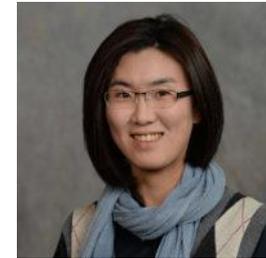


How Do Generational Differences Drive Response to Social-Issue Ads?

Yoon-Joo Lee, Associate Professor
Department of Strategic Communication
Edward R. Murrow College of Communication
Washington State University



Eric Haley, Professor
School of Advertising & PR
College of Communication & Information Science
University of Tennessee, Knoxville



Study Goal

Do consumers' self-value orientations influence responses to CSR advertising differently across different generation?

Corporate Social Responsibility Advertising

Defined as corporate advertising of companies' prosocial initiatives in supporting social causes.



Generational Cohort

- A convenient and effective way for **segmentation** (Schewe and Meredith, 2004). A certain demographic group is **uniquely coherent on the basis of birth years**.
- The same **'moment defining'** events - **values, preferences, attitudes and behaviors** (Meredith and Schewe, 1994; Ryder, 1965).



©unsplash.com



©GayatriMalhortra/unsplash.com

Self-Concept Theory

- *A system of thoughts and feelings about the self.*
- The theory posits that individuals try to maintain consistency between self-value and perceiving stimuli (Prince, 1993).
- A driver in consumer attitudes and behaviors.



©AzizAcharki/unsplash.com

Values and CSR Initiatives -*motives*

Other-Focused

- **Prosocial values**
 - Socially conscious behaviors (e.g., citizenship behavior (Rioux and Penner 2001) or supporting companies that help social causes (Youn and Kim 2008).

Self-Focused

- **Status-Seeking**
 - Strong **altruistic value** orientation did ***not*** influence positive evaluation of corporate social initiatives (e.g., Zasuwa, 2016).
 - Enhanced social standing via altruism.

Consumer Value Orientations (Self-Construal)

: **Self-Construal**: perception of self in relation to others.



©hannahbusing/unsplash.com

Collectivistic

Other-Focused

Individualistic

Self-Focused



©TKHammonds/unsplash.com

Vertical
(Hierarchy)



Horizontal
(Equality)



Vertical Individualism



©randyfath/unsplash.com

Status-Seeking
“Win” Achievement

Vertical Collectivism



©HunterRace/unsplash.com

Fulfilling Duties
Responsibility to
Society

Horizontal Individualism



©raw pixel.com

Uniqueness
Independence
Freedom

Horizontal Collectivism



©melissaaskew/unsplash.com

Benevolence

H1

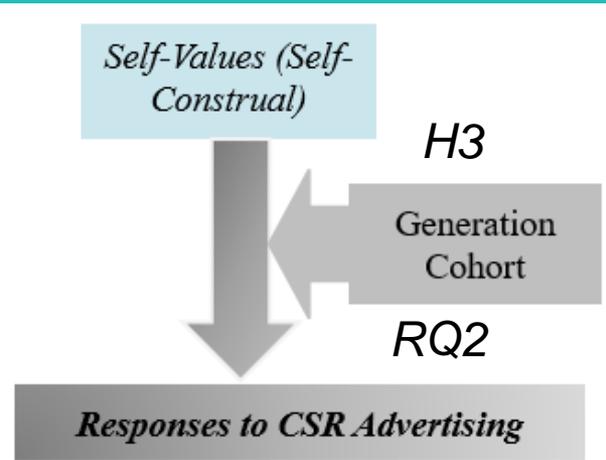
RQ1

H2

RQ2

CSR Advertising

Moderator: Generational Cohort



Examples:

- Millennials: Millennials are likely to support companies that engage with social initiatives (Polizzotto, 2015).
- Baby boomers: Prosocial behaviors recently dropped faster than the national average (Haberman, 2013).



© JulianGentilezza/unsplash.com



© GiacomoLucarini/unsplash.com

Method

- Quasi-Experiment Design (Cancer Research, Energy Conservation)
- Among 196 participants:
 - 18% of participants ranged in age from 21 to 30 years.
 - 25% were from 31 to 40.
 - 19% were from 51-59.
 - 20% from over 60.
 - White (76.4%), Hispanic American (4.1%), Black (10.8%), Asian American (3.4%) and other (5.4%).
 - 49 % Female

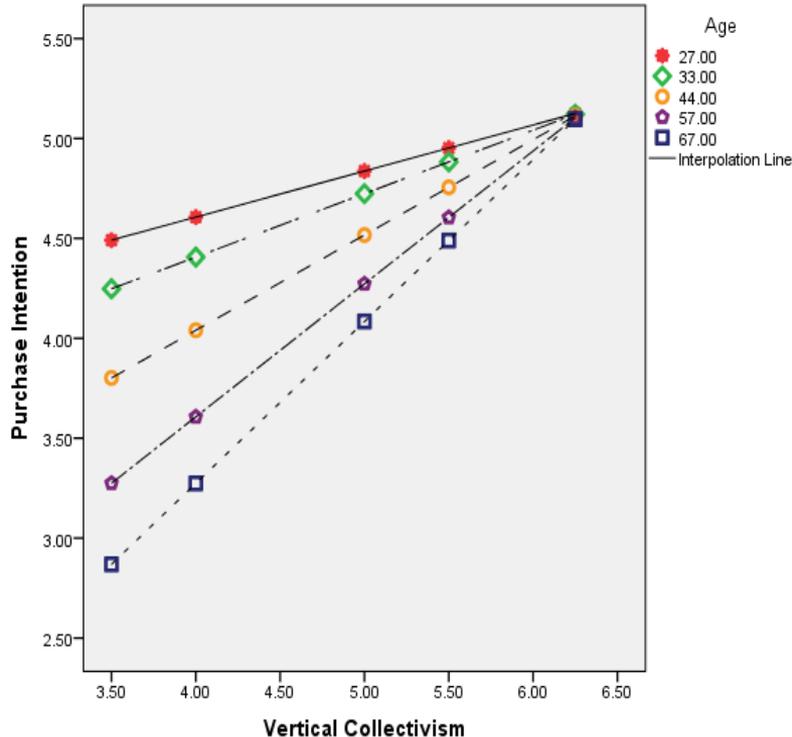
Results

Interactions Effects on Consumer Responses

	PI	Web	Aad	Ab	Alt	Status
	B	β	β	β	β	β
VI	.25**	.13	.09	.16**	.18**	.34**
VC	.17*	.22**	.35**	.29**	.25**	.14*
HI	.04	.10	.12	.12	.16*	-.03
HC	.18*	.19**	.09	.10	.10	.18*
Age	-.17*	-.15*	-.06	-.18**	-.18**	-.25**
VC × Age	.54*	.48*	.50*	.66**	.60*	.16
VI × Age	-.22	-.04	.22	-.14	.01	-.12
HC × Age	-.15	.14	.26	-.26	-.31	-.10
HI × Age	-.04	-.20	-.08	-.06	-.47**	.18

Note: PI = purchase intention; Aad = attitude toward the advertisement; Ab = attitude toward the brand; Alt = altruism; VI = vertical individualism; VC = vertical collectivism; HI = horizontal individualism; HC = horizontal collectivism. * $p < .01$. ** $p < .05$.

Results

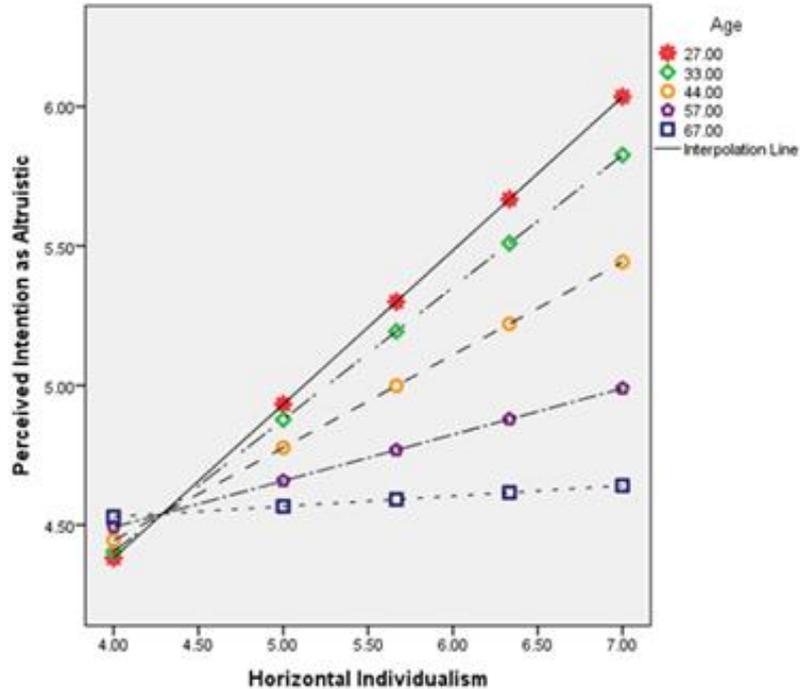


The Johnson-Neyman technique (the floodlight analysis).

Figure 1.

Interactions between VC and Age on Purchase Intention

Results



The Johnson-Neyman technique (the floodlight analysis).

Figure 2.
VC and HI in Interacting with Age on Perceived Advertisers' Motive as Altruistic

Takeaways

- **Younger** consumers (Millennials) were more likely to have **favorable responses** to CSR advertising
 - A strong sense of community and civic-minded (Strauss and Howe, 2000), or they are “Generation We” (Craig and Kieburger, 2014).
 - **Different age segments** have **different motives** to support CSR initiatives
 - Each age segment may respond to message strategy emphasizing uniqueness, status, duty, or benevolence differently.

Takeaways

Consider different motivational factors

- Millennials, (< 30-year-olds) were **unlikely** to be motivated by the **VC value**, such as **fulfilling social duties or responsibilities**, in supporting CSR initiatives in evaluating CSR ads (Gillenwater, 2015).
- Millennials and Gen X, (<54-year-olds), were **likely** to be motivated by the **HI** value, such as **uniqueness and independent freedom** in evaluating advertiser's motive as altruistic.

Managerial Implications

- In reaching out to younger consumers, advertisers may want to use advertising appeals emphasizing values of **uniqueness or equality**.
- The CSR initiatives could create programs whereby millennials can contribute to social issues by using their **unique talents and skills or by sharing their own ideas in the form of cloud sourcing**.

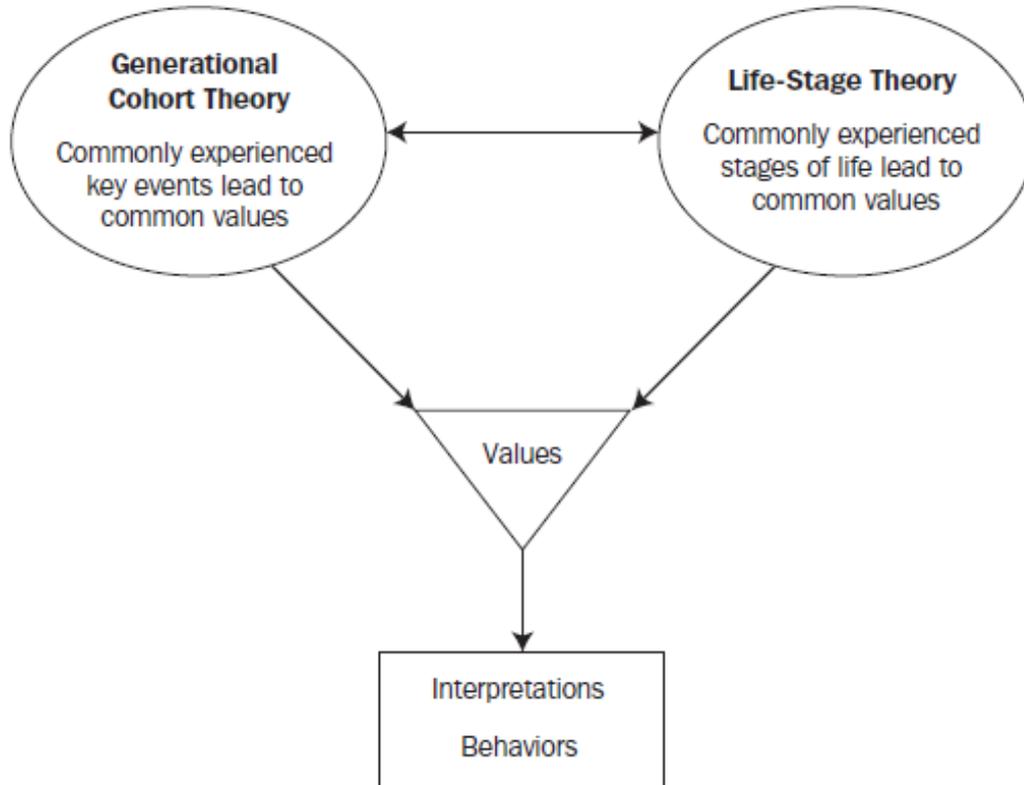


©rawpixel.com



©rawpixel.com

Summary and Future Study



A General Explanatory Model of Age Effects In Response to Advertising



Thank You!

Contact Information

yoon.j.lee@wsu.edu

haley@utk.edu