

A Work Project presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in
Management from the Nova School of Business and Economics.

GENERATIONAL COHORT DIFFERENCES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP:
HOW DOES GEN Z COME TO FEEL OWNERSHIP IN AN INTANGIBLE WORLD?

ANDREA ANTJE PETRA GRÖSCHEL

(44538)

Work project carried out under the supervision of:

Professor Luis F. Martinez, Nova School of Business and Economics

Co-Advisor: Professor Dr. Colleen Kirk, New York Institute of Technology

17-12-2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
ABSTRACT	1
1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	4
2.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP	4
2.1.1 <i>Motivations</i>	5
2.1.2 <i>Antecedents</i>	5
2.2 GENERATIONAL COHORTS.....	7
2.2.1 <i>Generational Traits and Differences</i>	7
2.2.2 <i>Characteristics of Generation Z</i>	8
3. GENERATION Z AS CONSUMERS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP FRAMEWORK.....	10
3.1 CONSUMPTION TRENDS	10
3.1.1 <i>A Need for Expressing Individual Identity</i>	11
3.1.2 <i>A Fundamental Desire for Security</i>	15
3.1.3 <i>A Need for Control</i>	18
3.2 EVALUATION OF SYNTHESIS.....	21
4. DISCUSSION	22
4.1 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS	23
4.2 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	23
4.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH.....	25
6. REFERENCES	26
7. APPENDICES	42

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisor, Professor L. Martinez, and co-advisor, Professor Dr. C. Kirk, for your invaluable guidance, advice, and patience. I am deeply grateful for my family's loving support.

Abstract

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to investigate the relationship between psychological ownership and its emergence in Generation Z based on prior published research, which differs in behavior, characteristics, and values compared to previous generational cohorts. Through the synthesis of existing literature, a conceptualization of the psychological ownership theory based on three proposed underlying consumption trends of Generation Z further advances the academic landscape: (1) 'A need for expressing individual identity', (2) 'A fundamental desire for security', and (3) 'A desire for control'. This paper's originality stems from being the pioneer conceptual paper to apply the psychological ownership framework to Generation Z's traits and thus, greatly contributes to existing psychological ownership literature. Products and services which drive the development of ownership feelings are discussed and future research propositions, calling for deeper empirical investigation of psychological ownership in generational cohorts, are outlined.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Psychological Ownership, Generation Z, Individual Identity, Perceived Control, Perceived Security

This work used infrastructure and resources funded by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (UID/ECO/00124/2013, UID/ECO/00124/2019 and Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209), POR Lisboa (LISBOA-01-0145-FEDER-007722 and Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209) and POR Norte (Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209).

1. Introduction

Generation Z (Gen Z), people born between 1995 and 2010, is considered the largest of all generational cohorts comprising more than 2.5 billion people worldwide, accounting for 32 percent of the world's population in 2021 (Euromonitor, 2021; Koop, 2021). As such, Gen Z will be the largest and most influential generation of consumers up until 2030. As true digital natives, Gen Zers grew up in a world with ubiquitous internet access and hence, expect seamless movements around the online and offline universe (Cheung et al., 2017). It is therefore crucial to understand the needs and desires of this generation to unlock critical opportunities for developing business and digital marketing strategies that cater to them (Bhalla et al., 2021). At the same time, ongoing technological innovations are drastically altering consumption models. This development ranges from legal ownership of personal material products to access-based consumption of experiential, temporary, and shared products (e.g., car sharing, streaming platforms, etc.). As a consequence, these value-creating innovations disrupt individuals' psychological ownership (PO) (Morewedge et al., 2021).

PO refers to a personal sentiment of ownership that an individual has for a physical or non-tangible target (e.g., "This is MINE!") (Pierce et al., 2001, p. 299). Therefore, this phenomenon determines how we interact and engage with the social environment and the objects that surround us (Pierce et al., 2003). Hence, the framework is widely used across marketing and consumer behavior tactics as consumers can develop ownership feelings for the brand, leading to the generation of favorable behavior (e.g., higher purchase intention, loyalty, and willingness to pay) (Asatryan & Oh, 2008; Fuchs et al., 2010; Kamleitner & Feuchtl, 2015; Peck & Shu, 2009; Shu & Peck, 2011; Kumar & Kaushal, 2021).

Younger generational cohorts, such as Gen Z, may challenge the conventional understanding of PO as their perspective on consumption has significantly changed towards a more

sustainable and less brand-loyal behavior (Bhargava et al., 2020; Gomez et al., 2020; Priporas et al., 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2018). Thus, confusion may arise whether the concept of PO, which has been based on studies of foregoing generations, can still be successfully applied to younger generations in a marketing context or whether the sentiment of ownership diminishes in a more experientially oriented generation such as Gen Z today.

The goal of this conceptual paper is to examine for the first time whether and how younger generations, with the example of Gen Z compared to older generations, perceive PO and what can be done to preserve this phenomenon. Drawing on prior published research, a conceptualization of the PO theory based on three relevant underlying consumption trends of Gen Z will be investigated: (1) ‘A need for expressing individual identity’; (2) ‘A fundamental desire for security’; and (3) ‘A desire for control’. Each trend offers new insights on the emergence of PO and ways to maintain and foster this phenomenon within the discussed generational cohort. Eventually, the next steps for consumer research and future research questions will be proposed.

This research paper is of enormous importance as it fills in the current research gap on generational differences within the PO theory and will answer the following research question: *How does PO evolve in younger generations, particularly in Gen Z, compared to previous generational cohorts?*

If Gen Z has a different perception of ownership than previous generations, they should also respond territorially to different types of targets (Kirk et al., 2018). Several questions arise from this assumption. How does this play out in social media and in an increasingly shared economy and how can the feeling of ownership be preserved in a more fast-moving and less brand-loyal society? Thus, this research will significantly contribute to the academic landscape of consumer behavior by extending knowledge and stimulating further theory construction as there is no published research yet on PO which includes Gen Z. It will help firms preserving and

operationalizing the concept of PO within the younger generations in their business strategies in a fast-paced modern world. The concept of PO has received much attention in various research fields, particularly in organizational science (Pierce et al., 2001; Pierce & Jussila, 2011) and over the last years also in consumer behavior (Jussila et al., 2015; Kamleitner & Feuchtl, 2015; Peck & Shu, 2009). However, PO is remarkably understudied in the context of generational differences and has, to the best of our knowledge, not been studied in this context before.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Psychological Ownership

The concept of PO has been developed over years and has emerged within various research disciplines, such as psychology, geography, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, organizational science, and consumer behavior (Brown et al., 2014; Jussila et al., 2015; Pierce et al., 2003; Pierce & Peck, 2018; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). PO describes a mental state in which an individual perceives that an immaterial or material asset of ownership (Belk, 1988) is ‘theirs’ (e.g., “It is *mine!*”) (Pierce et al., 2003, p. 86). Thus, the concept investigates the relationship between an individual (e.g., an employee or a consumer) and a target (e.g., employing organization, brand, or automobile) (Dittmar, 1992; Pierce et al., 1991, 2001, 2003, 2004). Consequently, this target is seen as part of the individual’s self, consciously or subconsciously (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992; Furby, 1978b). Accordingly, people often define themselves by their belongings (Belk, 1988; Dittmar, 1992). The concept is related yet different from legal ownership, which is characterized by the protection of the legal system and its recognition of society (Pierce et al., 2001). The state of PO is of complex nature and related, but still different from attachment, identification, and commitment (Pierce et al., 2001). The state is felt along a continuum rather than dichotomous (Morewedge, 2021). Moreover, it can be characterized as a cognitive-affective construct. The

cognitive component refers to the state in which the individual is intellectually well-aware of the ownership target whilst the affective component emerges when, e.g., an outside entity jeopardizes the PO of the involved target (Pierce et al., 2003). In the marketing context, the PO state can evoke through e.g., affective positioning of a brand (Thürridl et al., 2020). The feeling of PO can exist collectively. If a group of individuals feels ownership over a target, collective PO arises (Pierce & Jussila, 2010, 2011).

2.1.1 Motivations

There are three elementary human motivations which foster the development of the psychological sentiment: (a) ‘self-efficacy’, (b) ‘self-identity’, and (c) ‘having a place’ (Pierce et al., 2001, 2003). Firstly, ‘self-efficacy’ highlights the fact that individuals can perceive a strong feeling of ownership if they are able to control, alter, or change the target of ownership which leads to intrinsic and extrinsic pleasure. Secondly, ‘self-identity’ supports the emotional connection to the ownership object of the individual by getting to know themselves, defining, expressing, and maintaining their identity to others. This can also be seen as the need for a symbolic expression of the individual’s identity (Avey et al., 2009; Dittmar, 1992; Mittal, 2006). Lastly, ‘having a place’ is a root of getting psychologically attached to a target of ownership as it fulfills individuals’ socio-emotional needs of territoriality and personal security (Pierce et al., 2001, 2003).

2.1.2 Antecedents

The three main antecedents ‘control’, ‘intimate knowledge’, and ‘investment of self’ give rise to the feeling of PO (Pierce et al., 2001; Pierce & Jussila, 2011). ‘Controlling the target’ can be seen as the central determinant of the concept (Pierce et al., 2001). According to O’driscoll et al. (2006), the more control an individual has e.g., over a product or within its job, the more the ownership target is perceived as part of the extended self (McClelland, 1951). Another aspect is

‘intimate knowledge’, the composition of detailed knowledge and participation with an asset which leads to the development of the psychological state (Pierce et al., 2003). The relationship between the ownership target and the individual becomes even stronger and intense, the more knowledge it deposits about the described target (Pierce et al., 2001). Another mechanism which leads to the development of PO is the ‘investment of self’ into the target of ownership. As soon as an individual perceives responsibility for an asset by e.g., creating it, it invests its energy, time, and emotions. The stronger the investment and effort of the self into a certain object gets, the stronger the feeling of PO for its existence becomes. These three routes to PO are to be seen as additive and complementary, respectively. Hence, the feeling of PO arises more intensively when more than one antecedent is in use (Pierce et al., 2003).

However, this cognitive-affective state of mind can evoke both, negative and positive consequences due to e.g., a growth or loss in possessions (Jussila et al., 2015; Pierce et al., 2003). Positive consequences include a perceived sense of responsibility for the object (Avey et al., 2009; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) which can lead e.g., in the marketing and consumer behavior context, to a higher purchase intention, customer empowerment, willingness to pay, positive word-of-mouth and a stronger motivation to protect the brand (Jussila et al., 2015; Kumar, 2019; Kumar & Kaushal, 2021; Kwon, 2020; Morewedge et al., 2021; Thürridl et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2014). According to Kirk et al. (2015), hubristic pride reinforces the positive effects of PO even further. Hence, the state of PO of consumers is a value-enhancing asset for companies to capture as well as to maintain (Fritze et al., 2020; Morewedge & Giblin, 2015). In return, firms need to consider an increase in consumers’ expectations and the accountability for service failures deriving from the strongly perceived PO state. Negative consequences can encompass e.g., in the organizational field, dysfunctional effects such as resistance towards organizational change, territorial behavior, as well as a lack of participation culture (Pierce et al., 2001; Pierce & Jussila, 2011; Zhang et al., 2020).

2.2 Generational Cohorts

A generational cohort is an identifiable group that shares year of birth, age, and experiences about major social and historical life events during the same developmental period (Green et al., 2012; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Mannheim, 1952; Ryder, 1985; Scholz & Rennig, 2019). The main characteristic to separate various generations is years of birth (Arsenault, 2004; Zemke et al., 2000). According to several researchers (Howe et al., 2000; Scholz, 2014; Zemke et al., 2000), there are five recognized generations, respectively: Silent Generation (1925–1945), also known as Traditionalists, Baby Boomers (1946–1960), Generation X (1961–1980), Generation Y (1981–1995), known as Millennials, and Generation Z (Gen Z) (1996–2010). Gen Z is followed by Generation Alpha which comprises people born after 2010 who grow up with contactless payment methods instead of tangible cash (Bhalla et al., 2021; Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020) (see Appendix A).

2.2.1 Generational Traits and Differences

Besides using age effects and demographic traits to define specific generations, similar personality traits e.g., illustrating similar characteristics, might blur the end of a particular generation and the beginning of a new generation (Parry & Urwin, 2011). According to Ryder (1985), this phenomenon is also named as cross-over effect. Baby Boomers, thus the grandparents of people forming Gen Z, strongly value conventional attitudes such as traditions or faith and are rather resistant to change (Berezan et al., 2018). Generation X, being the generation of the parents of Gen Z, is considered as responsible and independent advocate for social change, the usage of technology and is tied to their well-loved brands (Berezan et al., 2018; David et al., 2017). Generation Y is known as the first generation to grow up with mediatization, including the introduction of the internet (Liesem, 2017). Although there are various definitions for the beginning

and ending of Gen Z, its widely accepted birth-year span ranges from 1995 until 2010 and are mostly Generation X's children, implying that the youngest are just 11 years old and the oldest are 26 years old in the year of 2021 (Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020; Priporas et al., 2020). They are acknowledged as the first generational cohort of digital natives as they grew up with omnipresent access to the internet and were surrounded by digital communication (Leslie et al., 2021). As stated by Bhalla et al. (2021), Gen Z is considered to be the largest generational cohort of consumers until 2030, thus, researchers, academicians, and industries are heavily investing in understanding this influential section of the world's population in order to unveil critical opportunities and potential for developing business strategies. Gen Z's way of thinking, working style, attitude, behavior, and lifestyle are significantly unlike in comparison to antecedent generations (Arsenault, 2004). Critical developments between the 1990s and 2000s, such as major profound technological advancements in every sphere of life, shape the foundation of differences between Gen Z and antecedent generations (Bhalla et al., 2021).

2.2.2 Characteristics of Generation Z

Gen Z – young, a hundred percent digitalized, technologically savvy, and 24/7 online – is often also described as iGeneration, App Generation, Online Generation, Zoomers, Facebook Generation, C-Generation (derived from being always “connected”), Digital Natives, or even Switchers (Cheung et al., 2017; Dolot, 2018; Gardner & Davis, 2013; Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020; Scholz & Rennig, 2019). Moreover, they are characterized as being believers in virtual reality and having the unique trait to develop virtual relationships over social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube more easily as antecedent generations (Bhalla et al., 2021). The ‘iGeneration’ was born and grew up in an era with free flow of unlimited information unrestrained by time zones or geography, which is shaped by an immense understanding of the

most recent technological innovations, such as smartphones, laptops, and tablets. A world without their smartphones and social media accounts is inconceivable for most people of this generational cohort and thus, these belongings are deeply anchored in their daily life, leading to indistinguishable boundaries between virtual and real life. Gen Zers value to express their individual identity in an environment of digital customization (Seemiller & Grace, 2018). Numerous studies show that users of Instagram check the main page at least five times a day and devote an average of five hours per day to their smartphone (Chen, 2018; Gardner & Davis, 2013; Haller et al., 2018). Thus, Gen Z has been taught how to digest and consume digital data from an early age. Concurrently, Gen Z's parents were encouraging and praising Gen Z's individuals more and included them in important decision-making processes than foregoing generations, fostering their self-confidence. This resulted in Gen Z's desire to strive for more independency (Agentur Junges Herz, 2021). This generational cohort is also known as highly educated, career-focused, open-minded, creative, rational, socially responsible, and innovative (Bhalla et al., 2021; Euromonitor, 2018; Levine et al., 2012; Priporas et al., 2017; Varkey Foundation, 2017). In addition, Gen Z highly appreciates immediate feedback and strives for approval. Thus, they act accordingly and use their social media for gathering and actively sharing their opinions (Haller et al., 2018). Lastly, Gen Z highly engages in virtual experiences and relationships, are less brand-loyal, and value authenticity (Bhargava et al., 2020; Bencsik et al., 2016; Gomez et al., 2020).

Over the years, several studies have been performed to better understand Gen Z's values, motivations, and behavior. The Varkey Foundation has conducted a global study with 20,088 participants born between 1995 and 2001 to obtain a better understanding of Gen Z's values. Appendix B summarizes the key findings, representing the six core values (Varkey Foundation, 2017). Honesty, working hard as well as supporting their families are seen as the most important values for people of Gen Z. As a matter of fact, Gen Zers are considered as very family-oriented

individuals (Seemiller & Grace, 2018; Varkey Foundation, 2017). Moreover, previous literature also emphasizes the values of (financial) security, family, relationships (also virtual relationships), happiness, and meaningful work (Seemiller & Grace, 2017).

3. Generation Z as Consumers: A Psychological Ownership Framework

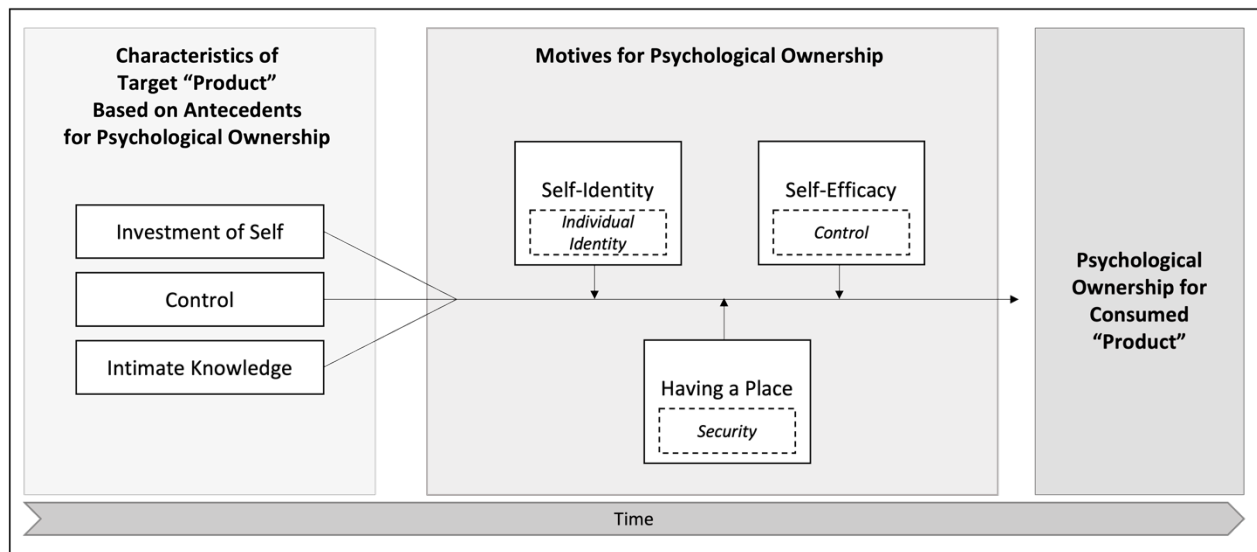
In the following, three main behavioral characteristics of Gen Z have been identified based on previous literature, which will build the central pillars for the application of the PO framework. This generation, combined with significant technological enhancements, is transforming the complex consumer landscape, as it differs substantially from previous generations. Hence, companies must rethink their ways of delivering value to younger generations and communicate honestly and ethically in areas such as marketing or work ethics. Gen Z's consumption behavior has shifted from possession to consumption as access, to consumption as an individual's identity expression, and ethical concern (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Moreover, their purchasing behavior are mostly marked and influenced by celebrities, online content, and social media in general (Bhargava et al., 2020). As a result, Gen Z highly values customization as a way to express their individuality, eliminates online-offline boundaries, expects unlimited access, and values brands which ideals match its actions (Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

3.1 Consumption Trends

Hence, three major behavioral trends were derived from Gen Z's values, motivations, and characteristics to describe Gen Z as consumers: (1) 'A need for expressing individual identity', (2) 'A fundamental desire for security', and (3) 'A need for control'. In the following, a synthesis of existing literature among the above-mentioned dimensions will be conducted and applied to the PO framework to address the following research questions: *How does PO evolve in younger generations, particularly in Gen Z, compared to previous generational cohorts?* Building up on

this, it will be elaborated which products or experiences enhance Gen Z’s PO evolvement. Figure 1 presents the derived conceptual model that combines the three key causes and the innate motives for the development of PO as well as the consumer behavior trends of Gen Z, which will be elaborated in the following. This integrated perspective is used to illustrate products or experiences which strongly foster the PO feelings of Gen Zers in a consumer behavior and marketing context.

Figure 1. *Gen Z’s Consumption Trends in the Psychological Ownership Framework.*



Note: The term ‘product’ in the context of this paper encompasses all goods and services, including experiential ones, that can satisfy a need or want. Own illustration based on Pierce et al. (2003).

3.1.1 A Need for Expressing Individual Identity

Gen Z is the first age cohort of consumers to have grown up with digital technology from birth (Ensari, 2017; Leslie et al., 2021). Major technical and digital developments such as Wi-Fi (1999) and high-speed networks (2019), as well as smartphones such as the Apple iPhone (2007) and smart speakers (2014), enable ubiquitous communication (Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020). Digital movie and customizable audio streaming services, such as Netflix (1997) and Spotify (2006), allow for an anytime consumption and a co-construction of ourselves (Belk, 2014). Social

media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, or Snapchat, as well as communication services, such as WhatsApp, are creating an omnipresent online consumption and communication world for Gen Z. Gen Z is not surprised by product obsolescence compared to their more market-cynical Generation X' parents and Baby Boomer grandparents who quickly feel overwhelmed by planned datedness. The younger generation expects constant innovation and a fast pace of more, better, and inventive releases of technological products (Wood, 2013). Nonetheless, the digital world, including the dematerialization of goods, is changing the game of self-expression for Gen Z (Belk, 2014). The interactive platforms allow individuals to collaboratively create, share, debate, and alter user-generated content (Kietzmann et al., 2011). During the COVID-19 pandemic, all social media platforms have experienced an enormous increase in downloads and usage (Krause, 2020). Gen Z has the highest internet and social media usage rate among all other generations and is therefore particularly important when creating content for social media (Bhalla et al., 2021; Gaidhani et al., 2019). As a result, brands need to fulfill the digital expectations of Gen Z by creating seamless and consistent user experiences everywhere – in-store, mobile, and digital (Euromonitor, 2018). Continuous technological advances in virtual and augmented reality are shaping the future of Gen Z to a great extent (Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020). Thus, compared to previous generations such as Baby Boomers, this cohort has an enormous amount of exposure to the media, resulting not only in a drastic reduction of their attention span (8 seconds in total), but also in a great range of options for expressing their identity (Bhalla et al., 2021; Boger, 2020).

Therefore, Gen Z is characterized by the strong desire to showcase their individual identity in the form of e.g., a profile picture or avatar on social media or gaming platforms, which allows for digital customization (Belk, 2014; Seemiller & Grace, 2018). Thus, according to a global survey by IBM of 15,600 Gen Zers from 16 different countries, 55 percent of Gen Zers value the ability to design unique products no one else owns (Haller et al., 2018). On the contrary, previous

generations experienced their daily lives in person, while Gen Z can be present in multiple places simultaneously (e.g., online and offline). Thus, the identity of Gen Zers can also vary depending on the environment, resulting in different characters (Seemiller & Grace, 2018). According to Jonah and David Stillman (2017), Gen Z as digital natives is able to control the expression of their digital identities by effectively managing their online preferences. Consequently, this process of expressing and defining the self-identity to others promotes the development of PO feelings towards e.g., the social media account (Avey et al., 2009; Dittmar, 1992; Mittal, 2006). Extensive privacy options also allow for personalized settings for interaction and content visibility. In return, individuals have the ability to control their accounts, know them intimately, and take responsibility of them, resulting in even stronger PO (Pierce et al., 2001, 2003).

On social media platforms, such as Instagram or Snapchat, individuals can precisely determine content and target audience for each posting. Therefore, these platforms are an important tool for expressing and adjusting Gen Zers' self-identity (Seemiller & Grace, 2018), allowing them to reach a significantly wider audience as through the use of non-digital media (Belk, 2014). In addition, social media platforms influence the way Gen Zers develop their self-esteem and self-awareness (GenHQ, 2016). For example, TikTok as a relatively new social media platform whose largest user group is Gen Z (Sloane & Rittenhouse, 2019). It aims to inspire people to be creative and joyful by allowing them to create and share short 15-second videos as a platform for user-generated content (TikTok, 2021). Thus, it gives individuals a platform to express their self-identity and to be recognized (Daugherty et al., 2008; Xu et al., 2019), even in times of social-distancing (Feldkamp, 2021). TikTok's popular challenges, short videos in which users record themselves and join a certain challenge, highly engage individuals, and allow them to invest and express themselves to others as well as perform the challenge in their own personal way, leading to the rise of intrinsic and extrinsic pleasure (Mittal, 2006). By precisely practicing the challenge, individuals

also come to intimately know the challenge and thus, develop PO over their produced video. According to Belk (2014), self-produced videos are seen as part of their extended digital self. In fact, digital videos are almost as valuable as material counterparts, but our understanding of digital possessions is lower because of having less control and meaning leading individuals to e.g., print digital photos (Belk, 2013). Nonetheless, a higher amount of time is invested in producing e.g., a TikTok challenge, resulting in a greater attachment and ownership to the virtually produced content (Belk, 2014). Gen Z, as digital natives, tends to perceive those digital belongings as part of their extended self as previous generations (Cushing, 2012). In general, the innate motives and antecedents of PO are fostered by social media, as Gen Zers can not only express their self-identity on these platforms, but also exercise control over their contributions. Hence, individuals feel a sense of belonging in these communities (Hulland et al., 2015; Karahanna et al., 2015).

The development of strong ownership feelings of Gen Z towards social media platforms and their content, such as TikTok, is also recognized by brands. Consequently, brands use social media as a marketing platform e.g., by launching a TikTok challenge, which is an opportunity to start a viral trend (Feldkamp, 2021). Thus, individuals who participate in this challenge for a brand might not only develop PO feelings for the video itself due to their self-investment, but also for the brand. For instance, Guess' branded hashtag challenge #InMyDenim reached over 5,550 user-generated videos, an engagement rate of 14.3 percent, over 10.5 million video impressions, and more than 12,000 new TikTok followers on their corporate social media profile (Docherty, 2020). Moreover, Gen Zers are more likely to develop stronger feelings of ownership over their social media than older people due to the possibilities of expressing their own identity in creative ways.

Another example is Mondelēz International's global cookie brand Oreo, which launched a social media contest with the hashtag #MyOreoCreation in the U.S. in 2017. Consumers could submit new flavor suggestions via social media, which Oreo consumers could vote for (Mondelez

International, 2018). Thus, PO was specifically promoted through the investment of self (Folse et al., 2012). Characteristics such as visibility, attractiveness, accessibility, and manipulability that according to Pierce and Jussila (2011) contribute to PO being developed, need to be considered by companies in their online marketing initiatives (Hulland et al., 2015).

Additionally, new access-based business models also enable a higher level of self-expression (Belk, 2013). Access to more product choices or social media platforms facilitates a more accurate and authentic expression of different individual's identities to gain attention, social capital, and prospective economic advantage (Barasch & Berger, 2014; Fritze et al., 2020; Haller et al., 2018; Kuehn, 2016). Thus:

Proposition 1: Gen Z's need for individual identity will motivate them to develop stronger ownership feelings for experiential products than previous generational cohorts.

3.1.2 A Fundamental Desire for Security

As compared to Generation Y, which is considered to be optimistic, 'darwinistic' and success-oriented, Gen Z is significantly different. Gen Zers are realistic, more pragmatic, risk-averse, and grew up in a very structured environment with over-bureaucratic and overstructured school systems (Jenkins, 2015). Generation X's 'Helicopter parents' exert an enormous amount of energy to protect their young children from all vagaries of life, even up to their mid-twenties. This even includes confrontation with teachers after their child has been criticized in order to avoid poor grading (Scholz & Rennig, 2019). As a result, Gen Zers grow up enormously protected with the feeling that everything is taken care of leading to an expectation of a feel-good surrounding in every aspect of life (e.g., at work or at home).

Still, several developments lead to a lack of security in Gen Z's everyday life. Firstly, initial desires such as agility and flexibility lead to an increase in individuals' uncertainty as it decreases

security. Secondly, the ‘digitization tsunami’ reinforces the lack of security sense as many jobs may be replaced by machines in the long-term perspective. Thirdly, uncertainties as the financing of the healthcare system in the short-term as well as the pension system in the long-term add on to the feeling of insecurity. Thus, Gen Zers are in need of a coping mechanism satisfying their desire for security that also expands to the financial aspect (Seemiller & Grace, 2018). It also explains why Gen Zers tend to prefer working for government institutions and large corporations that offer lifetime employments and prohibit layoffs, which has been amplified by the pandemic (Scholz & Rennig, 2019).

In general, Gen Z experiences an unstable time that is reinforced through cultural, social, environmental, and political factors, such as confrontation with systematic racism and racial inequality, debates about gender equality, sexual harassment, climate change as well as the persistent global COVID-19 pandemic (Stone, 2021). This uncertainty and the stress resulting from it draws back to the desire for stability and security as this young generation lacks life experience and resilience to turn to as compared to older generations. However, instead of being intimidated by those recent major events, Gen Zers are highly sensitive, committed, and take a strong position as an activist generation in real-life issues e.g., the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement or the worldwide ‘Friday for Future’ strikes. Hence, this age cohort expects the same change agent behavior from brands (Francis & Hoefel, 2018; Kleinjohann & Reinecke, 2020; Stone, 2021). As a result, they are challenging brands’ well-established key values and marketing efforts to be able to trust and find security within their products (Stone, 2021). Thus, Gen Z has a stronger motivation for having a place than other generational cohorts (Pierce et al., 2003). This results in a desire for products and intangible experiences with favorable outcomes, which help Gen Z to create a safe environment in which they belong, fulfill their congenital territoriality and emotional needs as well as build strong relationships (Kirk et al., 2018; Lorenz & Leyhausen, 1973; Pierce et al., 2001).

Collaborative business models, such as TEDx and Uber, foster ongoing conversations with their customers and thus, are building relationships leading to the formation of virtual communities (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). Online brand communities are leveraged by firms to engage customers with brands, firms, and also other customers (Baldus et al., 2015; Martínez-López et al., 2017; Tsai et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2010). The community's success depends on actively participating members, who can stay anonymous and express their chosen created cyber self-identity (Lee & Suh, 2015), which in turn also leads to a strong brand relationship (Chang & Chuang, 2011; Kang et al., 2014; Kumar, 2019). Moreover, such communal consumption experiences greatly enhance value, as individuals invest themselves and feel part of a group with similar interests (Schau et al., 2009; Wirtz et al., 2013). The strong relationship fulfills the motive of PO in 'having a place' towards the brand in terms of socio-emotional and social needs. Thus, it gives Gen Zers a sense of security by belonging to a broader community, an affiliation with the surrounding which shares the same values and results in individual's positive self-esteem and trust (Avey et al., 2009; Lee & Suh, 2015; Pierce et al., 2001; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Wu et al., 2010). Community members share a common in-group consciousness, values, and responsibility (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) which in turn results in the experience of collective PO. This is also reinforced by the members' sense of shared control, joint self-investment, mutual autonomy, and communal intimacy in and over the community (Pierce & Jussila, 2010).

Thus, brand managers can foster a sense of belonging amongst young members by creating an environment of intimacy, comfort, and harmony where Gen Z feels secure and like home (Kumar, 2019). To strengthen Gen Z's identity with virtual brand communities, community managers can offer personalized rewards, design customizable jackets which allow for the representation of members' self-identity and organize in-person or online events.

Moreover, metaverse, defined as collaborative virtual environments in which users can experience other users in a three-dimensional environment, are mainly used by younger generations (Kallman, 2021; Schroeder, 2002). Experiential games, such as Roblox or Fortnite are booming among Gen Zers, as they can invest themselves and control their actions in the ‘second life’, resulting in a strong emotional connection with the virtual world and perceive them as a safe place (Kallman, 2021; Pierce et al., 2003). The new company brand of Facebook, Meta, focuses on bringing the virtual world to life to help people collaborate and connect. Virtual worlds like Meta will allow Gen Zers to express themselves in a more immersive experiential way, to share experiences with friends, and to belong to a community even more (Meta, 2021). Gen Zers with a strong sense of ownership for the product’s brand will lead to favorable consequences, such as spreading positive word-of-mouth, higher purchase intention, and loyalty (Kumar, 2019). Thus:

Proposition 2: Gen Z’s underlying desire for security will motivate them to develop stronger ownership feelings for experiential products than previous generational cohorts.

3.1.3 A Need for Control

The technology-driven evolution in consumption and its subsequential change in consumer behavior of younger generations, such as Gen Z, towards a post-ownership and dematerialization economy (Sinclair & Tinson, 2017) leads to a shift towards on-demand and instant access to information and goods. This results in a desire of exerting more control over the target, for example, using digital media rather than traditional media as a source of information, opposing to their parents, Generation X, or Baby Boomers (e.g., television or radio) (Morewedge et al., 2021; Vollmer & Precourt, 2008). Being raised by encouraging parents, Gen Z strives for independence, being in control, and knowing their surroundings. However, the new access-based consumption models neglect the crucial antecedent for PO, namely control, since ownership in an increasingly

sharing economy is no longer individual and transitory (Morewedge et al., 2021). Nonetheless, more consumer choice in goods allows Gen Z to exercise control and thus, consequently, strongly enhances feelings of PO (Huang et al., 2009). Products with marketing strategies that include customization of consumption experiences enable Gen Z to invest themselves and retain control over these experiences or content provided on e.g., social media feeds (Morewedge et al., 2021). However, the ongoing evolution from material to experiential goods threatens the development of PO feelings of Gen Z. For instance, the intangibility of goods does not allow for touching or holding an object which usually leads to PO through perceived control over the target object (Peck & Shu, 2009). Another factor which complicates the development is the lower valuability of ownership in determining property rights (Carter & Gilovich, 2010).

Thus, Gen Z's PO is transferred from material goods (e.g., a CDs) to branded services, contemporary access-based streaming platforms (e.g., Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube), or the devices themselves which allow to consume those experiential products (Morewedge et al., 2021; Sinclair & Tinson, 2017). Thus, younger generations as Gen Z are able to perceive digital possessions (e.g., a Spotify account) as a part of their extended self on which they have control over in comparison to older generations (Belk, 2013). As a result, the desire to gain control which can evoke PO feelings at a brand level, has positive consequences on the demand of young consumers. For instance, students tend to use music streaming platforms, such as Spotify, more often since they have felt PO for the platform as they allow unprecedented choices for customization and control over music consumption, including time and place of access (Fritze et al., 2020). Moreover, streaming platforms can reflect an individual's music identity, giving them a sense of control over their daily routines and allowing them to create customized content. These platforms allow for the development of an easy-to-use and familiar space for the consumer that invites them to spend time on and structure their music consumption (Sinclair & Tinson, 2017).

Consequently, Gen Zers experience motivations, such as expressing and managing their music identity, as well as antecedents of PO, including the investment of themselves, coming to intimately know the interface, and being in control of the streaming platform account and their mood through the usage of streaming services leading to loyalty and feelings of empowerment (Kirk et al., 2015; Sinclair & Tinson, 2017). According to Sinclair & Tinson (2017), streaming platforms could improve user's perception of control over their streaming profile by creating more virtual space for sharing their identity, which is crucial on social media platforms (Dewan & Ramaprasad, 2014). Spotify's music sharing feature allows users to gain recognition, self-esteem, and status as a social reward, increasing the perceived level of control or as a result of citizenship, a sequel of PO (Pierce et al., 2003).

Another example for satisfying Gen Z's hunger for control is the trending shopping format 'live commerce', which has significantly changed the retail industry worldwide. This format merges audience participation through an entailed chat function and the option to instantly shop a featured product. This allows viewers to actively control featured products in the live stream as well as to communicate with fellow users simultaneously, which in turn enhances feelings of PO for the brand. Two major benefits of live commerce for brands are the acceleration of conversion and the improved appeal and distinctiveness of those through a stronger positioning. Thus, live commerce continuously attracts new customers, which are mostly Gen Zers and Millennials fascinated by the innovative shopping format (Arora et al., 2021). TikTok, as a video-focused social networking platform, is also able to host one-hour livestream fashion events, which was used by Walmart in December 2020. As a result, Walmart was able to target seven times more viewers than on average sales channels and was able to increase its number of followers on TikTok by 25 percent (Perez, 2021). Regardless of the live commerce format, all events have interactive components such as quizzes or games to keep the audience involved and hence, enhance their PO for the hosting

brand. Technological advancements such as virtual reality will enhance the shopping experience for Gen Z even more and allow them to see the featured product from every perspective (Arora et al., 2021).

Generally, experiential products that allow for a stronger investment of self and control, such as e.g., a flight ticket to Portugal, help Gen Zers to define and express themselves more in-depth and lead to the preservation of PO instead of simply buying an e.g., Portuguese T-shirt (Carter & Gilovich, 2010). Thus, Gen Z believes experiences to be more enriching and fulfilling to their everyday life (Bhargava et al., 2020). According to Sartre (1943), the most significant resource of self-definition in such instances is doing rather than having. Thus:

Proposition 3: Gen Z's perceived level of control will motivate them to develop stronger ownership feelings for experiential products than previous generational cohorts.

3.2 Evaluation of Synthesis

The synthesis of existing literature has led to several key findings regarding PO and its emergence in Gen Z. Although it is not empirically tested, the extensive synthesis suggests that Gen Zers perceive ownership similarly as previous generations and also have a human need for ownership according to Pierce et al. (2003). Nonetheless, Gen Zers' probability of developing PO will vary individually and is strongly dependent on the target of ownership compared to foregoing generations due to different personality traits, values, and the perceived individual strength of the motives. As such, Gen Zers as digital natives develop PO more likely over intangible technologies e.g., their intangible music streaming Spotify account, as opposed to Baby Boomer or Generation X who experience those feelings as brand-loyal generations for mostly material things such as their tangible CD collection (Belk, 2014; Bhargava et al., 2020). Due to Gen Z's strong characteristic of striving for approval, being in control, and expressing their self-identity (Haller et al., 2018;

Seemiller & Grace, 2018), they automatically give social media platforms greater importance as they allow them to satisfy their aforementioned traits. Hence, Gen Z is more likely to develop greater PO feelings for these platforms as opposed to antecedent generations, such as their grandparents and parents, who are spending significantly less up to no time on these platforms.

Lastly, Gen Zers prefer experiential products over material goods and thus, are able to develop a more intensive sense of PO for these experiences as they allow to activate and serve more motives simultaneously to PO than a material good (Pierce et al., 2003). According to Porteous (1976), the three essential satisfactions that can be derived from the state of ownership, a) having control over space, b) being able to personalize space to express identity, and c) experiencing stimulation by e.g., thinking about a certain target, accompany the three identified key phenomena of Gen Z and thus, amplify this generation's PO for experiential products.

4. Discussion

Gen Z, as the largest consumer base within the next ten years, deserves great attention and thus, the PO framework plays an important role in successfully targeting this generational cohort. Hence, this conceptual paper contributes to the existing literature in several ways. Firstly, as prior research on PO has heavily focused on organizational and marketing science without shedding light on generational differences, we expand the discussion for the first time further to consider how different generations, in particular Gen Z, come to feel PO and which kind of products and experiences elicit and enhance the feeling. Secondly, we analyzed the values, behaviors, and characteristics of Gen Z consumers, and drawing on PO theory, we identified three major trends that are likely to reflect how this generational cohort comes to perceive ownership: (1) 'A need for expressing individual identity', (2) 'An underlying desire for security', and (3) 'A need for control'. Thirdly, we noted that Gen Z is placing more emphasis on experiential products which enrich their

everyday lives instead of material goods and thus, also develop PO not for the target itself, rather for intermediary devices or places in comparison to previous generations (Bhargava et al., 2020).

4.1 Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical point of view, the synthesis of existing literature of the characteristics, values, and behaviors of Gen Z and the PO framework has given unique insights in the way Gen Zers perceive or come to feel PO. Thus, this paper highlights several characteristics of products, experiences, and brands which foster the development of PO feelings within this young generational cohort. As Gen Z is greatly different in terms of values, behaviors, and characteristics from previous generations, the three key trends disclose what motivations and desires Gen Zers drive to perceive certain targets as theirs. Moreover, most previous research studies about PO in consumer behavior and marketing domains focused primarily on the general evolution of consumption (Morewedge et al., 2021), brand ownership (Kumar & Kaushal, 2021), public goods (Peck et al., 2021), the sharing economy (Baker et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2021), and on the workplace (Dai et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). While the contribution of these important research contributions is uncontested, there is still a significant gap in the understanding of what each generation drives to develop PO. This paper aims to fill this gap by applying the PO framework to Gen Z's key phenomena and thus, advances consumer behavior and marketing literature.

4.2 Managerial Implications

This conceptual paper provides several valuable implications for practitioners to capture and maintain customers in these emerging environments. As the synthesis of existing literature unifies Gen Z's desire for finding ways to express their individual identity, need for control, and sense of belonging with the innate motives of 'self-identity', 'self-efficacy', and 'having a place' for PO, marketers should provide Gen Zers with engaging, immediately beneficial, and unique

experiences which empower them to receive self-realization, control, and co-creation. Thus, companies should develop initiatives and services to understand and collaborate with Gen Zers to stimulate their creativity. Therefore, they should allow Gen Z to interactively form the brand experience to satisfy their hunger for individualization and seamless interaction as well as to activate their networks by capitalizing on Gen Z's affinity for social networks. Consequently, firms should reward them with individualized benefits and provide immediate and authentic feedback to foster their feelings of PO for their respective brand.

Moreover, companies' real-time omnichannel communication with Gen Z tailored to the digital and physical world (including, if possible, a chat function for social interaction or gamification) should be value-adding, personalized, and brief due to Gen Z's short attention span and easy distraction. Gen Z as pragmatic generational cohort places enormous importance on corporate responsibility and brand ethics. Thus, it is vital that companies establish a responsible and trustworthy environment by being transparent about e.g., personal data storage or supporting local community initiatives. Hence, PO is being developed when Gen Zers feel that their purpose has been met with the product and has a social impact.

In addition, practitioners' mobile-focused marketing strategies should be flexible and agile to adapt them to newest evolving trends (e.g., TikTok challenges or live commerce) to engage with Gen Z and respond to their pragmatism. Considering the validation of the established conceptual model and the propositions presented in this paper through future research, companies should give Gen Z more control by giving them various choice for individualizing their own unique experience with a product. The stimulation of PO of Gen Z for a company through experiencing control can have positive effects (e.g., brand advocate influencer on social media) and is thus invaluable for both, consumers, and the company itself (Cheung et al., 2017).

4.3 Limitations and Future Research

The conceptual application of the PO framework to the identified three key phenomena of Gen Z has several limitations and thus, points out many opportunities for future research. PO is an important framework and asset in the consumer behavior and marketing context and its emergence has not yet been sufficiently researched across generational cohorts, in particular Gen Z, and different cultures. Thus, the research propositions in Table 1 focus mainly on these research areas.

Table 1. *Future Research Propositions for Gen Z and Psychological Ownership: Open Questions.*

Research Field	Research Questions
<i>Consumer Behavior and Marketing</i>	• How does PO affect the relationship of Gen Z to social media postings? • What social media features (e.g., customizability) increase the PO for Gen Zers? • Does Gen Z respond territorially to places featured in their own postings on social media? • Does PO increase for a social media platform if idols of Gen Z (e.g., influencer) comment on their postings? • Is Gen Z's PO stronger on virtual communities with broader customization options than in real life? • Does the sharing economy decrease or increase demand for private ownership of goods for Gen Zers? • Does the feeling of ownership of Gen Zers for an access-based product diminish over time? • How do cultural differences affect feelings of ownership of younger generations? • Does PO lead to stronger brand loyalty for Gen Z in the Western world?

As this paper represents a conceptual work to explore the relationship of PO and Gen Z further, empirical and quantitative research is required to test the generational differences in developing PO across different product categories. This will only allow to derive meaningful comparisons and inferences about PO across generational cohorts. Here, it is important that the PO framework measures the same trait across the considered generations. If Gen Z empirically feels PO differently, they should also respond territorially to different types of targets. This might play out differently in social media and within the increasingly sharing economy as compared to previous generations. In this paper, only English and German research articles were examined. For a further analysis of generational differences in PO, a review of articles in other languages would be useful to include possibly divergent and relevant research results from other countries as the perception of PO might differ culturally (Gineikiene et al., 2017). Lastly, there is a need for further future research to successfully integrate the concept in sales activities that mainly target Gen Z.

6. References

- Agentur Junges Herz. (2021). *Generation Z: Was erwartet den Arbeitsmarkt?* Agentur Junges Herz. <https://www.agentur-jungesherz.de/generation-z/>
- Arora, A., Glaser, D., Kim, A., Kluge, P., Kohli, S., & Sak, N. (2021). *Live commerce is transforming online shopping*. McKinsey. <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/its-showtime-how-live-commerce-is-transforming-the-shopping-experience>
- Arsenault, P. M. (2004). Validating generational differences: A legitimate diversity and leadership issue. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(2), 124–141. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410521813>
- Asatryan, V. S., & Oh, H. (2008). Psychological Ownership Theory: An Exploratory Application in the Restaurant Industry. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 32(3), 363–386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348008317391>
- Avey, J. B., Avolio, B. J., Crossley, C. D., & Luthans, F. (2009). Psychological ownership: Theoretical extensions, measurement, and relation to work outcomes. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30(2), 173–191. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.583>
- Baker, J. J., Kearney, T., Laud, G., & Holmlund, M. (2021). Engaging users in the sharing economy: Individual and collective psychological ownership as antecedents to actor engagement. *Journal of Service Management*.
- Baldus, B. J., Voorhees, C., & Calantone, R. (2015). Online brand community engagement: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Business Research*, 68(5), 978–985. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.09.035>
- Barasch, A., & Berger, J. (2014). Broadcasting and narrowcasting: How audience size affects what people share. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 51(3), 286–299.

- Belk, R. (2013). Extended Self in a Digital World. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(3), 477–500. <https://doi.org/10.1086/671052>
- Belk, R. (2014). Digital consumption and the extended self. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30(11–12), 1101–1118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2014.939217>
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the Extended Self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), 139–168.
- Bencsik, A., Juhász, T., & Horváth-Csikós, G. (2016). Y and Z Generations at Workplaces. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 6(3), 90–106. <https://doi.org/10.7441/joc.2016.03.06>
- Berezan, O., Krishen, A. S., Agarwal, S., & Kachroo, P. (2018). The pursuit of virtual happiness: Exploring the social media experience across generations. *Journal of Business Research*, 89, 455–461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.11.038>
- Berkup, S. (2014). Working With Generations X And Y In Generation Z Period: Management Of Different Generations In Business Life. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n19p218>
- Bhalla, R., Tiwari, P., & Chowdhary, N. (2021). Digital Natives Leading the World: Paragons and Values of Generation Z. In N. Stylos, R. Rahimi, B. Okumus, & S. Williams (Eds.), *Generation Z Marketing and Management in Tourism and Hospitality: The Future of the Industry* (pp. 3–23). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70695-1_1
- Bhargava, S., Finnemann, B., Schmidt, J., & Spagnuolo, E. (2020). *United States and Gen Z | McKinsey*. McKinsey. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/the-young-and-the-restless-generation-z-in-america>
- Boger, K. (2020). *The Rise of Short-Form Video & the Gen Z Social Revolution | IAB UK*. <https://www.iabuk.com/opinions/rise-short-form-video-gen-z-social-revolution>

- Brown, G., Crossley, C., & Robinson, S. L. (2014). Psychological Ownership, Territorial Behavior, and Being Perceived as a Team Contributor: The Critical Role of Trust in the Work Environment. *Personnel Psychology*, 67(2), 463–485.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12048>
- Carter, T. J., & Gilovich, T. (2010). The relative relativity of material and experiential purchases. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(1), 146–159.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017145>
- Chang, H. H., & Chuang, S.-S. (2011). Social capital and individual motivations on knowledge sharing: Participant involvement as a moderator. *Information & Management*, 48(1), 9–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2010.11.001>
- Chen, H. (2018). College-Aged Young Consumers' Perceptions of Social Media Marketing: The Story of Instagram. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 39(1), 22–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2017.1372321>
- Cheung, J., Glass, S., McCarty, D., & Wong, C. K. (2017). *Uniquely Generation Z*. IBM.
- Cushing, A. L. (2012). *Possessions and self extension in digital environments: Implications for maintaining personal information*. University of North Carolina: School of Information and Library Science, Chapel Hill, NC.
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/becd75190941287f7f3fa15e5178fd90/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>
- Dai, Y.-D., Altinay, L., Zhuang, W.-L., & Chen, K.-T. (2021). Work engagement and job burnout? Roles of regulatory foci, supervisors' organizational embodiment and psychological ownership. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 46, 114–122.
- Daugherty, T., Eastin, M. S., & Bright, L. (2008). Exploring consumer motivations for creating user-generated content. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 8(2), 16–25.

- David, P., Gelfeld, V., & Rangel, A. (2017). Generation X and Its Evolving Experience with the American Dream. *Generations*, 41(3), 77–83.
- Dewan, S., & Ramaprasad, J. (2014). Social Media, Traditional Media, and Music Sales. *MIS Quarterly*, 38(1), 101–122.
- Dittmar, H. (1992). *The social psychology of material possessions: To have is to be*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Docherty, K. (2020). *12 TikTok Challenges to Inspire Your Next Campaign*.
<https://later.com/blog/tiktok-challenges/>
- Dolot, A. (2018). The Characteristics of Generation Z. *E-Mentor*, 74(2), 44–50.
- Ensari, M. Ş. (2017). A study on the differences of entrepreneurship potential among generations. *Research Journal of Business and Management*, 4, 52–62.
<https://doi.org/10.17261/Pressacademia.2017.370>
- Euromonitor. (2018). *Generation Z: The Next Wave of Consumers*. Euromonitor.
<https://www.euromonitor.com/generation-z-the-next-wave-of-consumers/report>
- Euromonitor. (2021). *Engaging Millennials and Generation Z in the Coronavirus Era*. Euromonitor. <https://www.euromonitor.com/engaging-millennials-and-generation-z-in-the-coronavirus-era/report>
- Feldkamp, J. (2021). The Rise of TikTok: The Evolution of a Social Media Platform During COVID-19. In C. Hovestadt, J. Recker, J. Richter, & K. Werder (Eds.), *Digital Responses to Covid-19: Digital Innovation, Transformation, and Entrepreneurship During Pandemic Outbreaks* (pp. 73–85). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66611-8_6

- Folse, J., Guidry Moulard, J., & Raggio, R. D. (2012). Psychological ownership: A social marketing advertising message appeal? Not for women. *International Journal of Advertising*, 31(2), 291–315.
- Francis, T., & Hoefel, F. (2018). ‘True Gen’: Generation Z and its implications for companies. *McKinsey&Company*, 10.
- Fritze, M. P., Marchand, A., Eisingerich, A. B., & Benkenstein, M. (2020). Access-Based Services as Substitutes for Material Possessions: The Role of Psychological Ownership. *Journal of Service Research*, 23(3), 368–385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670520907691>
- Fuchs, C., Prandelli, E., & Schreier, M. (2010). The Psychological Effects of Empowerment Strategies on Consumers’ Product Demand. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(1), 65–79. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.74.1.65>
- Furby, L. (1978). POSSESSION IN HUMANS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ITS MEANING AND MOTIVATION. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 6(1), 49–65. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.1978.6.1.49>
- Gaidhani, S., Arora, D., & Sharma, B. (2019). *UNDERSTANDING THE ATTITUDE OF GENERATION Z TOWARDS WORKPLACE*. 9.
- Gardner, H., & Davis, K. (2013). The app generation: How today’s youth navigate identity, intimacy, and imagination in a digital world. In *The App Generation: How Today’s Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy, and Imagination in a Digital World*.
- GenHQ. (2016). *Infographic on Gen Z Social Media Trends and Influence*. The Center for Generational Kinetics. <https://genhq.com/igen-genz-social-media-trends-infographic/>
- Gineikiene, J., Schlegelmilch, B. B., & Auruskeviciene, V. (2017). “Ours” or “theirs”? Psychological ownership and domestic products preferences. *Journal of Business Research*, 72, 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.11.003>

- Gomez, K., Mawhinney, T., & Betts, K. (2020). *Welcome to Generation Z*. Deloitte.
<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/us/Documents/consumer-business/welcome-to-gen-z.pdf>
- Green, A. P., Eigel, L. M., Fames, J. B., Hartmann, D., & Mclean, K. M. (2012). Multiple generations in the workplace: Exploring the research, influence of stereotypes, and organizational applications. In *The Oxford handbook of work and aging* (pp. 483–500). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195385052.013.0146>
- Haller, K., Glass, S., Wong, C. K., & Cheung, J. (2018). *What do Gen Z shoppers really want?* IBM. <https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/W07A8QGE>
- Howe, N., Strauss, W., & Matson, R. J. (2000). *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. Vintage Books. <https://www.yourcloudlibrary.com>
- Huang, L., Li, Y., Huang, X., & Zhou, L. (2021). How social distance affects the intention and behavior of collaborative consumption: A study based on online car-hailing service. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 61, 102534.
- Huang, Y., Wang, L., & Shi, J. (2009). When Do Objects Become More Attractive? The Individual and Interactive Effects of Choice and Ownership on Object Evaluation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35(6), 713–722.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167209333046>
- Hulland, J., Thompson, S. A., & Smith, K. M. (2015). Exploring Uncharted Waters: Use of Psychological Ownership Theory in Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 23(2), 140–147. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2015.1002332>
- Jenkins, R. (2015). *15 Aspects That Highlight How Generation Z Is Different From Millennials*. Business 2 Community. <https://www.business2community.com/social-data/15-aspects-that-highlight-how-generation-z-is-different-from-millennials-01244940>

- Jussila, I., Tarkiainen, A., Sarstedt, M., & Hair, J. F. (2015). Individual Psychological Ownership: Concepts, Evidence, and Implications for Research in Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 23(2), 121–139.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2015.1002330>
- Kallman, A. (2021). *Understanding the metaverse: Opportunities, challenges and Gen Z*. IBC.
<https://www.ibc.org/understanding-the-metaverse-opportunities-challenges-and-gen-z/7863.article>
- Kamleitner, B., & Feuchtl, S. (2015). “As if it were mine”: Imagery works by inducing psychological ownership. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 23(2), 208–223.
- Kang, J., Tang, L., & Fiore, A. M. (2014). Enhancing consumer–brand relationships on restaurant Facebook fan pages: Maximizing consumer benefits and increasing active participation. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 36, 145–155.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.08.015>
- Karahanna, E., Xu, S. X., & Zhang, N. (2015). Psychological ownership motivation and use of social media. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 23(2), 185–207.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.005>
- Kirk, C. P., Peck, J., & Swain, S. D. (2018). Property Lines in the Mind: Consumers’ Psychological Ownership and Their Territorial Responses. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 45(1), 148–168. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucx111>
- Kirk, C. P., Swain, S. D., & Gaskin, J. E. (2015). I’m Proud of It: Consumer Technology Appropriation and Psychological Ownership. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 23(2), 166–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2015.1002335>

- Kleinjohann, M., & Reinecke, V. (2020). *Marketingkommunikation mit der Generation Z: Erfolgsfaktoren für das Marketing mit Digital Natives*. Springer Fachmedien.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-30822-3>
- Koop, A. (2021). *Chart: How Gen Z Employment Levels Compare in OECD Countries*. World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/03/gen-z-unemployment-chart-global-comparisons/>
- Krause, R. (2020). *TikTok Raises Profile In Digital Ads, Hires Disney Streaming Boss As CEO*. Investor's Business Daily. <https://www.investors.com/news/technology/tik-tok-video-app-digital-advertising/>
- Kuehn, K. M. (2016). Branding the self on Yelp: Consumer reviewing as image entrepreneurship. *Social Media+ Society*, 2(4), 2056305116678895.
- Kumar, J. (2019). How psychological ownership stimulates participation in online brand communities? The moderating role of member type. *Journal of Business Research*, 105, 243–257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.08.019>
- Kumar, V., & Kaushal, V. (2021). Perceived brand authenticity and social exclusion as drivers of psychological brand ownership. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 61, 102579. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102579>
- Kupperschmidt, B. R. (2000). Multigeneration employees: Strategies for effective management. *The Health Care Manager*, 19(1), 65–76. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00126450-200019010-00011>
- Kwon, S. (2020). Understanding user participation from the perspective of psychological ownership: The moderating role of social distance. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 105, 106207. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.106207>

- Lee, J., & Suh, A. (2015). How do virtual community members develop psychological ownership and what are the effects of psychological ownership in virtual communities? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 45, 382–391. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.12.002>
- Leslie, B., Anderson, C., Bickham, C., Horman, J., Overly, A., Gentry, C., Callahan, C., & King, J. (2021). Generation Z Perceptions of a Positive Workplace Environment. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 33(3), 171–187. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10672-021-09366-2>
- Levine, A., Dean, D. R., & Levine, Arthur. (2012). *Generation on a tightrope: A portrait of today's college student*.
- Liesem, K. (2017). Generation Y and the World of Work in the Future. *Journal of Media Research - Revista de Studii Media*, 10(27), 3–12.
- Lorenz, & Leyhausen, P. (1973). *Motivation of human and animal behavior*. Litton Educational Publishing.
- Lyons, S., & Kuron, L. (2014). Generational differences in the workplace: A review of the evidence and directions for future research. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(S1), S139–S157. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1913>
- Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Business Horizons*, 52(4), 357–365. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.03.002>
- Mannheim, K. (1952). *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. Routledge & K. Paul.
<https://archive.org/details/essaysonsociolog00mann>
- Martínez-López, F. J., Anaya-Sánchez, R., Molinillo, S., Aguilar-Illescas, R., & Esteban-Millat, I. (2017). Consumer engagement in an online brand community. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 23, 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2017.04.002>
- McClelland, D. C. (1951). *Personality*. Sloane.

- Meta. (2021). The Facebook Company Is Now Meta. *Meta*.
<https://about.fb.com/news/2021/10/facebook-company-is-now-meta/>
- Mittal, B. (2006). I, me, and mine—How products become consumers' extended selves. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5(6), 550–562. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.202>
- Mondelez International. (2018). #MyOreoCreation Contest Finalist Flavor Submissions Hit Shelves Nationwide For Fans To Try And Vote On. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/myoreocreation-contest-finalist-flavor-submissions-hit-shelves-nationwide-for-fans-to-try-and-vote-on-300638957.html>
- Morewedge, C. K. (2021). Psychological ownership: Implicit and explicit. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 39, 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2020.10.003>
- Morewedge, C. K., & Giblin, C. E. (2015). Explanations of the endowment effect: An integrative review. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 19(6), 339–348.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2015.04.004>
- Morewedge, C. K., Monga, A., Palmatier, R. W., Shu, S. B., & Small, D. A. (2021). Evolution of Consumption: A Psychological Ownership Framework. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(1), 196–218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242920957007>
- Muniz, A. M., Jr., & O'Guinn, T. C. (2001). Brand Community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(4), 412–432. <https://doi.org/10.1086/319618>
- O'driscoll, M. P., Pierce, J. L., & Coghlan, A.-M. (2006). The Psychology of Ownership: Work Environment Structure, Organizational Commitment, And Citizenship Behaviors. *Group & Organization Management*, 31(3), 388–416.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601104273066>

- Parry, E., & Urwin, P. (2011). Generational Differences in Work Values: A Review of Theory and Evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(1), 79–96.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00285.x>
- Peck, J., Kirk, C. P., Luangrath, A. W., & Shu, S. B. (2021). Caring for the Commons: Using Psychological Ownership to Enhance Stewardship Behavior for Public Goods. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(2), 33–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242920952084>
- Peck, J., & Shu, S. B. (2009). The effect of mere touch on perceived ownership. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(3), 434–447.
- Perez, S. (2021). *Walmart to host a new livestream shopping event on TikTok, following successful pilot* | *TechCrunch*. Tech Crunch. https://techcrunch.com/2021/03/09/walmart-to-host-a-new-live-stream-shopping-event-on-tiktok-following-successful-pilot/?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAKPIInnKe3gZCvwqXM879aP559-5PEifldJWDtieBW2knuNNXUyxPiIDqyRoLm-wWKUXV-gevMaPB8NazAXbOMCjRaCRdbCucqc9iOGgkH10UaRHR0biIkPFnQUJp7wivdO1pd4g5hhUBQVapI4rlWB776BQIK7cgWK1oXg9OSvh
- Pierce, J., Kostova, T., & Dirks, K. (2001). Toward a Theory of Psychological Ownership in Organizations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 26, 298.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/259124>
- Pierce, J. L., & Jussila, I. (2010). Collective psychological ownership within the work and organizational context: Construct introduction and elaboration. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(6), 810–834. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.628>
- Pierce, J. L., & Jussila, I. (2011). *Psychological Ownership and the Organizational Context: Theory, Research Evidence, and Application*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

- Pierce, J. L., Kostova, T., & Dirks, K. T. (2003). The State of Psychological Ownership: Integrating and Extending a Century of Research. *Review of General Psychology*, 7(1), 84–107. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.7.1.84>
- Pierce, J. L., O’driscoll, M. P., & Coghlan, A. (2004). Work Environment Structure and Psychological Ownership: The Mediating Effects of Control. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 144(5), 507–534. <https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.144.5.507-534>
- Pierce, J. L., & Peck, J. (2018). The History of Psychological Ownership and Its Emergence in Consumer Psychology. In J. Peck & S. B. Shu (Eds.), *Psychological Ownership and Consumer Behavior* (pp. 1–18). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77158-8_1
- Pierce, J. L., Rubenfeld, S. A., & Morgan, S. (1991). Employee ownership: A conceptual model of process and effects. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(1), 121–144. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1991.4279000>
- Porteous, J. D. (1976). Home: The Territorial Core. *Geographical Review*, 66(4), 383–390. <https://doi.org/10.2307/213649>
- Priporas, C.-V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers’ expectations of interactions in smart retailing: A future agenda. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 77, 374–381. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.058>
- Priporas, C.-V., Stylos, N., & Kamenidou, I. (Eirini). (2020). City image, city brand personality and generation Z residents’ life satisfaction under economic crisis: Predictors of city-related social media engagement. *Journal of Business Research*, 119, 453–463. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.05.019>

- Ryder, N. B. (1985). The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change. In W. M. Mason & S. E. Fienberg (Eds.), *Cohort Analysis in Social Research: Beyond the Identification Problem* (pp. 9–44). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-8536-3_2
- Sartre, J. P. (1943). *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*. NY: Philosophical Library. <https://www.amazon.com/Being-Nothingness-Essay-Phenomenological-Ontology/dp/B0006AUQKI>
- Schau, H. J., Muñoz Jr, A. M., & Arnould, E. J. (2009). How brand community practices create value. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5), 30–51.
- Scholz, C. (2014). *Generation Z: Wie sie tickt, was sie verändert und warum sie uns alle ansteckt*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Scholz, C., & Rennig. (2019). *Generations Z in Europe: Inputs, Insights and Implications*. Emerald Publishing Limited.
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=nlebk&AN=2034411&site=eds-live&scope=site&custid=s1020420>
- Schroeder, R. (2002). Social Interaction in Virtual Environments: Key Issues, Common Themes, and a Framework for Research. In R. Schroeder (Ed.), *The Social Life of Avatars: Presence and Interaction in Shared Virtual Environments* (pp. 1–18). Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4471-0277-9_1
- Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2017). Generation Z: Educating and Engaging the Next Generation of Students. *About Campus*, 22(3), 21–26. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.21293>
- Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2018). *Generation Z: A Century in the Making*. Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429442476>

- Shu, S. B., & Peck, J. (2011). Psychological ownership and affective reaction: Emotional attachment process variables and the endowment effect. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 21*(4), 439–452. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2011.01.002>
- Sinclair, G., & Tinson, J. (2017). Psychological ownership and music streaming consumption. *Journal of Business Research, 71*, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.10.002>
- Sloane, G., & Rittenhouse, L. (2019). FIRST LOOK AT TIKTOK’S GAME PLAN: Leaked pitch deck reveals how the app is luring brands. Spoiler alert: There will be gummy bears. *Advertising Age, 90*(20).
https://www.proquest.com/docview/2306286732?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo
- Stillman, D., & Stillman, J. (2017). *Gen Z @ Work: How the Next Generation Is Transforming the Workplace*. Harper Business.
- Stone, M. (2021). *Gen-Z: They Crave Stability And Trust, So Give It To Them*. Forbes.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelstone/2021/05/18/gen-z-they-crave-stability-and-trust-so-give-it-to-them/>
- Thürridl, C., Kamleitner, B., Ruzeviciute, R., Süßenbach, S., & Dickert, S. (2020). From happy consumption to possessive bonds: When positive affect increases psychological ownership for brands. *Journal of Business Research, 107*, 89–103.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.10.019>
- TikTok. (2021). *About TikTok | TikTok*. <https://www.tiktok.com/about?lang=en>
- Tsai, H.-T., Huang, H.-C., & Chiu, Y.-L. (2012). Brand community participation in Taiwan: Examining the roles of individual-, group-, and relationship-level antecedents. *Journal of Business Research, 65*(5), 676–684. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.03.011>
- Tsimonis, G., & Dimitriadis, S. (2014). Brand strategies in social media. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning, 32*(3), 328–344. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-04-2013-0056>

- Van Dyne, L., & Pierce, J. L. (2004). Psychological ownership and feelings of possession: Three field studies predicting employee attitudes and organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(4), 439–459. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.249>
- Varkey Foundation. (2017). *Generation Z: Global Citizenship Survey*.
<https://www.varkeyfoundation.org/what-we-do/research/generation-z-global-citizenship-survey>
- Vollmer, C., & Precourt, G. (2008). *Always On: Advertising, Marketing, and Media in an Era of Consumer Control* (1st edition). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Wirtz, J., den Ambtman, A., Bloemer, J., Horváth, C., Ramaseshan, B., van de Klundert, J., Gurhan Canli, Z., & Kandampully, J. (2013). Managing brands and customer engagement in online brand communities. *Journal of Service Management*, 24(3), 223–244.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09564231311326978>
- Wood, S. (2013). Generation Z as consumers: Trends and innovation. *Institute for Emerging Issues: NC State University*, 119(9), 1–3.
- Wu, J.-J., Chen, Y.-H., & Chung, Y.-S. (2010). Trust factors influencing virtual community members: A study of transaction communities. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(9), 1025–1032. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2009.03.022>
- Xu, L., Yan, X., & Zhang, Z. (2019). Research on the causes of the “Tik Tok” app becoming popular and the existing problems. *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 7(2).
- Zemke, R., Raines, C., & Filipeczak, B. (2000). Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace. *Training & Development*, 54(1), 60–60.
- Zhang, J.-Y., Nie, M., Yan, B.-S., & Wang, X.-D. (2014). Effect of Network Embeddedness on Brand-Related Behavior Intentions: Mediating Effects of Psychological Ownership.

Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 42(5), 721–730.

<https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2014.42.5.721>

Zhang, Y., Liu, G., Zhang, L., Xu, S., & Cheung, M. (2020). Psychological Ownership: A Meta-Analysis and Comparison of Multiple Forms of Attachment in the Workplace. *Journal of Management*, 47, 014920632091719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206320917195>

Zhang, Y., Liu, G., Zhang, L., Xu, S., & Cheung, M. W.-L. (2021). Psychological ownership: A meta-analysis and comparison of multiple forms of attachment in the workplace. *Journal of Management*, 47(3), 745–770.

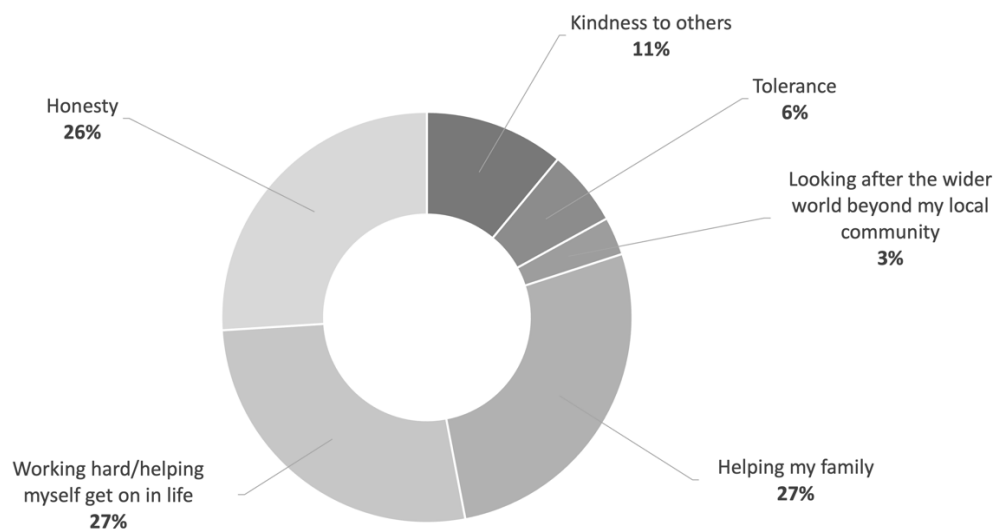
7. Appendices

Appendix A. *Generational Cohort Classification.*

Generational Cohort	Age Range
Silent Generation	1925 – 1945
Baby Boomer	1946 – 1964
Generation X	1965 – 1980
Generation Y	1981 – 1995
Generation Z	1996 – 2010
Generation Alpha	2010 – Today

Note. This table shows the six respective generation cohorts, ranging from the Silent Generation to Generation Alpha. Own illustration adapted from Bhalla et al., (2021, p. 7).

Appendix B. *The Core Values of Generation Z.*



Note. This figure illustrates the distribution of importance among the core values of the global survey participants. Adapted from “Generation Z: Global Citizenship Survey”, by Varkey Foundation (2017, p. 46).