

Research Project Proposal

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Introduction

This research project will use data from the General Social Survey (GSS). The GSS is conducted face-to-face with an in-person interview by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. The universe is adults (18+) in randomly selected households.

One of the questions they ask respondents is “Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?” From 1973 to 2012, 34,977 people have answered this question. The following table summarizes their responses:

Table 1: General Social Survey Responses to How People Get Ahead

Response	Count	Percent of Total
Hard Work	23022	66
Both Equally	7834	22
Luck Or Help	4085	12
Other	36	0

The Research Question

A Pew Research Center study found that Baby Boomers most often cited their work ethic as a feature that made their generation unique from all other generations. Are there generational differences in the view of how people get ahead?

My Approach

The respondents will be organized into generations based on their birth year. I will examine the responses to the how people get ahead questions to see if there are differences between the generations. I will test to see if the differences are statistically significant. The following generational definitions will be used:

- Lost: 1883 to 1900
- Greatest: 1901 to 1927
- Silent: 1928 to 1945
- Baby Boomer: 1946 to 1964
- Gen X: 1965 to 1980
- Millennial: 1981 to 2015

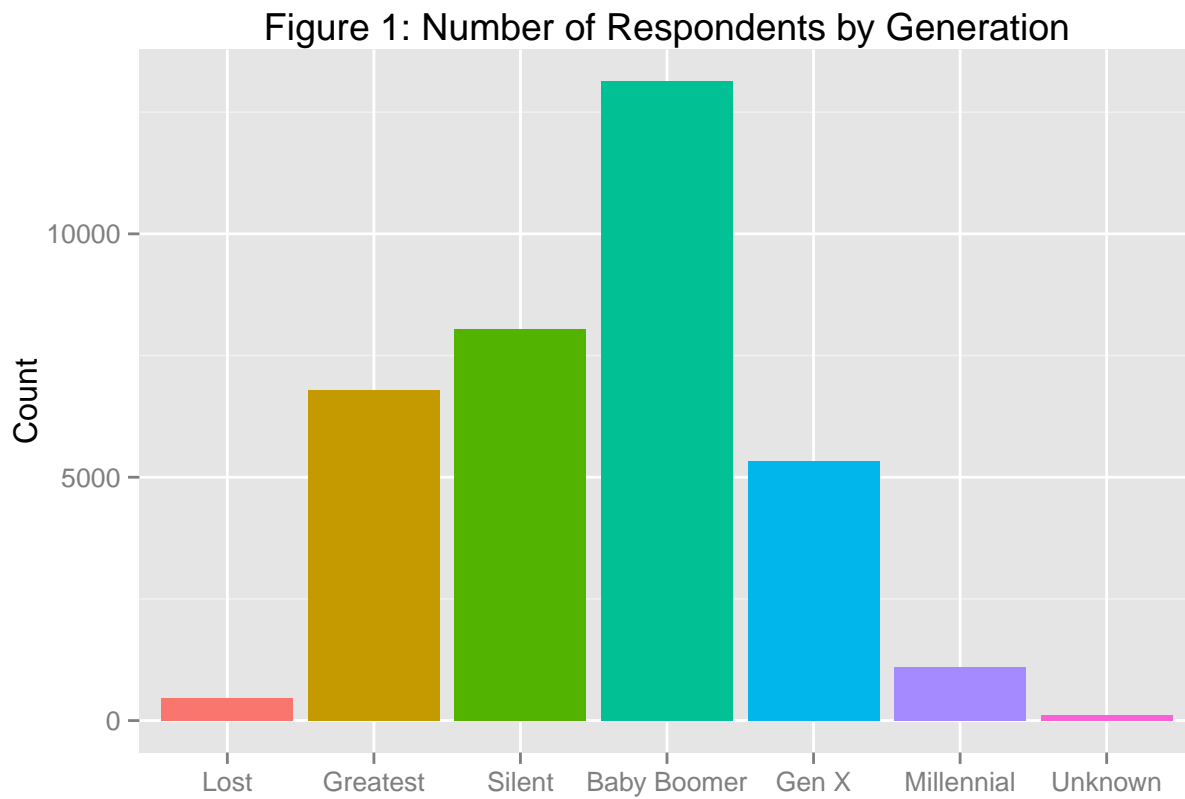


Table 2: General Social Survey Respondents by Generation

Generation	Respondents
Lost	459
Greatest	6797
Silent	8044
Baby Boomer	13133
Gen X	5331
Millennial	1100
Unknown	113