questioned about their green values. Previous findings have also demonstrated that an increased concern over sustainability and the environment by consumers will translate into an increase in green product purchases (Coleman et al., 2006; Elgaaied, 2012; Lu et al., 2013; Mainieri et al., 1997; McKay, 2010; Mostafa, 2006; Ottman, 1998; Peattie, 2010; Royne et al., 2016; Trivedi et al., 2015). However, other research has shown that even though a person claims to be green, it does not mean that they purchase environmentally friendly products (Mainieri et al., 1997; Royne et al., 2011). After carefully reviewing this existing research, three carefully crafted research questions and hypotheses were developed and put to the test.

This study addresses a gap in research by comparing generations to see if they share similar environmental beliefs and if these beliefs translate to green product purchases (Roynes et al., 2011; K. T. Smith & Brower, 2012; Weisstein et al., 2014). It was hypothesized that the oldest and youngest generations included in this study would score similarly on a GCVS due to the sharing of common beliefs as a result of coming of age during periods of environmental awakening. However, this assumption did not hold true. Baby Boomers actually had higher GCVS than either Millennials or Generation Xers, and the last two generations had similar scores.

The second research question this study addresses is the correlation between the scores on the GCVS and the number of green purchases. It was hypothesized that there would be a strong positive correlation between the two. There was a positive correlation, but it was a weak positive correlation (people did buy more green products, but they did not buy them in the expected quantities), which can be accounted for with a few reasons. First, it may be that those higher on the GCVS tend to reuse items longer. Second, these consumers may tend to make items last longer; both reusing and trying to extend the life of an item fits into the beliefs of a person who is greener. Lastly, it could be that these greener consumers also tend to be more frugal with their money; therefore, they buy fewer products overall.

Finally, this study examined generational differences regarding the number of green products each generation purchased. It was once again hypothesized that Millennials and Boomers would buy more green products than Generation Xers. In reality, there was no statistically significant difference among the generations in the number of green products they purchased. However, there were some differences in the types of green products each generation purchased. Although Baby Boomers had the highest GREEN Value Scale Scores of any generation, they did not buy more types of green products than any other generation. The Millennials bought organic food and locally grown produce, stayed in green hotels, and used public transportation in numbers that are significantly higher than Boomers; they also used public transportation more than Generation Xers. Members of Generation X bought more energy efficient light bulbs and locally grown produce than the Millennials and purchased more organic food and used public transportation more than the Boomers.

Contribution to Existing Knowledge

Generational cohort theory is based on a philosophy that members of a generation are influenced by major events during their formative years. These experiences, it is theorized, lead to beliefs and values. Past research has shown that beliefs and values then translate to behaviors. Contrary to prior research that would indicate that environmental values would translate to green buying behaviors, the outcome of this study indicated that environmental values do not always drive people into buying green

products. In this case, having green values did not elicit the expected behaviors of buying green products.

A common perception in the United States is that Millennials are greener than other generations, but in this study, the Baby Boomer generation was the most green. The two younger generations have more in common with each other than they do with the Boomers. This is important to researchers and marketers who are deciding how to best target each generation. Knowing this, marketers may decide to target Millennials and Generation Xers in the same way but take a different approach with Baby Boomers.

Limitations

The theoretical framework of this study is generational cohorts; therefore, the survey asked respondents to identify a year range in which they were born that matches up with three generations. However, the survey did not ask the respondents to give their specific ages. If the survey had included a question asking the participants' ages, that information may have been useful for the purpose of cluster analysis. The decision not to include a question asking age was made to prevent a possible discrepancy between this question and the question asking for the respondent to select within a range of dates that match the generations.

The research did not differentiate between the levels of importance of the different types of environmental issues each generation faced as they came of age. For example, one generation might view the level of importance for climate change differently than another generation, who were more concerned with the impact of nuclear risks.

Further Research

In order to better understand customers, research could include more in-depth interviews and code for key words that become common during the data collection process. These interviews could add the variable of a measure of closeness to peers to find if the participant identifies with their cohort. Another interesting study would be to develop a scale that uses the traits of generations discussed in the literature to see how much respondents agree with those traits.

Another area to explore could be a study including using guilt as a motivator to purchase green products. Guilt has been used in other consumer behavior studies as a motivational factor (Dahl, Honea, & Manchanda 2003; Elgaaied, 2012; Huhmann & Botherton, 1997; Jiménez & Yang, 2008; Lascu, 1991). By using guilt and self-efficacy, researchers could compare the responses of people from each generation to determine any differences; some generations might respond to guilt and self-efficacy more than other generations.

Conclusion

This study is important to the body of research in the areas of generational cohorts, green marketing, and environmentally friendly products. Marketers have long known that the one-size-fits-all approach to consumers is not always the most effective. This is probably truer now than ever before with segmented TV channels, social media platforms, and print publications. Knowing the greenness of a generation can assist marketers in targeting advertisements. Additionally, knowing that beliefs do not necessarily translate to actions offers additional areas of research to explore.

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