

YOUNG FUTURES

SASKATCHEWAN MILLENNIAL STUDY USING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY THEME: SUSTAINABILITY

YOUNG FUTURES- MONTH FIVE-SUSTAINABILITY

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OVERVIEW THE PROJECT

In November of 2017, Insightrix Research[®] launched the Young Futures study- an innovative and interactive study with 20 Millennials from the province of Saskatchewan. There were many purposes of this study;

- To set the bar for research with millennials, and learn about best practices for engaging this 'difficult to engage' age group.
- To learn about the perspectives, interests, habits and beliefs of millennials in Saskatchewan.
- To have primary data upon which to do cost analysis between this type of study and traditional methods, such as focus groups.
- To test the capabilities of our SaskWatch Research panel, and use it for projects that thought outside of the box.

Retention rates and engagement rates were high, data gathered were rich and insightful, participants provided thoughtful and thorough answers, and interacted amongst themselves and with the moderator. We learned about the lifestyles and perceptions of millennials in the province.

Using an Online Community to engage with millennials proved to gather rich data and facilitate discussion, save on research costs, and emerge as a best-practice for engaging busy and hard-to-reach groups.

This report is intended to serve as one part in a twelve part series. Young Futures ran every month through November 2018. The data gathered each month will be included in unique reports, with a comprehensive book released at the end of the study to review findings and learnings of the project overall.

THE WHO AND WHAT OF OUR STUDY

We chose participants for this study from our existing provincial Online Research Panel, SaskWatch Research[®]. We strived to make our sample representative in terms of age and location. Our sample was created with equal numbers of participants from the North, South, Saskatoon, and Regina, as well as equal numbers from an early millennials (18-24), and late millennials (25-34) group. Participants were also chosen based on their indication of being "very comfortable" using technology, and "very comfortable" sharing their opinions online.

Thirty people were short-listed, and we utilized the call center on location at Insightrix Research[®] to recruit from this narrowed list. We informed people on the call that they had been selected to participate in a provincial-wide study of millennials that would cover a number of interesting topics. We described that this would involve participation in three research activities a month (surveys, bulletin board discussions, and diary mode discussions). We also informed people on the call that the study had intentions of carrying on for a full year, and invited them to participate in the study in upcoming months. We were able to find 20 people to participate in our study, and all of them agreed to continue to participate in upcoming months for the duration of the study.

HOW WE DID IT

The Young Futures study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Surveys were used to gather quantitative data, and bulletin board discussions and diary mode discussions were used to gather qualitative data.

BULLETIN BOARD

Large or small online group discussions; richer insights than traditional focus groups, many-to-many dialogue where the moderator and participants interact together, qualitative data collection.

DIARY MODE

One-on-one online discussion; suitable for sensitive topics, qualitative data collection.

INCENTIVES WHAT WE OFFERED

Young Futures ran for three days each month, with a new research activity each day. Participants who completed all three activities for the month were awarded with an incentive of \$50. Those who completed all three activities each month also qualified for the monthly draw of \$100.

WE WANTED TO SET THE BAR FOR RESEARCH WITH MILLENNIALS

We wanted to learn more about pressing issues that young people face in their daily life, such as personal finances, mental health, concern for the environment, media consumption, etc. We approached the research in a fun and engaging way; we kept activities short, we chose activities that were engaging, visual and social, and we asked for input on issues that matter.

THE SECRET SAUCE KEY ELEMENTS

Our participants are awesome, obviously. But, there are three other main factors that made this project a success: cost effectiveness, speed, and accessibility.



COST EFFECTIVENESS Online communities provide fast, cost effective access to research participants, including millennials, everywhere.



SPEED

From research activity conception, programming and gathering data, and exporting the information we collected- all stages of the study were quick and easy to understand.



ACCESSIBILITY

Our participants could engage comfortably- wherever and whenever. Familiarity of technology with this group eliminated communication barriers. The geographic challenges found in traditional focus groups were also eliminated since participant location is irrelevant to an Online Community. Time is saved by allowing one skilled moderator to administer many groups at once.

SNAPSHOT **FINDINGS SUMMARY**



20 out of 20 people participated in all three

Recycling was common among our sample

Environmental protection was not viewed as taking precedence over standard of living

More than half of our group shops at the

The use of nuclear energy was supported by

Large majority of our participants believed

IS IT HOT IN HERE? CLIMATE CHANGE



Large majority believe climate change is real.

Over three quarter of our sample expressed that they believe climate change is real, and is cause for concern.

Climate change is worrisome to most.

Of those who expressed they perceived climate change to be a real threat, nearly all indicated that they were "very worried" or "somewhat worried" about it. Only one person indicated that they were "not really" worried.

Believers take action.

We asked those who perceived climate change as a real problem whether they play their part in reducing the problem. Three quarters of the group indicated that they make efforts to reduce climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE

WHAT EFFORTS DO YOU MAKE TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE?

"I recycle as much as possible. Try not to idle my car too long. And not support some businesses who make no effort to reduce emissions."

"Everything I own I use until it is used out and unfixable. I recycle the best I can and reuse everything. I drive small cars, I use wood heat."

"Purchasing green technologies, use of a smart thermostat to maintain a lower temperature to use less energy, drive a fuel efficient vehicle and walk when I am able."

"I take public transit, use energy efficient appliances, recycle, try to buy sustainably sourced materials."

"I carpool and walk a lot and try to support ethical companies. I eat locally as much as possible."

"Recycling, composting, walking to work."



YOUNG FUTURES

CLIMATE CHANGE

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE?

"Households should cut down on waste, cities should become more sustainable, and governments should decrease their carbon footprint."

"We need to move towards renewable energy by any and all means necessary."

"Laws to implement changes that will help minimize climate change."

"Increased research and use of sustainable technologies, public education campaigns regarding ways to assist, funneling dollars into emerging technologies to help combat it, researching methods to mitigate or halt the damage that is currently being done."

"We need to focus on what we need to live and not what we want. We don't need bigger cars or more tech phones. We need clean air, water, food and a dwelling. Get rid of the extra."

"Find ways to make adjustments that produce less waste and fewer emissions, focus on technologies that are better for the environment, implement clean techniques."

ACCOUNTABILITY BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

Environmental degradation is a real threat, few will argue with that. But, its cause and the view of who is responsible for dealing with it varies across the board. We wanted to know what our group thought about the reasons it is happening, and who should step up on the issue.

WHAT IS DRIVING ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND WHO, IF ANYONE, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADDRESSING THIS (I.E. INDIVIDUALS OR GOVERNMENTS)? OR, IS THIS A NATURAL CYCLE THAT SIMPLY CANNOT BE AVOIDED?

BIG PLAYERS

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"The abuse/overuse of our natural resources, deforestation for meat and other cash crops, fossil fuel usage, overfishing, dumping of chemical waste, the abundance of trash that piles up due to our modern lifestyle... mostly this is due to corporate cost cutting and the reluctance of governments both in developed and developing countries to push for actual change in what big companies are doing. I think we as individuals should make a conscious choice to support more ethical companies and to make sure that we're not wasting more than we need to, but I think it's on the government to put pressure on manufacturers to make stuff with as little an environmental footprint as possible and to promote renewable energy."

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

IN A NUTSHELL

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"(...) In general everyone is responsible but industry is obviously going to be the largest contributor and government has responsibility as they control regulation. Individuals are also responsible but without a societal shift no one individual can make a significant dent."

CHOICES

"I believe it is caused by both parties, the government and the individuals, as they both contribute to the environment's well being. Individuals should be aware of the consequences of abusing the environment, and they should abide by the rules for maintaining a healthy environment. It is also the responsibility of the government to ensure that the people are aware of the consequences of abusing the environment and they should develop programs that help in reducing the environmental degradation."

CANADA'S ECONOMY SHOULDN'T SUFFER

"In my opinion it is everyone's responsibility as citizens and organizations of the world. However, as others have pointed out, it is difficult to get everyone on board with the same initiatives. Since Canada is nowhere near the biggest polluter on the planet I don't believe it is up to us to jeopardize our economy for the sake of improving our emissions, however I do feel that we need to develop policies and encourage our population to make emission conscious decisions. If we give other countries the competitive advantage by making our goods and services more expensive then we will slow down our economy and shift production over to places with less pollution regulations which is counter productive. When it comes to the greater global problem, it is up to global organizations to work with the governments of biggest polluters on the planet in attempt to clean up their emissions and pollution in terms of both policy and practices. These countries also need to educate their citizens to be environmentally conscious as well."

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

#GREENCHALLENGE

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"I think the higher-influence people are not helping the environmental degradation enough as they should be. It should be "the cool thing" to do to go as green as possible. There are so many little things we could change in our everyday lives that would make a difference."

SUM OF THE PARTS

"It's going along steadily, and way faster than is natural because of things humans did. Sure it's a cycle, but it naturally takes centuries, not decades. But it's demonstrably true that we can do things to help. We stopped using CFCs and the ozone sort of went back to normal. In the end it will take government doing things to regulate and prevent the corporations from destroying the world, but it has to start with individuals doing what they can. The government is supposed to be a reflection of the will of the people, and a public that is working toward a greater goal will lead to a government with an easier time making necessary regulations."

YOU SHOULD, WE WILL

"Literally everything we do as humans is contributing to the demise of our environmental ecosystem. Humans are horrible for the environment. It should be something that is legislated by the government but they will never take it seriously enough to handle. So it is completely up to us to take care of our earth."

HELP WANTED

"Is definitely both - my family and I do everything we can to recycle, reduce our emissions as we can within reason - however the government should be doing their part to make it easier. We should have curbside compost pickup. We should have weekly recycling pickup and biweekly garbage pickup, year round. We should have more efficient bus schedules that would make it convenient for people to take public transit, and more accessible bike paths. It is definitely an individual's responsibility to do what they can, but the government could and should be doing more to make it easy."

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Most of our respondents agreed that the state of the environment was in danger. But, when asked about the tradeoff between standard of living and the condition of the environment, more than half said the two had equal importance. Only about one quarter stated that protecting the environment should take precedence. We were also curious to know what our group thought was the most important issue facing the environment. Over half mentioned global warming/climate change, while many more were concerned about pollution and waste:

"(...)Climate change to the pollution of our air and water to what could arguably be called an extinction event."

"The amount of trash we throw away. We don't try to fix anything anymore. Just throw it away and buy new."

"Global warming and curbing its effects on our various environments."

"Soil contamination and garbage waste disposal."

"Air and ocean pollution."

"Recycling and waste."

"CO₂."

...and there was one on the fence as well...

"If I had to choose anything I guess it would be global warming. With that being said I think a lot of this environmental nonsense is overblown and inaccurate thanks to hipsters and tree huggers."

BLUE, GREEN & BLACK BINS RECYCLING & COMPOST & WASTE



Recycling was very common among our sample, and most of our group considered themselves to be conscious of the amount of waste they produce. They also reported that purchasing bottled water was not common (18/20 said that they purchased bottled water "rarely" or "never"). However, composting did not have the same buy-in among them.

DO YOU COMPOST?



FUEL EATING HABITS & TRANSPORTATION



The moves that we make, and the things we consume undoubtedly have an effect on the environment around us. Although our sample was very conscious of the environment and had a high rate of recycling, patterns of consumption seemingly contradicted these ideals. More than three quarters of our sample have traditional eating habits, while only 2/20 identified as vegetarian. There were no vegans in the group. We were also curious about whether the source of food had any weight with our group:

Do you...?

5/20 GROW YOUR OWN FOOD 13/20 SHOP AT THE FARMERS MARKET 10/20 GIVE PREFERENCE TO LOCAL FOOD

Although it is arguably unfair to place judgement on the modes of transportation people use in Saskatchewan (let's face it, public transportation is basically nonexistent, and in our towns and cities urban sprawl is a very real thing), we were still curious about the mode of transportation our group uses most often. 18/20 stated driving was the most common method, 2/20 stated public transportation. One person nailed the issue right on the head when asked about their most common mode of transportation:

"Car, but it's a side effect of living in Saskatchewan."

MINOR MELTDOWNS

Most of our sample showed support for the use of nuclear power. However, most also expressed concern about associated waste disposal.

"The problems are so rare and considerably fewer than even in the past. The amount of power you can get with such little input is significant, and it's a fast way to get to an option that's pretty clean. The trick is what to do with the waste (...)."

Majority of our respondents either "fully support" or "mostly support" the use of nuclear energy, with none indicating that they "fully oppose" the use of nuclear energy. "It's safe and more environmentally friendly than coal or gas. However, waste storage is an issue I'm uncomfortable with."

"It has very little emissions and aside from natural disaster is environmentally friendly. Care must be used when planning placement of plants."

"Anything nuclear is not good in human hands."

"With sufficient advances, nuclear energy can be safer and less hard on the environment."

"It doesn't produce as much CO_2 but I don't think it should be near the oceans."

NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP... BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

We all have good intentions (...right?). But we also have things in our life that would be hard to give up in the name of environmental preservation. We asked our sample what that would be. Most common responses included vehicles/transportation, air conditioning, and technology/gadgets.

We asked: WHAT WOULD BE THE ONE THING THAT YOU WOULD NOT BE WILLING TO GIVE UP IN THE NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION?



ROADIES

"I couldn't give up road trips. I travel a lot with my family and it is very important to us. We have driven from coast to coast and all around this country."



WORLD WIDE WEB

"The internet. Luckily it's easy enough to power it in a renewable way, but not having internet ruins my schooling, my work, my leisure time, relationships with family and friends, the ability to find my way around and do things easily, Like it's a prerequisite for so much of the other stuff I would bother to do. Can't go on a successful road trip without knowing where to go or how to get there, or book your place to stay, or arrange things to do."

BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION

AIR CON

"I run an Energy Star certified air conditioner during the summer with a temperature sensor and sleep mode to be as green as possible without having to actually give up AC which I'll never do."



GADGETS

"I guess for me it would electronic manufacturing I couldn't live without it. Things like computers and silicon-based hardware."



ELECTRICITY

"Electricity. (...) In the winter months the sun sets at 4pm and rises at 10 am, I'm sorry but I cannot live in darkness. For me, the convenience of turning on a light with a switch changed my life quit a bit. I'm not saying I would die without it, but it's a luxury I definitely would find it hard to give up.



OIL

"I feel that at this time, crude oil is such a big part of our lives. The market really dictates our economy and has an impact on all other sectors. We also have family in the industry that relies on it to support their families. I'm not ready to give up an entire industry without the proper plans in place to help these workers transition into other fields. I also use a vehicle to get around and support my business. I couldn't do what I do without a vehicle and need that to support myself."

PARTICIPATION & RETENTION PROJECT LOYALTY

Our high retention rate is another measure of success of our project. This month, we had another high engagement rate, with 20/20 participating in all three activities! We couldn't have done it without the dedication of this group of millennials!

THANKS EVERYONE!

WANT TO LEARN MORE? CONTACT INFORMATION

TALK TO US



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