**Generation Z Comparative Study Overview**

### Background Information

Generation Z, the post-Millennial generation, was born from 1995 through 2010. In 2021, they are as young as 11 and as old as 26. As the Big Zs, who are the older, first half of the generation (born 1995-2001), move further into adulthood, the Little Zs at the start of the second half of the generation (born 2002-2003) are navigating their new young adult lives during an unprecedented time in history. While much has been studied about the older half of Generation Z, this younger cohort may look different.

### Purpose

This study aims to uncover characteristics, outlooks, and behavioral preferences of Little Zs (college-aged students born 2002 and 2003).

The focus of this study is to ascertain Little Z’s:

* Characteristics, worldviews, styles, and motivations
* Preferences for learning, engaging, communicating, and forming relationships
* Views on pertinent social issues and outlook on life

This is a mixed-methods research study aimed to answer the following research question:

* What is the peer personality (characteristics, outlooks, and behavioral preferences) of Little Z?

**Significance**

Do today’s college-aged Gen Zers (Little Zs) have the same characteristics, outlooks, and behavioral preferences as their older Gen Z counterparts when they entered college seven years ago? Or, have recent events made an impact on how this generation sees and navigates the world? Findings from this study can be used to help schools, higher education institutions, parents, and others in better understanding how to support and leverage Generation Z’s academic success, health and wellbeing, career preparation, and social engagement, especially given that what Little Zs may need could differ from what Big Zs did when they were the same age.

### Global Focus

Early studies about Generation Z (focused on the Big Zs) were often conducted independently by researchers in various countries regarding their specific populations. While this is useful from a national perspective, being able to truly compare data across geographic boundaries has been limited as the studies being used for comparison were often entirely discrete from each other with different methodologies, survey questions, and even timing.

This study aims to bring together researchers from around the world to garner participation in a joint research initiative, where the study is coordinated, both in using comparative survey questions (adjusted for linguistic and cultural appropriateness) as well as employing the same methodology and analysis procedures for validity. Doing so will allow for more direct comparisons between countries as researchers in all participating nations grapple with the transition of the Little Zs into adulthood.

**Study Population**

While the main focus is to collect and analyze data from Little Zs, we will also be collecting data from Big Zs (those born 1995-2001) and possibly older generations who may be part of the undergraduate student population that receives the survey link. Substantial data from Big Zs and/or other generations could provide a comparative sample.

**How the Study Will Work**

The first phase of the study will include soliciting individuals or teams from a variety of countries who will serve as Country Liaisons. Each Country Liaison will be responsible for

soliciting institutional partners across a variety of higher education institutions who will agree to send the survey link to their undergraduate student populations. In addition, Country Liaisons will need to review the survey questions and make any changes based on cultural nuances; countries that would like to administer the survey in a language other than English will translate the survey and accompanying materials for participants.

The second phase of the study will include the Country Liaisons sending out the recruitment email and survey link to all their institutional partners so they can forward that information to their students.

**Timeline**

We are soliciting institutional partners during May, June, and July 2021. The survey will be open from the end of September through early November.

**IRB/Human Subjects/Ethics Approval**

This study has been approved as Exempt from the Wright State University (Dayton, Ohio, USA) Institutional Review Board. Approval and submission paperwork will be available to Country Liaisons and institutional partners at any time.

**Accessing the Data**

Each Country Liaison will have access to the data specific to all of the participating institutions in their country (as long as participation from an institution was greater than 20 individuals). Each institutional partner will receive all data specific to the participants from their institution (as long as participation was greater than 20 individuals).

Using the Data

Country Liaisons and institutional partners are free to publish, present, consult, report on, and engage in any applied initiatives based on the data they are provided. Opportunities to co-publish between countries in mainstream media or academic journals is also an option as parties are interested in doing so. The PIs, Dr. Corey Seemiller and Dr. Meghan Grace, will have access to all the collected data and will also be publishing, presenting, consulting, reporting on, and engaging in applied initiatives. Country Liaisons and institutional partners may not sell the data set, in part or in whole, however they may engage in revenue generating opportunities like book publishing and consulting with the data they analyze.

**Resources**

For information on previous studies and publications, go to [www.thegenzhub.com](http://www.thegenzhub.com)