

Toward discovering a national identity for millennials: Examining their personal value orientations for regional, institutional, and demographic similarities or variations

James Weber¹ | Jeffrey Loewenstein² | Patsy Lewellyn³ |
Dawn R. Elm⁴ | Vanessa Hill⁵ | Jessica McManus Warnell⁶

¹Department of Management, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

²Department of Business Administration, University of Illinois, Champaign, Illinois

³Department of Accounting, University of South Carolina Aiken, Aiken, South Carolina

⁴Department of Ethics and Business Law, University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis, Minnesota

⁵Department of Management, University of Louisiana – Lafayette, Lafayette, Louisiana

⁶Department of Management and Organizations, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana

Correspondence

James Weber, Duquesne University,
Rockwell Hall, 600 Forbes Avenue,
Pittsburgh, PA 15282.
Email: weberj@duq.edu

Abstract

Millennials are a powerful workforce group and are quickly becoming established business leaders, consumers, and investors. Yet, millennials are often described as a uniformly homogeneous generation, despite mounting evidence of variances across their private and workplace behaviors, attitudes and preferences, and personal values. This article examines the personal value orientations of millennials in the United States, reporting consistencies, variations, and contrasts based on a large sample drawn from seven diverse universities. Results of this article suggest more similarities across a national population of millennials than differences, suggesting a national identity among American millennials. Practical implications of our findings and future research are discussed.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Defined as individuals born between 1980 and 2000, the millennial generation is the largest in U.S. history, surpassing the population of the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) by four million and accounting for more than 83 million workers according to 2015 U.S. Census data. In 2016,

millennials became the largest generation in the U.S. labor force. In order to understand if there is a common national identity of the U.S. millennial generation, we posit that it would be useful to consider consistencies, variations, and contrasts in their values based on a national sampling.

The millennial population is often described as a uniformly homogeneous generation (see Deal & Levenson, 2016) despite mounting evidence of variances across their private and workplace behaviors, attitudes and preferences, and personal values (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Earlier investigations reported that millennials were interested in social and sustainability issues and connecting or interacting with others (Murphy, Mujtaba, Manyakb, Sungkhawanc, & Greenwood, 2010). Yet, Weber (2017) and Weber and Urick (2017), using different populations of millennials from the United States, found that the subjects tended to exhibit a stronger orientation toward self-interested or personal, rather than social values. Moreover, millennials seemed more interested in values that supported their interests in being competent, successful, or productive in the workplace, rather than values oriented toward ethical or moral values, a concern for others, or a social focus. These conflicting findings raise the question of a consistent national identity across this generation. When Deal, Altman, and Rogelberg (2010) set out to explore millennials at work, they began with the assumption that “the relatively sparse empirical research published on millennials is confusing at best and contradictory at worst” (p. 191). While there has been an increase in millennial research published in recent years, it appears as conclusions drawn from this work are no less contradictory.

This article will review generational research and values theory as foundations for our investigation of research questions to guide us in our search for a national millennials identity. Specifically, we will explore if personal value orientations (PVOs) are consistent among millennials in the United States, despite regional, institutional, and demographic differences.

2 | GENERATIONAL THEORY AND IDENTITY

Who are millennials, as a generation, and does this generation have a single identity? Sociologist Karl Mannheim (1970) is widely credited with introducing the “generation” concept as a variable for systematic study. He described members of a generation as people who share a common perspective because of common experiences of significant events occurring during their formative years (Kertzer, 1983). Yet, there is disagreement regarding the definition and subsequent operationalization of the construct, resulting in significant obstacles in the study of generations and generational differences (Macky, Gardner, & Forsyth, 2008).

Previous organizational research has pointed out the inconsistency in categorization of generations identifying multiple generations in the twentieth century using different ranges in their review of generational research: World War II (1909–1933); Swingers (1934–1945); Matures (before 1940); Baby Boomers (1946–1960, but as late as 1964); Generation X (as early as 1961, and ending in 1975, 1980, 1981, or 1982); and finally Millennials (1979–1994) (Smola & Sutton, 2002, pp. 364–365.) The inability to agree on consistent ranges for generational cohorts makes replicating studies to differentiate the impacts of various generations difficult.

Researchers cite further problems with interpreting the results of generational research due to the difficulty in distinguishing generational effects from age, life stage, and historical period (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2007). Macky and his colleagues (2008) note that that even if there is agreement on the membership of a generational group it is not clear that all members of that generation will experience the same significant cultural and/or economic events in the same way due to differences in social class, gender, ethnicity, or national culture. Furthermore, the authors point out that differences

in attitudes, values and behaviors could also be impacted by the length of service with an organization rather than generational differences.

Because of these various difficulties, the case for generational similarities or differences as a factor that influences attitudes, values, and behaviors remains an empirical question. Further, the expectation of a consistent value orientation characterizing the millennial generation is suspect and worthy of examination. Therefore, we turn to an investigation of this generation's values to determine if value orientations are consistent among millennials in the United States.

3 | PERSONAL VALUES AND VALUE ORIENTATIONS

Kluckhohn articulates a generally accepted definition of values: "A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (1951, p. 395). Values convey what is important to one in life. Unsurprisingly then, values are an important factor influencing behavior. They relate to selected behavior in real-life situations (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). For example, values predict how one might vote in a political election (Schwartz, 1996) or what university course a student might select (Feather, 1988). Values are instantiated in practices (Gehman, Trevino, & Garud, 2013), providing a normative dimension to behavior due to social institutions (Selznick, 1957). Therefore, research generally concludes that values influence judgments, decisions, and actions.

Values theory suggests that individuals consider multiple values when seeking to make a decision. For example, an individual may place greater importance on one specific value (e.g., being courageous, living a life of prudence or temperance) than other values (e.g., accumulation of wealth or fame, preferring to be alone rather than with friends or family). According to Rokeach (1973), individuals also rank specific values in importance regarding two value types: modes of conduct (instrumental values) or end-states of existence (terminal values). Given the number of values individuals contemplate; it is most relevant to consider value orientations, or stances toward collections of values, rather than single values in isolation, as guides to individuals' behavior.

A more recent value measurement technique since the work of Rokeach is that of Shalom Schwartz. Building on the work of Rokeach, Schwartz and Bilsky (1987) presented a universal and comprehensive set of individual values that is stable across cultures. Subsequent work resulted in the development of the Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 2009). The Schwartz Value Survey has been used in several studies and has proved helpful in furthering our understanding of the role of values in individual behavior. However, we chose to use the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) for its direct connection to ethical or moral values. Since we are interested in the identity of millennials relative to how they make ethical choices, we believe this theory and survey are the most appropriate for our article.

Rokeach proposes four ideal types of PVOs: *personal-competence*, *social-competence*, *personal-moral*, and *social-moral*. The terminal (or end state) values are either personal (self-focused) or social (other-focused). Similarly, Rokeach separates the instrumental or modes of conduct values into two groups: competence (a focus on individual abilities or proficiencies) versus moral character (an ethical dimension of doing well). Weber (1990) substantiates these distinctions empirically (shown in Appendix A). Using the Rokeach model, it is possible to gain insights into the value orientations held by individuals within a group, such as members of the U. S. millennial generation, and so shed light on a nationally consistent PVO among millennials in the United States.

Consistencies and variations among populations while investigating their PVOs have been the focus for some academic research, although many scholars call for additional work. Twenge, Campbell, and Freeman (2012) examine generational changes in the emphasis on intrinsic and extrinsic values. The

results of their study support generational differences with significant differences observed in both extrinsic and intrinsic values between generations. Murphy et al. (2010) report that baby boomers show a preference for a sense of accomplishment and a world of beauty when compared to the other generations; generation Xers prefer health and inner harmony; millennial subjects exhibit a stronger preference for a world at peace and national security. Similarly, value preferences are found across the generations when considering the instrumental values found in the RVS: baby boomers preferred honesty and loyalty, compared to generation Xers' preference of being responsible and millennials' higher preference for self-control. Their results, which reveal that 8 of 18 terminal and 10 of 18 instrumental values reflected statistically significant differences across the generations, support the notion that generations have different values that influence their collective attitudes and behaviors (Murphy et al., 2010, p. 550).

Some research assumes a more macro view of value influence rather than attributing value preferences to unique characteristics of the individual. Social and cultural forces likely shape value preferences (Gehman et al., 2013). A subject's rank ordering of personal values can be formed by work and family demands (Lipinska-Grobelny, 2014), or organizational culture and values (Diskiene & Gostautas, 2012). Factors, such as the particular historical events, social trends, and the prevalent technologies during formative years, might be experienced differently by different subsets of millennials. The variance in experiences may influence the congruency or incongruency of millennials' values with those of prior generations (Warnell, 2015).

Findings from existing research on generational differences render the results on values within generations somewhat inconclusive. While there is support for value similarity within generations, the simultaneous impact of other factors, such as education, religious affiliation, geographic region, and other individual characteristics are not extensively explored. Next, we examine prior research exploring the millennials generation's values in order to construct our testable hypotheses.

4 | HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT: MILLENNIALS AND VALUES

Millennials typically are described in the popular and academic literatures as an unvarying population. They are portrayed as the most educated, globally aware, and technology-savvy population in the history of humankind (Deal & Levenson, 2016). In number and thus potential strategic influence, millennials are characterized as a powerful group in the workforce and are quickly becoming established leaders of business organizations (Huang & Gellman, 2016).

There is an emerging amount of research on the value characteristics of the millennial generation and their engagement in the workplace. Deal and Levenson (2016) combine extensive interview and survey data from 25,000 millennials around the world to describe millennials' workplace value preferences and attitudes. As a generation, millennials want a flexible workplace, want to combine life and work, seek to learn and grow through feedback, value their autonomy, and care about doing good. Millennials want a satisfying job that pays well, coworkers they like and trust, advancement opportunities, and the occasional pat on the back.

Hershatter and Epstein (2010) used a qualitative case research method to provide understanding of the way college age millennials approach work by focusing on their knowledge and practices with technology and institutions. Two critical discoveries were reported: first, the incorporation of technology as a "sixth sense" characterized millennials' ability to fully interact with the world; and, second, their expectation of organizational accommodation, stemming from their prior experiences and the degree to which institutions have made themselves malleable to the needs and desires of this cohort.

These findings cause many to believe that millennials could likely manifest a different approach to business problem-solving and leadership than prior generations (Winograd & Hais, 2014). Unlike the baby boomers who are often in positions of senior leadership in business organizations, millennials are accustomed to living in a world of fast-paced, nonstop exchange of information and opinions—tweeting, texting, using social media, and emailing others. They are expecting innovation and change, mostly based on technological advancements, which occur at a quicker pace than for any previous generation (Agan, 2013).

Reavis, Tucci, and St. Pierre sought to test Howe and Strauss' (2000) claim that the millennial generation would have higher levels of social consciousness by examining millennials' attitude toward stakeholder philosophy. Reavis, Tucci, and St. Pierre (2017) report that nearly two-thirds of the millennials in their study identify as stakeholder-oriented, compared to less than 20% identifying with Freidman's stockholder approach to corporate social responsibility. The authors claimed that “this provided millennials with a different lens from which to view the world than previous generations and leads to different expectations as employers, consumers, and voters” (2017, p. 79).

Results from research focusing on generation differences and value orientations among millennials not only seem to indicate that there are consistent preferences for many values regarding their importance to the subject but also similarities in the value orientations within generations. Based on prior research investigations analyzing the millennial generation population, and specifically value preferences and PVOs, we posit the following hypotheses for testing:

Hypothesis #1—Millennial undergraduate business students in the United States will manifest a consistent personal value orientation, as opposed to variant value orientations, regarding the importance attributed to the terminal and instrumental values found in the Rokeach Value Survey.

Although generational PVO may be found, it is likely, based on prior research previously discussed, that variations will be discovered when exploring various institutional and individual demographic variables. Other academic explorations uncovered other, potentially contradictory, discoveries. Contrary to the pro-corporate social responsibility view reported by Reavis, et al. (2017), Gong (2018) found that millennials appeared to be less interested in organizational citizenship behavior than earlier generations in the workforce, and millennials manifest a thirst for learning and training since it may foster their personally focused advancement in the workplace, according to Baker and Hastings' (2018) research.

The potential for conflicting evidence characterizing millennial's values is often based on observations or examinations of a geographically limited subpopulation of this generation and typically reports on the predominant findings emanating from this group. It remains unproven if this generation has a group identity (Hogg, 2007) that is based on a uniform and homogenous set of personal values portraying this powerful new generation that underlie the behaviors and attitudes reported in the literature and observed in the workplace and marketplace.

As noted earlier, PVOs are a key element of identity and an influence on decision making and behavior. Values research also provides a rich base for identifying consistencies, variations, and contrasts. Prior research shows, for example, that regional differences in values may exist within a sample of national subjects (Dheer, Lenartowicz, Peterson, & Petrescu, 2014). In addition, there may be institutional influences, such as differences between individuals attending private versus public universities (Rutherford, Parks, Cavazos, & White, 2012). Existing evidence also suggests that gender (Craft, 2013), academic class standing (Debevec, Schewe, Madden, & Diamond, 2013), intelligence (Coyne, Bell, & Merrington, 2013), amount of work experience (Urlick, Hollensbe, Masterson, & Lyons, 2017), and academic major (May, Chang, & Shao, 2015) are significant predictors of PVOs.

Factors that seminally influence millennials' values, such as particular historical events, social trends, and technologies at play during their formative years (Warnell, 2015), might be experienced differently by different subsets of millennials based on region, cultural, and economic circumstances (Macky et al., 2008).

A detailed examination of consistencies and variations in a national sample of millennials' value orientations is an opportunity to consider the kinds of influences affecting millennials and the types of concerns millennials are bringing to the workplace providing opportunities both to stimulate additional research and to inform practice, given the currently underdeveloped state of knowledge about the nature of millennials' PVO. Our next set of hypotheses allows us to observe if millennials demonstrate differences (or similarities) when considering their PVO given their school affiliation and the subject's demographic differences. More specifically, do differences in the percentage of millennials manifesting a specific PVO appear when considering which university the subjects attend, if the university has a private or public affiliation, the geographic location of the university, or any of the individual demographic differences (gender, grade point average, major area of study, or length of work experience)? Therefore, we posit the following collection of testable hypotheses: *When considering the undergraduate business students' preferences regarding the importance attributed to different values in the RVS, there will be significant differences when considering subjects by*

Hypothesis question #2a—university membership

Hypothesis question #2b—university affiliation—public versus private

Hypothesis question #2c—the university's geographic location

Hypothesis question #2d—gender

Hypothesis question #2e—current grade point average, as a surrogate for intelligence

Hypothesis question #2f—current major area of study

Hypothesis question #2g—the amount of prior work experience

5 | METHODOLOGY

5.1 | Survey sample

Our data consist of undergraduate business students from seven U.S. universities, private and public, located across the United States. Subjects were drawn voluntarily from a larger population of business students at the respective universities in the spring 2016 semester. All subjects were millennials, that is, individuals born between 1980 and 2000. Some subjects were eligible to participate in this project due to a course they were enrolled in, while others were part of a larger participative pool of student subjects. Further information about the participating schools is summarized in this section. The term useable surveys, mentioned below, refers to completed value surveys received from the subjects. Surveys missing one or more designation of the value's importance were discarded from the analysis.

University A is a private, faith-based institution in the Eastern region of the United States. It is located in an urban setting with a university enrollment of almost 10,000 students and a 15:1

student-to-faculty ratio. The business school has an enrollment of 1,200 students in the undergraduate program, representing nearly every state in the country and over three dozen nations. The sample from University A provided 423 useable responses for our analysis. In this subsample, there were 211 males and 209 females, with an average grade point average of 3.15 out of 4.00 and 3.5 months of work experience.

University B, also a private, faith-based institution, is located in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. The university has an undergraduate enrollment of nearly 9,000, with an undergraduate enrollment of 1,923 in the College of Business. The university has a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio. The campus occupies 1,265 acres in a "college-town" environment. The student body is drawn from all 50 states and more than 1,100 international students from nearly 90 countries. In total, 362 subjects completed the RVS with 351 useable subjects' responses for our analysis. Males comprised 194 subjects in this subsample with 158 females. Subjects had an average grade point average of 3.45 out of 4.00 and 1.6 months of work experience.

The third private institution in our sample, University C, is also a faith-affiliated university located in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. The university has a 14:1 student-to-faculty ratio and a total undergraduate enrollment of 6,240, and is the smallest of the private universities in our sample. The College of Business has an undergraduate enrollment of 1,330 students providing 272 useable survey responses for our analysis. There were 151 males and 119 females in this subsample, with an average grade point average of 3.42 out of 4.00 and 4.2 months of work experience.

Our final private university, University D, is located in the Northwestern region of the United States in an urban setting. The university has a 21:1 student-to-faculty ratio and a total undergraduate enrollment of 21,980 students. The business school has an undergraduate enrollment of 694 students. A total of 296 subjects completed the RVS with 286 responses useable for our analysis. A total of 156 males and 133 females made up this subsample, with an average grade point average of 3.4 out of 4.00 and 2.4 months of work experience.

University E is a public institution located in a suburban setting in the Southeastern region of the United States. The university has a 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio and a total undergraduate enrollment of 3,356, making it the smallest school in our sample. The School of Business Administration has a resident undergraduate enrollment of 571 students. The RVS was completed by 99 subjects, with 95 useable for analysis. In this subsample, there were 48 males and 44 females, with an average grade point average of 3.10 out of 4.00 and 4.7 months of work experience.

University F is a public university located in a metropolitan setting in the Southern region of the United States. It has a 23:1 student-to-faculty ratio and a total undergraduate enrollment of 14,444. The business school has an undergraduate enrollment of 1,865 students. Over 90% of the students attending the University are in-state residents. International students represent 40 different nations. A total of 201 subjects completed the RVS and were used in our analysis. This subsample had 101 males and 87 females, with an average grade point average of 3.01 out of 4.00 and more than 12 months on average of work experience.

Finally, University G, a public institution, is located in a metropolitan setting in the Upper Midwest region of the United States. The university, the largest in our sample, has a 18:1 student-to-faculty ratio and a total undergraduate enrollment of 33,368 students. The business school has an undergraduate enrollment of 3,102 students. Nearly 70% of the students enrolled are in-state residents. Approximately 20% of enrolled students are non-U.S. residents. In total, 492 subjects completed the RVS with 476 useable responses for our analysis. In this subsample there were 228 males and 192 females, with an average on 11 months of work experience.

Across all seven schools, 2,145 subjects participated in the research, with 2,104 useable responses for our analysis. Additional details descriptive of the total sample are provided in the subpopulation analysis that follows.

5.2 | Materials and measures

There are two predominant value surveys appearing regularly in the academic literature, one developed by Milton Rokeach and the other by Shalom Schwartz. This research utilized the RVS (1973) due to the instrument's strong theoretical foundation focusing on personal values underlying the survey (Rokeach & Ball-Rokeach, 1989), its widely accepted validity in values research (Vauclair, Hanke, Fischer, & Fontaine, 2011), and its capability in assessing business students' values (McCarthy, 1997). The RVS assesses the importance assigned by individual subjects to 18 terminal (personal or social end states of existence) and 18 instrumental (competence or moral modes of conduct) values.

Participants completed the RVS questionnaire and a series of demographic questions, either online or in-class. None of the subjects at any institution were provided monetary incentives for completing the survey. Items from the RVS are listed in Appendix A. There are two sets of values measured, terminal values and instrumental values. We had the respondent consider each set of values separately. We listed each set of values in alphabetical order and asked respondents to rate each value in terms of their perceived importance. In order to assess demographic characteristics, we asked for information in another section of the survey. These items asked the respondent to write in their age, major, GPA, and previous work experience in years. Additional items asked the respondent to indicate their gender and class standing.

We applied two modifications to the original RVS were employed in our article. The first modification instructed respondents to *rate*, rather than *rank*, each value on a 7-point Likert scale. Previous research found that by asking subjects to rate (rather than rank) values on a Likert scale enabled subjects to consider fewer items at once and made the resulting importance ascribed to each value more plausible and reliable (Miethe, 1985). The rating system allows individuals to appraise different values as being equally important to them, and permits for the possibility that a given value item will be negatively valued.

The participants' value preferences were then analyzed in several ways. We drew on Cultural Consensus Theory (Romney, Weller, & Batchelder, 1986) by taking the entire matrix of participants by responses and applying the original cultural consensus modeling approach using UCINET's Consensus Analysis function (Borgotti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002), as well as the Multi-Culture Latent Truth Rater Model (Anders & Batchelder, 2013) using Anders' (2014) R package, CCTpack. The Multi-Culture Latent Truth Rater Model provides a means to assess whether collections of individuals give similar answers to a survey, indicating similar underlying views due to social conventions. Thus, it is one of many approaches to identifying consistencies within a dataset by clustering participants rather than survey items.

The second modification of the original RVS, and the second approach to analyzing participants' value preferences, was to use quantitative-based membership, or weights, for each of the 36 values. This approach is based on five prior works (see Weber's initial classification reported in 1990, shown in Appendix A). The weights are assigned to the values within each of the four PVOs theoretically proposed by Rokeach (1973). These are a personal or a social value orientation for the terminal values and a competence or a moral value orientation for the instrumental values.

Weber found, for example, that A Comfortable Life was consistently grouped through factor analysis to a PVO by all five of the prior investigations, thus receives the maximum weight of "five" and assigned to the PVO (Weber, 1990). Similarly, Independent was found to belong to the competence

value orientation through factor analysis in all five of the prior investigations and is given the maximum weight of “five” and assigned to the competence value orientation. Salvation, however, was associated with the PVO in only four of the five prior studies and once with the social value orientation. Thus, Salvation was assigned to the PVO with a mid-range weight of “three” (based on four minus one).

The subjects' PVOs are initially analyzed by looking for a normal distribution into each PVOs and then assessing for significant differences across each of the universities, private versus public designation, or regional location of the participating school using a Chi-square Goodness of Fit test statistic. The goodness of fit test assesses whether an observed frequency distribution of a nominal variable matches an expected frequency distribution. In addition to the Chi-square test statistic, we also report on the “size effect,” the Cohen d (2008), when assessing our data. We are analyzing large populations and seeking to discover big influences on this data, thus the discovery of having large effects would be desirable to our analysis and conclusions.

If initial differences are found, then an additional assessment is conducted using a Z-test of Propositions for the two samples. This test calculates the value of a “Z” (and associated “ p value”) for two group proportions to determine if there are statistically significant differences across the two groups within the population. The Cohen's d is also reported here.

Finally, to assess the individual's demographic variables a variety of measures was used. For gender, a Chi-square Goodness of Fit test was calculated. For assessment of the major areas of study, a series of Z-test of Propositions were used. For the two continuous demographic variables, grade point average and amount of work experience, a regression analysis was performed and reported.

6 | RESULTS

6.1 | Individual value preferences

As this project involved large sample sizes, we provide a descriptive account of the individual values in response to Hypotheses #1: *Millennial undergraduate business students will manifest a consistent personal value orientation, as opposed to variant value orientations, regarding the importance attributed to the terminal and instrumental values found in the Rokeach Value Survey*. The overall pattern of terminal and instrumental values is shown in Table 1 ($N = 2,104$). As a simple indication of the stability of these values in the United States over time, the correlations between the ordering of this listing and the Rokeach and Ball-Rokeach (1989) national sample from 1971 show a moderate consistency ($r = .48$). In other words, of the 16 values from the top rated four and bottom rated four instrumental and terminal value listed in Table 2, nine were also in the top rated four and bottom rated four in the 1971 data from Rokeach and Ball-Rokeach (1989). Some differences may stem from our focus on college students rather than a wider community. In the current sample True Friendship, Intellectual, and Logical are higher, while Clean and Salvation are lower than in prior samples. However, some changes, such as World at Peace dropping from #2 to #17 or Forgiving dropping from #4 to #15, may well be the result of change in generational values rather than sample anomaly.

When assessing for differences across the seven participating institutions in our sample, the responses from the different schools are remarkably alike, with an average pairwise correlation of .89 (range .72–.96). There are a few differences that were so large ($Z > 7$) that they are unlikely to be chance effects. Specifically, the two Southeastern public schools report markedly higher ratings for Salvation (5.71 vs. 4.97), Clean (5.59 vs. 4.88), and Obedient (5.57 vs. 5.08) than the other schools. These differences are reminiscent of Haidt's (2012) work on moral foundations (i.e., the three moral

TABLE 1 Importance rating for terminal and instrumental values, full sample ($N = 2,104$)

Terminal values	Mean (SD) [95% CI]	Instrumental values	Mean (SD) [95% CI]
Family security	6.52 (0.83) [6.49, 6.56]	Responsible	6.28 (0.89) [6.24, 6.32]
Happiness	6.50 (0.83) [6.46, 6.53]	Ambitious	6.14 (0.97) [6.10, 6.18]
Freedom	6.28 (0.92) [6.24, 6.32]	Honest	6.14 (1.07) [6.09, 6.18]
True friendship	6.23 (1.00) [6.19, 6.27]	Intellectual	6.02 (1.02) [5.98, 6.06]
Sense of accomplishment	6.04 (1.03) [6.00, 6.08]	Loving	5.95 (1.18) [5.90, 6.00]
Self-respect	6.02 (1.03) [5.98, 6.07]	Independent	5.92 (1.14) [5.88, 5.97]
Comfortable life	5.99 (1.06) [5.95, 6.04]	Capable	5.92 (1.60) [5.85, 5.99]
Wisdom	5.89 (1.12) [5.85, 5.94]	Polite	5.88 (1.12) [5.83, 5.93]
Mature love	5.82 (1.19) [5.77, 5.87]	Logical	5.81 (1.12) [5.76, 5.86]
Pleasure	5.79 (1.18) [5.74, 5.84]	Self-controlled	5.80 (1.14) [5.75, 5.85]
Inner harmony	5.79 (1.21) [5.74, 5.84]	Courageous	5.73 (1.12) [5.68, 5.78]
Exciting life	5.73 (1.59) [5.66, 5.80]	Broadminded	5.72 (1.16) [5.67, 5.77]
National security	5.72 (1.28) [5.66, 5.77]	Helpful	5.65 (1.21) [5.60, 5.70]
Equality	5.64 (1.43) [5.58, 5.70]	Cheerful	5.57 (1.20) [5.52, 5.62]
Social recognition	5.13 (1.43) [5.07, 5.19]	Forgiving	5.40 (1.29) [5.34, 5.45]
Salvation	5.10 (1.85) [5.02, 5.18]	Obedient	5.18 (1.41) [5.12, 5.24]
World at peace	5.07 (1.53) [5.00, 5.13]	Imaginative	5.16 (1.41) [5.10, 5.22]
World of beauty	4.75 (1.47) [4.68, 4.81]	Clean	4.97 (1.47) [4.91, 5.03]

TABLE 2 Chi-square goodness of fit test for abnormal distribution

School	Personal– Competence	Personal– Moral	Social– Competence	Social– Moral	Total	χ^2	p
University A	44%	27%	15%	14%	423	101.02	<.0001
University B	41%	31%	13%	14%	272	60.15	<.0001
University C	41%	26%	13%	20%	95	16.62	.0008
University D	36%	27%	19%	18%	286	26.03	<.0001
University E	40%	20%	20%	20%	201	23.5	<.0001
University F	50%	25%	12%	12%	476	179.51	<.0001
University G	51%	25%	13%	11%	351	143.94	<.0001
All	45%	26%	15%	14%	2,104	507.83	<.0001

foundations of Authority, Sanctity, and Loyalty), and accordingly might indicate a difference in particular religious or political bias among subjects.

Our sample reveals few notable differences by demographic categories. The only notable gender difference is Equality, which is rated significantly higher by women than men (5.92 vs. 5.41). No notable differences are found particular to year (freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior; the mean pairwise correlation across the means of the item responses by year was $r = .97$).

The overarching impression from the descriptive analyses of the data is that there is a fair amount of similarity among the participants' responses when we examine the various types of respondents.

This provides the basis for discovering a homogenous personal value orientation, or national identity among American millennials.

Another way to investigate the question of the similarities in participants' responses is to start not with differences in *categories*, but rather to observe *similarities* in individuals' responses. Using the original Cultural Consensus Approach (Romney et al., 1986), we find evidence for a modest overall consensus: the ratio of the first factor to the second is 3.24, above the traditional cutoff of 3, and there are just 4 respondents (out of 2,171) with scores less than zero, only one of which is beyond $-.03$. Still, there is a lot of variance as indicated by the low average competency score (i.e., fit to the consensus model) of 0.45.

Using Anders and Batchelder's (2013) recent approach, we also see evidence consistent with there being one general response profile, as a one-group model has the lowest DIC score and the scree plot indicates one dominant factor. As the group ideal answers from this analysis fall within the confidence intervals listed in Table 1, we do not list them separately. Accordingly, we conclude that Table 1 provides a reasonable descriptive summary of the dataset, bearing in mind the few school and demographic exceptions noted. *Millennial business undergraduates in the U.S. display reasonable consistency in value preferences.*

As discussed earlier, individuals often make decisions based on a cluster of values, not individual values. Therefore, it seems prudent to explore individual value groupings. We analyzed the information collected on the importance attributed to the values in the RVS after grouping individual values preferences into PVOs. Figure 1 illustrates the orientation cluster pattern of subject value preferences.

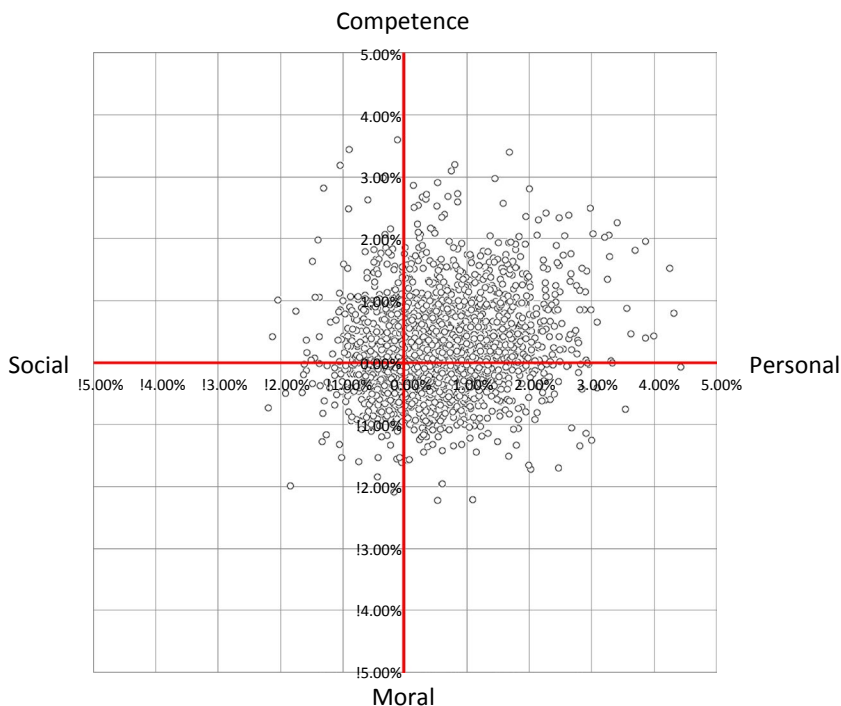


FIGURE 1 Personal value orientations [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

6.2 | PVOs—Institutional Influences: Hypotheses #2a, #2b, and #2c

6.2.1 | Hypothesis #2a—Institution

Table 2 reports the percentages of subjects and statistical significance (Chi-square Goodness of Fit and corresponding p value) associated with each of the four PVOs by institution and collectively ($N = 2,104$). As the p values indicate, there is significant variation from a normal distribution for the collective sample as well as for each of the seven institutions, addressing Hypothesis #2a.

Our article found the personal–competence value orientation distinctively prominent among all subjects across institutions, followed by the personal–moral value orientation, common among studies using business managers or business students as subjects (Weber & Urick, 2017). The social–moral and social–competence value orientations were least represented; equal collectively, and relatively equal for each institution, the largest difference found among students at University E.

Additionally, our analysis reveals tendencies of PVOs specific to institutions. For example, about half of the subjects at University B and University G exhibit a personal–competence PVO. A personal–moral PVO is most evident among the subjects from University C, whereas, a social–competence PVO more often characterizes the subjects at Universities D and F than any other university. Finally, a social–moral PVO is exhibited by more subjects at Universities D, E, and F than subjects at the other universities. These results are discussed further in the next section of this article.

6.2.2 | Hypothesis #2b—University affiliation

When comparing value orientations of subjects at public versus private (religious) affiliation, addressing Hypothesis #2b, we found little significant difference attributed to type of institution ($X^2 = 6.047$, $p = .109$, $d = 0.1074$). The most dramatic variation is with the personal–competence and personal–moral PVOs. Only 43.7% of the subjects from the private institutions exhibit a personal–competence PVO, compared to nearly half, or 47.2%, of subjects from public institutions. For the personal–moral PVO, 27.4% of the subjects from the private institutions show this orientation and only 23.7% for the subjects from public institutions, based on the data shown in Table 2. The other PVO comparisons are quite close: social–competence PVO—14.9%–14.1%, and social–moral PVO—14%–15%.

6.2.3 | Hypothesis #2c—University location

We also examined whether the geographic location of the participating institution explained differences in the subjects' PVOs, addressing Hypothesis #2c. Table 3 shows the distribution of subjects per PVO by geographic location. A Z-test of Proportions with Two Samples is used to assess if any of the pairwise comparisons manifest statistical significance. We discover this to be true in 21% of the comparisons (5 of the 24). Midwest students ($N = 1,088$) demonstrate a social–competence PVO more often than East students ($N = 428$) ($Z = 2.654$, $p = .008$, $d = 0.1366$). The East students manifest a personal–competence PVO to a greater degree than West students ($N = 286$) ($Z = 2.6632$, $p = .007$, $d = 0.2003$). The Southeast students ($N = 283$) exhibit a social–moral PVO more than Midwest students ($Z = 2.5074$, $p = .012$, $d = 0.1357$). Midwest students reveal a personal–competence PVO more often than West students ($Z = 2.6847$, $p = .007$, $d = 0.1452$). Finally, West students show a social–moral PVO more often than Midwest students ($Z = -2.5907$, $p = .009$, $d = -0.1401$). In two other comparisons, East versus Southeast and Southeast versus West there are no statistically significant differences in PVOs.

TABLE 3 Distribution of subjects' PVO by the institutions' geographic location

School	Personal–Competence	Personal–Moral	Social–Competence	Social–Moral	Total
East = University A	196 (45.8%)	115 (26.9%)	61 (14.3%)	56 (13.0%)	428
Midwest = Universities B, C, G	485 (44.6%)	263 (24.2%)	219 (20.1%)	121 (11.1%)	1,088
Southeast = Universities E, F	122 (43.1%)	62 (21.9%)	52 (18.4%)	47 (16.6%)	283
West = University D	103 (36.0%)	77 (26.9%)	54 (18.9%)	52 (18.2%)	286
All	43%	25%	19%	13%	2,085

Overall, while some geographical differences were evident between regions, *there are no significant differences discovered in a majority (79%) of the comparisons between geographic locations of the participating institutions.* The general similarities across the United States in the millennials' PVOs are discussed in the next section of the article.

6.3 | PVOs—Demographic differences: Hypotheses #2d, #2e, #2f, and #2g

6.3.1 | Hypothesis #2d—Gender

When looking at gender differences, an analysis using a Chi-square Goodness of Fit test was conducted to see if the two distributions (females = 960 vs. males = 1,089) are significantly different. They are only marginally different ($X^2 = 1.721$, $df = 3$, $p = .06323$, $d = 0.058$). Since no significance was found at the $p < .05$ level, no additional Z-tests of Proportions were conducted. These results are discussed in the following section of the article.

6.3.2 | Hypothesis #2e—Grade point average

The second demographic variable considered is the subject's grade point average (GPA). Overall, the average grade point average for the sample was 3.30 out of 4.00. A regression analysis was used to determine if any of the four PVOs were significantly affected by the subject's GPA. The result showed that all four PVOs were significantly affected—personal: $f = 7.25$, significant $f = 0.007$ = significant; social: $f = 18.467$, significant $f < 0.001$ = significant; competence: $f = 5.14$, significant $f = 0.02$ = significant; and, moral: $f = 11.61$, significant $f = 0.00067$ = significant. These results are discussed in the following section of the article.

6.3.3 | Hypothesis #2f—Major area of study

The third demographic variable consists of the subjects' self-reported major area of study. Some specific majors were combined to render consistent categories. The resulting classification for this sample is shown in Table 4.

A series of 56 Z-tests of Proportions were conducted to see if one major is significantly different from another major for the personal PVO (and by extension for the social PVO) and for the moral PVO (and by extension the competence PVO). Given the lack of predicted direction in the comparison, a two-tailed assessment is assumed. Only 5 of the 56 comparisons (8.9%) related to the personal PVO were found to be significant at the $p < .05$ level. Additional tests were conducted to determine if the significant differences for the personal PVO is due to the personal–moral PVO or the personal–competence PVO. Multiple comparisons were found to be statistically different for the personal–moral

TABLE 4 Data distribution of PVOs by major ($N = 2,327$)

	Marketing	BA/GB/IB/BM ^a	Accounting	Finance	OTM/SCM ^b	Entrepreneur	ISM/IT ^c	Nonbusiness
Personal–Competence	108 (32%)	142 (31%)	139 (31%)	121 (31%)	39 (33%)	11 (28%)	33 (26%)	99 (25%)
Social–Competence	103 (30%)	149 (32%)	159 (35%)	123 (32%)	33 (28%)	15 (38%)	55 (44%)	177 (44%)
Personal–Moral	67 (20%)	85 (18%)	72 (16%)	67 (17%)	23 (20%)	6 (15%)	21 (17%)	48 (12%)
Social–Moral	64 (19%)	86 (19%)	83 (18%)	74 (19%)	22 (19%)	7 (18%)	16 (13%)	80 (20%)
Total	342	462	453	385	117	39	125	404

Note: Some subjects declared multiple majors so data is included in each major area of study.

^aBusiness Administration/Global Business/International Business/Business Management.

^bOperations Technology Management/Supply Chain Management.

^cInformation Systems Management/Information Technologies.

PVO with greater importance attributed to this PVO for Marketing ($Z = 2.9056, p = .0037$), Business Administration ($Z = 2.6537, p = .0080$), Finance ($Z = 2.1970, p = .0280$), and Supply Chain majors ($Z = 2.1591, p = .0308$) versus Nonbusiness majors but no significant difference when comparing Accounting and Nonbusiness majors ($Z = 1.6899, p = .0910$).

For the social–moral PVO, multiple comparisons were found to be statistically different as well. Most majors place greater importance on a social–moral PVO, for example, Marketing ($Z = 2.1501, p = .0315$), Business Administration ($Z = 2.0412, p = .0412$), Accounting ($Z = 2.0162, p = .0438$), and Finance majors ($Z = 2.1678, p = .0302$), than did Nonbusiness majors. However, no differences were found for a social–moral PVO when comparing Supply Chain Management majors to Nonbusiness majors ($Z = 1.9057, p = .0567$).

Contrarily, none of the comparisons when considering the moral PVO was found to be significant. These results are discussed in the following section of the article.

6.3.4 | Hypothesis #2g—Work experience

The fourth demographic variable considers the subjects' self-reported amount of work experience. Subjects had, on average, 2.79 months of work experience. Similar to our treatment of grade point average, a regression analysis was used to determine if any of the four PVOs were significantly affected by the subject's amount of work experience. The result showed that three of the four PVOs were significantly affected—personal: $f = 1.944$, significant $f = 0.16 =$ not significant; social: $f = 8.58$, significant $f = 0.0003 =$ significant; competence: $f = 3.035$, significant $f = 0.08 =$ marginally significant; and, moral: $f = 5.364$, significant $f = 0.02 =$ significant. These results are discussed in the following section of the article.

7 | DISCUSSION, FUTURE RESEARCH, LIMITATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Our overarching research question was to discover if there is consistent PVO or a national identity for the U.S. millennial generation. Specifically, our initial focus was whether U.S. millennials attributed different importance to the terminal and instrumental values found in the RVS.

7.1 | General discussion of research findings

In general, we found some agreement between our sample of millennials and previous subject responses reported in the literature. Nine of the 16 terminal and instrumental values are ranked in the top four or bottom four as found in the 1971 national sample reported by Rokeach and Ball-Rokeach (1989). The variation in importance reported for the remaining seven values raises questions.

As suggested in the results section, we believe that some of the variation discovered is due to our sample of business students compared to a sample from the general population used in the 1971 national sample. Petrof, Sayegh, and Vlahopoulos (1982), when administering the RVS to business students, conclude, “There is no question that the School of Business influences the values of its students” (1982, p. 512). Similarly, Mitsis and Foley (2009) reported: an educational institution, a school of business, impacts its students and that students' perceptions of the school experience culturally anchor their values, further supporting the earlier findings. Thus, based on these findings, it is likely that our students' experiences in their business schools has exerted some degree of influence on

their values and that experience may partially explain variations in their values when compared to a national sample from the general population.

We wanted to provide a representative national sample of millennial business students for analysis, as we were curious about whether potential differences in the importance given to specific values in the RVS might occur within and across the seven participating institutions in our sample (Hypothesis #2a). However, we found significant similarities across the value preferences for the millennials enrolled in these seven schools, with a correlation of .89 (ranging from .72 to .96). We conclude that, in general, *our sample is relatively homogenous, across seven institutions diverse in size, affiliation, and geographic location, thereby discovering a consistent personal value orientation and, thus, a national profile of identity for U.S. millennial business students.*

Previous studies have also found that national identification may have profound consequences on individuals' attitudes and their values, ranging from extreme self-sacrifice for the benefit of compatriots to endorsement of brutal violence against outgroups (Sahdra & Ross, 2007). Roccas, Schwartz, and Amit (2010) investigated national identity and reported that personal value priorities are closely aligned with one's home nation, using subjects from Israel, Russia, and the United States.

Although there appears to be a consistent national identity in our subjects, some regional variations did appear in our analysis of our sample's value preferences. For example, millennials enrolled in institutions located in the Southeast tend to place greater importance on the values of Salvation, Clean and Obedient, which may be reflective of a relatively strong conservative political or religious orientation found in that region (Haidt, 2012). We also report that females exhibit a greater importance toward the value of Equality than males, which may be attributed to the on-going struggle for gender equality in job opportunity and compensation that exists in the United States today (Sayers, 2012). Despite these differences, we can conclude, similar to other recent explorations into the values of the emerging millennial generation, *little differences emerge and assessments of demographic variations in our sample do not yield dramatically different value preferences among millennials.*

The practical implications of our discoveries provide insights for business managers and their organizations as they seek to accommodate or attract millennials. It seems that business organizations, who are hiring millennials, appealing to them as potential consumers, or attempting to attract them as future investors, may find that many of the techniques used in the past may be generally successful today and in the near future.

At the core of the decision process for millennials appears to be value preferences that are similar to previous generations. Weber (2017) assessed the personal values of managers in the 1980s—baby boomers—compared to managers today—generation X—with business students—millennials. He reported that, despite the uniqueness attributed to millennials by the popular press, managers from the 1980s, today, and millennials all appear to emphasize values associated with a personal, rather than social, orientation and emphasize values pointing to skills or competency rather than ethical or moral values (Weber, 2017), consistent with our discoveries here.

Yet, prior empirical scholarly research reports that rarely do individuals make decisions using an isolated value (Rokeach, 1973). Therefore, it is also important to explore differences or similarities among the PVOs held by our millennials. Our second research question addressed this by exploring differences across the four value orientations emanating from the original set of the 36 values found in the RVS.

The scatterplot of PVO preferences in Figure 1 shows a tendency toward a personal–competence value orientation, compared to the other three possible orientations. This is consistent with other PVO-based research. Weber and Urick (2017) found that nearly half of the millennials in their samples emphasized the personal–competence PVO, over the other three PVO types.

We analyzed our dataset to see if we could ascertain significant differences within our national millennial population. We posited that there may be differences due to the nature of the institution—Catholic, private universities versus nonreligious, public institutions (Hypothesis #2b). Our analysis of the millennials PVOs did not yield any significant differences, suggesting that while an educational institution does influence the values of their students (Mitsis & Foley, 2009; Petrof et al., 1982) the presence or absence of a religious affiliation is not a factor.

Similarly, we discover few differences—only 21%—when exploring differences in the millennials' PVO based on regional location (Hypothesis #2c). Scholars have posited that there are numerous cultural value differences within the United States. For example, Woodard (2012) reports that there are eleven distinctive cultural regions in the United States. It seems reasonable therefore that these regional cultural differences will account for variations in values and behavior. However, we did not discover such differences when investigating for regional variations within our national sample of millennials, consistent with the research that supports a consistent PVO or national identity (see Roccas et al., 2010, among others).

We examined whether there are significant differences among our national millennial students based on their varied demographics. When considering gender (Hypothesis #2d), we found no differences. Contrary to most studies, our lack of gender differences does confirm earlier work reported by Schminke (1997) and Street and Street (2006).

Significant differences were discovered when considering the impact of the subject's grade point average on their four PVOs (Hypothesis #2e). In each analysis, the PVO was significantly affected. Therefore, it appears that grade point average, our surrogate for intelligence, does influence the individual's value orientations.

Few differences were found when investigating the impact of a millennials' major area of study (Hypothesis #2f). It appears that nonbusiness students, although currently enrolled in a business school but without a declared business major, are significantly different than millennials with a declared major in any business field. The nonbusiness majors are less likely to adopt a personal–moral or social–moral PVO compared to millennials with business majors. Does this provide support for the assertion that business schools attempt to infuse ethics and moral education into their curriculum to prepare business students for professional business careers? Kopanidis and Shaw (2014) found that personal values among first-year undergraduates are quite different than for student later in their undergraduate careers and the student's academic choice of a career (or major) plays a significant role influencing the value change. They also report that students choose their academic programs or majors based on their values and preferences, confirming expected value differences across academic major areas of study, echoing findings reported in earlier work by Añaña and Nique (2010).

Finally, we explored if having some work experience, even as little as a few months, may influence the millennials' PVO (Hypothesis #2g). Apparently, it does, but not as one might expect. For our subjects, work experience seems to enhance an individual's social and moral value orientation.

Scholars have investigated the role business work experience might play in a subject's values and ethical decision making. Triandis, Leung, Villareal, and Clack (1985), for example, suggest that work values may be related to idiocentric (emphasis on personal considerations) or allocentric (emphasis on shared social considerations) personality traits which could be influenced over time as an employee gains more experience within a work context. Specific generational-related group and individual concerns emerged in a recent qualitative study. Urick and colleagues (2017) note that workplace tension often occur resulting from perceptions that millennial workers are not team players but are “in it for themselves,” often because they are believed to be inexperienced in socially oriented work settings.

Contrarily, our subjects seemed to have a greater inclination toward a social and moral value orientation after having some work experience. It is possible that working for only a few months is

insufficient to be socialized by the commonly seen personal and competence value orientation found among managers (Weber, 2017).

7.2 | Future research directions

Our article raises some new questions. Although we do not claim a cause–effect for our findings, it is important to consider why millennials at University B and University G are significantly more inclined to exhibit a personal–competence value orientation versus other institutions. Do these institutions and their business schools emphasize personal achievement or accentuate the learning of business skills and abilities more than the other five business schools represented in our sample? Is personal achievement emphasized in their admissions criteria and selection process? It is generally found that these two institutions are ranked among the “best” business schools in the world by the *Financial Times*, or nationally by the *U.S. News and World Report*, something the other, smaller business schools in our sample do not claim. However, it is noteworthy that University E is currently ranked #1 among regional comprehensive public colleges in the south by U.S. News and World Report and has earned that distinction 12 out of the last 19 years.

It is possible that students attending Universities B and G are more geographically isolated than students at our other sample institutions while matriculating in their business degree programs—residing in rural Midwest states. They may enjoy more opportunity to focus on personal achievement in their studies perhaps with fewer outside demands from work or family responsibilities than other business students in our sample. While we are speculating here, these are additional research questions to be addressed by future scholars and their research.

Other slight variations in the percentage of millennials exhibiting a particular PVO are seen in our results. Millennials at University C show a higher preference for a personal–moral PVO. Is the moral dimension in this value orientation attributable to some specific institutional characteristics? University C has a strong Catholic identity, yet so do University A and University B. University C also requires its students to complete multiple Theology courses and a service learning experience before graduation. Its business students must pass a business ethics course to receive a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. All these requirements are also mandated at University A and University B.

A social element embedded in the PVOs is also suggested by our results. Millennials at Universities D and F show higher preferences for a social–competence PVO. Further investigations could explore why these two schools, compared to the other five, have business students that are more inclined to value social rather than personal values. Are there curriculum or extra-curricular explanations for this trend? Similarly, can the higher percentage memberships of a social–moral PVO at Universities D, E, and F be attributed to some institutional or business school factor absent in the other four institutions in our sample? Are these millennials more in tune with a social mission as part of their future business careers or more committed to making a difference in the world, as seen in other millennial-based values research (Johnson, 2015)?

It seems we are raising more questions than we are answering but such is the nature of exploratory research. Future scholars may utilize our findings as the foundation for their longitudinal study to track trends in the value preferences of millennials over time. Future researchers might also delve more deeply into the causes of millennials' value orientation to explain further the differences we found among our millennial students.

7.3 | Limitations

Our exploration has some limitations. Although our sample expands across seven national universities, it is not fully representative of a cross-section of the United States. Future explorations may want

to expand the geographic parameters of the sample to be more comprehensive in taking a snapshot of national millennials' value preferences. Similarly, our sample was limited to business students, who appear to be somewhat different than other college students and from the general U.S. population. Thus, studying a broader and more diverse sample may result in a more precise national value profile of millennials.

Our assessment is limited to seeking the importance given to the values contained in the RVS. While acknowledged in the literature as a robust values assessment tool (Vauclair et al., 2011), we are aware that other value surveys are available, such as Schwartz's (2009) Theory of Basic Human Values. Moreover, values are only one component in an individual's decision-making process and additional exploration focusing on other decision elements, such as cognitive moral reasoning, may be fruitful.

Finally, it would be beneficial for scholars to take the groundwork provided by our article and explore the impact that value preferences or PVOs may have on behavior. Business organizations, academic institutions, and other entities are interested in knowing how to influence or predict millennials' decisions and behaviors in various environments—acting as employees, consumers, or investors, for example.

7.4 | Summary

We set out to discover if millennials in the United States possessed a consistent PVO based on responses to the RVS. As reported here, *there was consistency in their responses and thus a national identity emerged—millennials generally hold similar personal value orientations*. They are, as a group, inclined toward a personal–competence value orientation. Their distribution across the four PVO types is similar to what is found when exploring value preferences exhibited by managers over the past four decades (Weber, 2017) and other millennials (Weber & Urick, 2017).

Millennials are not dramatically variant depending on where they live or study, nor are there many differences explained by gender or major area of academic study. While the workplace may influence individual values to some extent, as seen in previous research, the impact is not dramatic. Thus, overall, millennials are much like previous generations, despite some predictions of bringing a dramatically different set of values leading to variant behaviors. Therefore, it seems that business organizations, who are hiring millennials, appealing to them as potential consumers, or attempting to attract them as future investors, may find a uniform and homogenous identity and that many of the techniques used in the past may be generally successful today and in the near future.

REFERENCES

- Agan, T. (2013, November 9). Embracing the millennials' mid-set at work. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from www.nytimes.com
- Añaña, E. S., & Nique, W. M. (2010). Personal values in relation to graduate career choices. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 23(2), 158–168. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513551011022500>
- Anders, R. (2014). *CCTpack: Cultural consensus theory applications to data*. R package version 1.5.1.
- Anders, R., & Batchelder, W. H. (2013). Cultural consensus theory for the ordinal data case. *Psychometrika*, 80(1), 151–181. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11336-013-9382-9>
- Baker, R. N. M., & Hastings, S. O. (2018). Managing millennials: Looking beyond generational stereotypes. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 31(4), 920–930. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-10-2015-0193>
- Borgatti, S. P., Everett, M. G., & Freeman, L. C. (2002). *UCINET6 for Windows software for social analysis*. Retrieved from www.analytictech.com
- Cohen, B. (2008). *Explaining psychological statistics* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

- Costanza, D. P., Badger, J. M., Fraser, R. L., Severt, J. B., & Gade, P. A. (2012). Generational differences in work-related attitudes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 27*, 375–394. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-012-9259-4>
- Coyne, J., Bell, P., & Merrington, S. (2013). Exploring ethics in intelligence and the role of leadership. *International Journal of Business and Commerce, 2*(10), 27–37.
- Craft, J. L. (2013). A review of the empirical ethical decision-making literature: 2004–2011. *Journal of Business Ethics, 117*, 221–259. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1518-9>
- Deal, J. J., Altman, D. G., & Rogelberg, S. G. (2010). Millennials at work: What we know and what we need to do (if anything). *Journal of Business Psychology, 25*, 191–199. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9177-2>
- Deal, J. J., & Levenson, A. (2016). *What Millennials want from work*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Debevec, K., Schewe, C. D., Madden, T. J., & Diamond, W. D. (2013). Are today's Millennials splintering into a new generational cohort? Maybe!. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 12*, 20–31. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1400>
- Dheer, R., Lenartowicz, T., Peterson, M. F., & Petrescu, M. (2014). Cultural regions of Canada and United States: Implications for international management research. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management, 14*, 343–384. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470595814543706>
- Diskiene, D., Gostautas, V. (2012). The fit of individual and organizational values in business company. *Managerial Challenges of the Contemporary Society, 3*, 130–134.
- Feather, N. T. (1988). Values, valences, and course enrollment: Testing the role of personal values within an expectancy-valence framework. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*(3), 381–391. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.80.3.381>
- Gehman, J., Trevino, L. K., & Garud, R. (2013). Values work: A process study of the emergence and performance of organizational values practices. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(1), 84–112. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0628>
- Gong, B. (2018). Millennials and organizational citizenship behavior: The role of job crafting and career anchor on service. *Management Research Review, 41*(7), 774–788. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-05-2016-0121>
- Haidt, J. (2012). *The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
- Hershatter, A., & Epstein, J. (2010). Millennials and the world of work: An organization and management perspective. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 25*, 211–223. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9160-y>
- Hogg, M. A. (2007). Uncertainty-identity theory. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 39, pp. 69–126). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials rising*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Huang, D., & Gellman, L. (2016, April 8). Millennial employees confound big banks. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from www.wsj.com
- Johnson, M. (2015, March). Stop talking about work/life balance! TEQ and the millennial generation. *Workforce Solutions Review*. Retrieved from www.ihrim.org
- Kertzer, D. (1983). Generation as a sociological problem. *American Sociological Review, 9*, 125–149. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.09.080183.001013>
- Kluckhohn, C. (1951). Values and value orientations in the theory of action. In T. Parsons & E. A. Shils (Eds.), *Toward a general theory of action* (pp. 388–433). New York, NY: Harper.
- Kopanidis, F. Z., & Shaw, M. J. (2014). Courses and careers: Measuring how students' personal values matter. *Education & Training, 56*, 397–413. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-05-2013-0065>
- Lipińska-Grobelny, A. (2014). Psychological determinants of portfolio workers' satisfaction with life. *Health Psychology Report, 2*, 280–290.
- Lyons, S. T., Duxbury, L., & Higgins, C. (2007). An empirical assessment of generational differences in basic human values. *Psychological Reports, 101*, 339–352. <https://doi.org/10.2466/PRO.101.6.339-352>
- Macky, K., Gardner, D., & Forsyth, S. (2008). Generational differences at work: Introduction and Overview. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 23*, 857–861. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940810904358>
- Mannheim, K. (1970). The problem of generations. *Psychoanalytic Review, 57*, 378–404.
- May, D. R., Chang, Y. K., & Shao, R. (2015). Does ethical membership matter? Moral identification and its organizational implications. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*(3), 681–694. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038344>
- McCarthy, I. N. (1997). Professional ethics code conflict situations: Ethical and value orientation of collegiate accounting students. *Journal of Business Ethics, 16*, 1467–1473.
- Miethe, T. D. (1985). The validity and reliability of value measurements. *Journal of Psychology, 119*, 441–453. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1985.10542914>

- Mitsis, A., & Foley, P. (2009). Culturally-anchored values and university education experience perception. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 23, 484–504. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540910981023>
- Murphy, E. F., Jr., Mujtaba, B. G., Manyak, T., Sungkhawanc, J., & Greenwood, R. (2010). Generational value differences of baby boomers in Thailand. *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 16, 545–566. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602380903503762>
- Parry, E., & Urwin, P. (2011). Generational differences in work values: A review of theory and evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13, 79–96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00285.x>
- Petrof, J. V., Sayegh, E. E., & Vlahopoulos, P. I. (1982). The influence of the school of business on the values of its students. *Academy of Marketing Science*, 10, 500–513. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02729350>
- Reavis, M. R., Tucci, J. E., & St. Pierre, G. (2017). Corporate social responsibility and millennials' stakeholder approach. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 14(4), 74–83.
- Roccas, S., Schwartz, S. H., & Amit, A. (2010). Personal value priorities and national identification. *Political Psychology*, 31, 393–419. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00763.x>
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Rokeach, M., & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (1989). Stability and change in American value priorities, 1968–1981. *American Psychologist*, 44(5), 775–784. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.5.775>
- Romney, A. K., Weller, S. C., & Batchelder, W. H. (1986). Culture as consensus: A theory of culture and informant accuracy. *American Anthropologist*, 88(2), 313–338. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1986.88.2.02a00020>
- Rutherford, M. A., Parks, L., Cavazos, D. E., & White, C. D. (2012). Business ethics as a required course: Investigating the factors impacting the decision to require ethics in the undergraduate business core curriculum. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11, 174–186. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2011.0039>
- Sahdra, B., & Ross, M. (2007). Group identification and historical memory. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 384–395. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206296103>
- Sayers, R. (2012). The cost of being female: Critical comment on Block. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106, 519–524. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-1017-4>
- Schminke, M. (1997). Gender differences in ethical frameworks and evaluation of others' choices in ethical dilemmas. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16, 55–65.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1996). Value priorities and behavior: Applying a theory of integrated value systems. In C. Seligman, J. M. Olson, & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *The Ontario symposium: The psychology of values* (pp. 1–24). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2009). *Draft User's Manual: Proper Use of the Schwarz Value Survey*, version 14 January 2009, compiled by R. F. Littrell. Auckland, New Zealand: Centre for Cross Cultural Comparisons. Retrieved from <http://www.crossculturalcentre.homestead.com>
- Schwartz, S. H., & Bardi, A. (2001). Value hierarchies across cultures taking a similarities perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(3), 268–290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022101032003002>
- Schwartz, S. H., & Bilsky, W. (1987). Toward a universal psychological structure of human values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 53(3), 550–562. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.53.3.550>
- Selznick, P. (1957). *Leadership in administration: A sociological interpretation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Smola, K. W., & Sutton, C. D. (2002). Generational differences: Revisiting generational work values for the new millennium. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23, 363–382. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.147>
- Street, M., & Street, V. L. (2006). The effects of escalating commitment on ethical decision-making. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 64(4), 343–356. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-005-5836-z>
- Triandis, H. C., Leung, K., Villareal, M. J., & Clack, F. I. (1985). Allocentric versus idiocentric tendencies: Convergent and discriminant validation. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 19(4), 395–415. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566\(85\)90008-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(85)90008-X)
- Twenge, J. M., Campbell, W. K., & Freeman, E. C. (2012). Generational differences in young adults' life goals, concern for others and civic orientation, 1966–2009. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102, 1045–1062. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027408>
- Urick, M. J., Hollensbe, E. C., Masterson, S. S., & Lyons, S. T. (2017). Understanding and managing intergenerational conflict: An examination of influences and strategies. *Work, Aging and Retirement*, 3(2), 166–185.

- Vauclair, C.-M., Hanke, K., Fischer, R., & Fontaine, J. (2011). The structure of human values at the culture level: A meta-analytical replication of Schwartz's Value Orientations using the Rokeach Value Survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42, 186–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110396864>
- Warnell, J. M. (2015). *Engaging millennials for ethical leadership: What works for young professionals and their managers*. New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
- Weber, J. (1990). Managerial value orientations: A typology and assessment. *International Journal of Value-Based Management*, 3(2), 37–54. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01732412>
- Weber, J. (2017). Discovering the millennials' personal values orientation: A comparison to two managerial populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 143, 517–529. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2803-1>
- Weber, J., & Urlick, M. J. (2017). Examining the millennials' ethical profile: Assessing demographic variations in their personal value orientations. *Business & Society Review*, 122(4), 469–506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/basr.12128>
- Winograd, M., & Hais, M. (2014). *How millennials could upend Wall Street and corporate America*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.
- Woodard, C. (2012). *American nations: A history of the eleven rival regional cultures of North America*. New York, NY: Viking.

How to cite this article: Weber J, Loewenstein J, Lewellyn P, Elm DR, Hill V, Warnell JM. Toward discovering a national identity for millennials: Examining their personal value orientations for regional, institutional, and demographic similarities or variations. *Bus Soc Rev*. 2019;124:301–323. <https://doi.org/10.1111/basr.12177>

APPENDIX A. WEIGHTS ASSIGNED TO EACH VALUE IN THE ROKEACH VALUE SURVEY, BASED ON WEBER (1990)

Terminal values (end states of existence)

Personal value orientation:

- A Comfortable Life (a prosperous life) = 5 = personal
- An Exciting Life (a stimulating, active life) = 4 = personal
- A Sense of Accomplishment (lasting contribution) = 4 = personal
- Family Security (taking care of loved ones) = 1 = personal
- Freedom (independence, free choice) = 1 = personal
- Happiness (contentedness) = 4 = personal
- Inner Harmony (freedom from inner conflicts) = 5 = personal
- Mature Love (sexual and spiritual intimacy) = 4 = personal
- Pleasure (an enjoyable, leisurely life) = 5 = personal
- Salvation (saved, eternal life) = 3 = personal
- Self-respect (self-esteem) = 5 = personal
- Social Recognition (respect, admiration) = 3 = personal
- True Friendship (close companionship) = 5 = personal
- Wisdom (a mature understanding of life) = 4 = personal

Social value orientation:

- A World at Peace (free of war and conflict) = 5 = social
- A World of Beauty (beauty of nature and the arts) = 3 = social

- Equality (equal opportunity for all) = 5 = social
- National Security (protection from attack) = 5 = social

Instrumental values (modes of conduct)

Competence value orientation:

- Ambitious (hard-working, aspiring) = 5 = competence
- Broadminded (open-minded) = 2 = competence
- Capable (competent, effective) = 5 = competence
- Imaginative (daring, creative) = 5 = competence
- Independence (self-reliant, self-sufficient) = 5 = competence
- Intellectual (intelligent, reflective) = 5 = competence
- Logical (consistent, rational) = 5 = competence
- Responsible (dependable, reliable) = 4 = competence

Moral value orientation:

- Cheerful (light-hearted, joyful) = 4 = moral
- Clean (neat, tidy) = 3 = moral
- Courageous (standing up for your beliefs) = 2 = moral
- Forgiving (willing to pardon others) = 5 = moral
- Helpful (working for the welfare of others) = 5 = moral
- Honest (sincere, truthful) = 2 = moral
- Loving (affectionate, tender) = 5 = moral
- Obedient (dutiful, respectful) = 1 = moral
- Polite (courteous, well-mannered) = 3 = moral

Neither value orientation: Self-controlled (restrained, self-disciplined).