

The Colbert Bump® and The Facebook® Follow-Through for Generation Snark: A Test and Extension of The Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior for 2012

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Abstract

A previous study (Peterson, 1993) of the theory of planned behavior (TPB, Ajzen, 1985, Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005) was re-visited through examining student questionnaires in a Mountain States liberal arts college. The objective was to develop understanding into how the current generation of undergraduates develops voting intentions and behaviors for the 2012 general election. The results of the study generally confirmed the support for TPB found in the 1992 version, however, for this study additional moderating variables exploring the influence of satirical, social, and cable news media on voting opinions, intention, and behavior. In this regard, opinions related to the influence of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart®, The Colbert Report®, social media like Facebook® and Twitter®, and the influence of cable news networks like FOX®, MSNBC®, and Current TV® were explored. While cable television networks showed no influence on this generation's knowledge, attitude, or behavioral intent, the role of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart® and The Colbert Report® showed significant predictive value.

Keywords: Planned Behavior, Voting, Satire, Social Media, Management

JEL Codes: M01, Z18

1. Introduction

The theory of planned behavior (TPB, Ajzen, 1985, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c) provides a useful conceptual framework for dealing with the complexities of human social behavior in terms of predicting behavior where attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control impact an intention to perform, following through with the performance of the behavior under control. In a very quick review, between 1985 and 2011, there have been no fewer than 19,610 citations for TPB and its predecessor Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Azjen and Fishbein (1975) on ProQuest® as of March, 2012.

Over time, the TPB and TRA have provided significant value to the social psychological constructs connecting behavioral intention and its antecedents with actual behavior. While the theory provides significant evidence for relationships between beliefs and attitudes toward intentions and behavior, the model's predictive power leaves additional applications, like voting behavior left unexplored. In the meta-analysis of TPB (Armitage and Connor, 2001), it also seems appropriate to generalize that more longitudinal and cross generational explorations could be done. This paper recreates and reports on a study started in 1992 (Peterson, 1993) that provided support for the TPB as it predicted voting intentions, and it follows through in the demographic space of a different voting generation, albeit in the same age and educational range. This study re-tested all the constructs of the original study and explores potential attenuation variables relating to the more open and electronic world in which generation 2012 lives. In essence, this model fills a need to cross generationally test the constructs of TPB within an 18-24 demographic 20 years' apart while also testing for the impact of satirical, social and cable news media on voting opinion, intention, and behavior. No study in the literature thus far has performed this task and thus there is a need for this particular work.

Through the 1980s and into the 21st Century, voter turnout for general and off-year elections has declined substantially (Powell and Bingham, 1986; Wolf, 2010; US Department of the Census, 2011). While approximately 71% of the eligible adult population is registered to vote in the United States, only about half of those registered to vote actually do (US Bureau of the Census, 2010). Further, in households with incomes under \$20,000, 61% of qualified voters register (US Bureau of the Census, 2010). According to the United States Census Bureau, non-Hispanic whites voted at a rate of 63% of registered voters. African Americans voted at about the same rate (62%). Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans voted at about 45% of the registered total, while other demographic groups like Native Americans had much lower percentages of voter participation. In terms of age demographic, the highest turnout was among people 55 – 74 with a 72% turnout. The lowest voting age demographic, people 18 – 24 came out at the rate of 48%, up from 46% in the previous election cycle. Overall, about 59% of registered voters are now registered through the “motor voter” rules in most states and in terms of overall turnout, the number who actually vote drops below 50% for general elections, and well below 35% in off-year congressional elections (Hortalla-Vallve, 2006). This presents another reason for this study: by learning more about voting behavior in this particular group, recommendations can be made to policy makers to improve the overall statistic of turnout for the first time or young voter. This and other literature has a few thoughts on the reasons for voter turnout that range from economics, education, strong preferences on issue differences, socioeconomic resources, levels

of political awareness, and self confidence (Powell and Bingham, 1986; Hortella-Vallve and Esteve-Volart, 2010).

Given the view that the 18 – 24 demographic least likely to vote among the varying ages demographics, it may be appropriate to use sharper instrumentation in terms of attitude models to gain better understanding of a few dynamics underlying the voting decisions in this space. The Ajzen (1985) model has shown good predictive ability in a wide variety of applications, but few applications to voting intention and voting behavior. With the very large numbers of applications of the Ajzen (1985) model however, it seems as though it is sufficiently attenuable to understand and include differing psychographic profiles. The generation under the microscope in Peterson (1993) was the collegiate voting population aged 18 – 24; this study contains the 18 – 24 demographic in the collegiate setting of 2012. First, the voting behavior of how and why young people go to the polls is not well understood (Burgess et al, 2000) and second, the antecedent conditions of voting behavior in the demographic age 18 – 24 is only documented in a small number of studies, one in particular by Peterson (1993). While the first study focused upon the TPB model and added a causality orientation, this study recreates that one, while adding the technological and media oriented differences inherent in the M-life® world of 2012. M-life®, was a trademark of the AT&T Corporation in the beginning of the 21st Century: it was meant to convey that people live in an increasingly mobile world, which of course AT&T could help satisfy those needs through its products and services...

Another unique part of this study is the psychographic and social profile differences these generations exhibit. In the 1992 audience, there was a relative economic growth period but also a lax attitude toward voting in general elections. The audience had the psychographics profile of “preppy”, and the generational monikers of “baby busters” and “13th generation”. The term “preppy” indicated a relatively strong desire to fit within societal norms in a socially favorable and fashion conscious manner. The 13th generation name was in place to indicate they are the 13th generation post WWII. Two generations later, the 15th generation, the 13th’s kids or grandkids, a more individualistic and sarcastic attitude seems to be the norm. The general term for the 2012 generation is “the snarky generation” after the word “Snark” that was coined by Lewis Carroll (nom du pen Dodgson, 1874) in the “Hunting of the Snark” where the word “snark” describes a journey to find an inconceivable creature of infinite humor classified as either a “Boojam” or a shunned “frumious Bandersnatch” from *The Jabberwocky* (Dodgson, 1879). Boojams are the ones who frequently appear and then disappear and they are ones of endless light-hearted humor. Our subject-voters are probably metaphorical Boojams because they are rather flighty but also appear and go, virtually or otherwise, at their heart’s content.

In Snarkiology, the word “snark” entered the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) as chiefly British slang meaning testy or irascible, sarcastic or snide. Other descriptions in the OED include being wittily sarcastic with a hint of being an arse. The adjective snarky is first recorded in 1906. It is from dialectal British snark, meaning 'to nag or find fault with', which is probably connotative of the word snark or snork, which means 'to snort or snore'. The likely connection is the derisive snorting sound of someone who is always finding fault.

In the last few years, the word has become increasingly common in American publications

and media, satirical, and social understanding. Other uses and forms of language that appear on the topic are snarkoleptic, snarkology, snarkosaurus (fellow professors, that's us), snarkotunity, snarkpit, snarkster, snarkstress, snarktastic, desnarktox, snarkubation, snarkubate, snarkument, or snarkology. This generation is socially questioning, it is also relatively sarcastic or facetious. With this in mind it makes no sense to measure voting intentions with the same instrument as 1992; it will have become blunted. This generation has method to exchange snark, formulate snarkiness, and otherwise reveal somewhat different attitudes in relating to and communicating with one another and the world. Something else, an artifact of snarkdom, needs to be included. This, is the inclusion of the use and value of that satirical, social, and cable media like Facebook®, Twitter®, The Daily Show with Jon Stewart®, The Colbert Report®, and the various cable "news" networks – who all contribute to Snarkology Hall of Fame.

The question for 2012 snarkological boojams is whether they test in the same way as the 1992 audience because their ages and gender profiles are similar (they do not). Another question is whether their psychographic profiles and technological usages are different enough to introduce an artifact that influences voting intentions or decision making processes.

There are other differences between the 1992 group and the present one. Communication patterns are different. In 1992, email was just emerging as a communications mechanism as was the commonality of mobile telephone service. In 1992 basic political humor was largely within newspapers like the Atlanta Journal with Mike Lukovich, commentary magazines like The New Republic with William F. Buckley, Jr or in editorially oriented magazines like Politico. While we were viewing Lukovich and reading National Geographic, generation snark was reading Mad, The Onion, MTV (weren't we all?) and National Lampoon. CNN was around, but was still envisioned as a traditional news medium. Since then other realities have developed: the rise of the professional punditry belonging to the major media networks (e.g. Rachel Maddow, the late Keith Olbermann, Bill Maher, and Fareed Zakaria), the rise of email and the ubiquity of mobile telephone texting, social media, SouthPark® and entertainment oriented "fake news" cable television shows like The Daily Show® and The Colbert Report®, along with Real Time with Bill Maher®, or radio shows like Rachel Maddow or the irascible Rush Limbaugh.

Today, students throughout the world communicate most frequently via mobile phone, text, and tweet and the number of households in the United States without traditional land lines has increased to about 15%, up from 9.6% in 2007 (Blumberg, 2010). For on-line communication, also common is Blogspot®, Facebook®, Twitter®, USHI®, Tweetdeck®, Checkin®, LivingSocial®, Pinterest®, DeNa® (owned by Disney), Spotify®, Snatchly®, Zynga®, CraigsList®, and Reddit® (among many others). News is more likely to be gathered through Yahoo®, Google®, MSN®, BBC-Online®, NPR/PBS®, or limited online versions of the New York Times®, the Economist®, FT®, CNN®, or even Al Jazeera-English®. What is interesting is that unlike the older generation, the 18 – 35 demographic reports that their majority are more likely to get the primary news from a social commentary or satire show (CNN, January 20th, 2012 Brooke Baldwin Reporter) like The Daily Show with Jon Stewart®,

The Colbert Report®, Real Time with Bill Maher®, or SouthPark®. Once again, the question is whether these media outlets have an impact on political intention, opinion, and behavior among Generation Snark.

2. The Theory of Planned Behavior

According to the TPB (Ajzen, 1985), behavioral intention is the most important predictor of behavior and is determined by: (1) an individual's attitude toward the behavior, (2) his or her subjective norm for the behavior, and (3) perceived behavioral control over the behavior. See the Figure 1 for that model. Directionality and significance is shown for the 1992 sample.

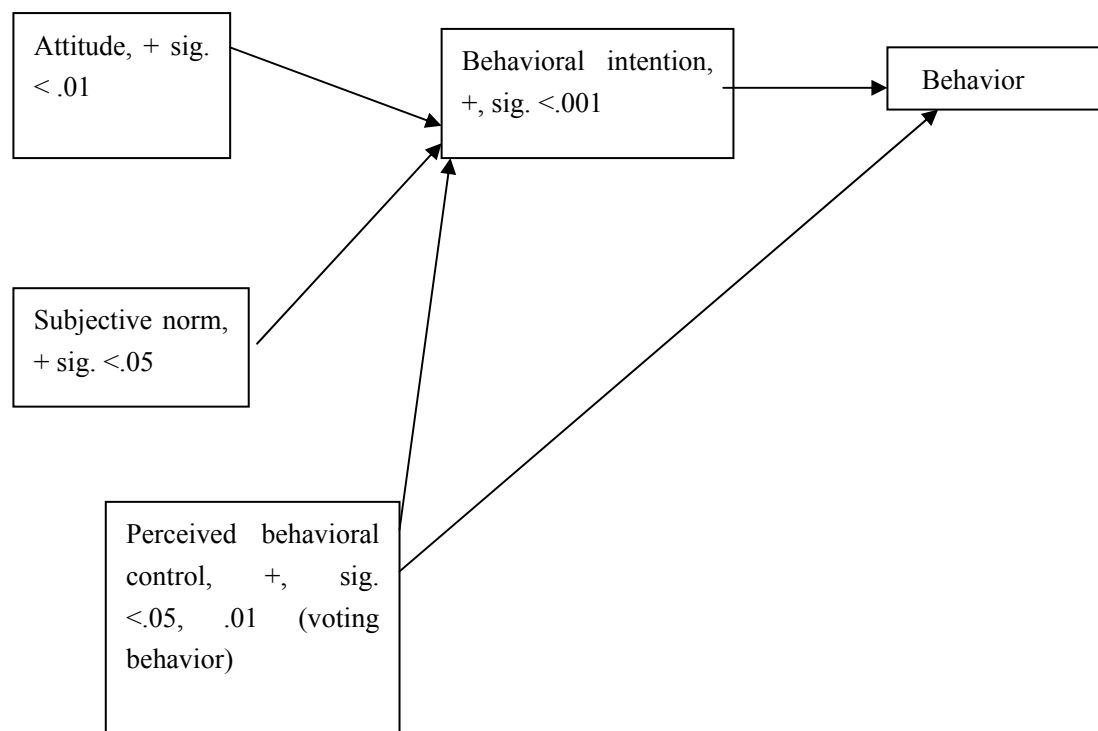


Figure 1. the original 1992 study (Peterson, 1993)

2.1 Attitudes towards Intentions

According to Fishbein and Ajzen's expectancy-value model (1975), beliefs are formed about an object by associating it with certain attributes. These attitudes develop from beliefs people hold about an object. In the case of attitudes toward a behavior, a belief links behavior to an outcome or to another associated outcome characteristic. Since attitudes linked toward the behavior are already valued positively or negatively, the individual acquires an intention to act toward the attitude in relationship to the behavior. Specifically, the outcome's subjective value contributes to the attitude in direct proportion to the strength of the belief. Attitude toward behavior is represented by the equation indicating that attitude is a simple regression, $Y = \beta_1 + \beta_2 + \beta_3 + b_4 + \epsilon$, where variables are the product of individual variables divided by n . A person's attitude toward

the behavior is directly proportional to the summed belief index.

According to Ajzen (1991), the foundations of attitudes can be explored by looking at salient beliefs about an attitude object while assessing the subjective probabilities and values associated with different beliefs. By combining observed values in accordance with the equation, we obtain an estimate of the attitude itself, an estimate that represents a person's evaluative attitude toward the object or behavior under consideration. In the case of the 1992 study (Peterson, 1993) the findings were statistically significant below the .05 levels in all cases save for perceived behavioral control and causality orientation.

2.2 Subjective Norms

Normative beliefs are concerned with the likelihood that important referent individuals or groups approve or disapprove of performing a given behavior. The strength of each normative belief interacts multiplicatively with the person's motivation to comply with the referent in question. The subjective norm is directly proportional to the sum of the resulting products across all salient referents.

A global measure of subjective norm is usually obtained by asking respondents to rate the extent to which important others would approve or disapprove of their performing a given behavior. Empirical investigations show the best relationship between global measures of subjective norm and belief based measures is usually obtained with the scoring of normative beliefs and motivation to comply (Ajzen, 1991). Once again, results from the original study were statistically significant below the .05 level.

2.3 Perceived Behavioral Control

According to the TPB, a set of beliefs deals with the presence or absence of needed resources and opportunities to accomplish a certain behavior. These beliefs may be based in part on past experience, but are also influenced by second hand information about the behavior, by learning experiences, and by factors that increase or reduce perceived difficulty of performing that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The more resources and opportunities individuals possess, the fewer obstacles or impediments they anticipate, which increases their perceived behavioral control over the behavior.

Each control belief is multiplied by the perceived power of the particular control factor to facilitate or inhibit performance of the behavior, and the resulting products are summed across all salient control beliefs to produce the perception of behavioral control. Once again, the results of the study reported statistical significance below the .05 level. Here it would seem that the primary elements of TPB were satisfied and our insight into voting intentions, some antecedents, and some outcomes were supported and Ajzen's theory was largely intact.

3. Support for TPB

Among the 16,000+ citations for TRA and TPB (Ajzen, 2001, Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) there have been thousands of uses for the model where TRA has been used to study behaviors that are considered to be under full volitional control and where TPB is not limited to the study of behaviors under volitional control, but considers antecedents involving

attitudes and perceptions (Armitage and Connor, 2001; Connor and Abraham, 2001; Connor and Armitage, 1998; Connor, Norman, and Bell, 2002; Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992; Baggozi, 1992; Ajzen, 2001; Ajzen, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c; Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005; Sutton, 1998; Cooke and Sheeran, 2004).

Studies concerning the two models have taken a number of different approaches. There has been considerable direct testing of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977, 1980; Albarracin, 2001; Armitage and Connor, 1999, 2001; Sheppard, Hartwick, and Warshaw, 1988). The theory of planned behavior has also been subjected to a number of direct tests. Parker, Manstead and Stradling (1992) applied the theory of planned behavior to the intention to commit driving violations. Their results showed general support for the theory of planned behavior, with perceived behavioral control making significant contributions to the prediction of behavioral intention and behavior itself. Beale and Manstead (1991) predicted mother's intentions to limit frequency of infant's sugar intake. Results indicated that the addition of perceived behavioral control shows significant increases in explained variance in intentions. Also, increases in perceived behavioral control caused improvements in attitudes, which was turn significantly correlated to intentions. In another study, Montano and Taplin (1991) tested attitude, affect, subjective norm, and facilitating conditions and found 39 percent of variation in intentions and 20 percent of variation in participation was explained by a model similar to the theory of planned behavior. Other studies have tested the theory of planned behavior in cancer screening (DeVellis, Blalock, and Sandler, 1990), engaging in problem drinking (Schlegel, D'Avernas and Zanna, 1992), voting behavior (Netemeyer & Burton, 1990), prediction of athletic participation (Theodorakis, 1992), choice of leisure activity (Ajzen & Driver, 1992), intentions to lose weight (Schifter & Ajzen, 1985), engaging in AIDS related sexual behaviors (Fishbein et al, 1992), using contraceptives (Doll and Orth, 1993) and engaging in a range of other behaviors (Madden et al, 1992).

A number of studies have compared the theory of planned behavior and the theory of reasoned action under varying instances of volitional control. Netemeyer, Burton, and Johnston (1991) found that, for voting behavior, the first version of the theory of planned behavior (with no direct effect of perceived behavioral control on behavior) offered a more parsimonious model for predicting behavioral intention than the theory of reasoned action. Madden, Ellen, and Ajzen (1992) and Ajzen and Fishbein, (2005) analyzed behaviors with varying levels of volitional control and found that the addition of perceived behavioral control significantly enhanced the prediction of intentions and target behavior. Connor and Sparks (2010) and Armitage and Conner (2001) indicated the interaction between intentions and perceived behavioral control (PBC) while Sheeran (2003) showed that PBC was significant in about half of reported tests and was a stronger predictor of behavior that moderated the intention and behavior relationship. Other particular studies that strengthen the TPB are Venkatesh et al (2000) where TPB predicts user acceptance of informational technology; Venkatesh (2000) where four longitudinal field studies of TPB in IT are supported; Hoffmann and Novak (1998) where acceptance of computer mediated environments is studied; and where Armitage and Conner (2010) conduct a meta-analysis of the TPB for the British Psychological Society. Further studies have been conducted regarding TPB as predictive of drug use (McMillan and

Connor, 2004), weight loss behavior, condom use (Sheeran and Taylor, 1998), exercise behavior (Hausenblas et al, 1997), smoking cessation and behavior (Godin et al, 1992; DeVries, Backbier, Kok, and Dijkstra, 1995), speed limit compliance (Elliott, Armitage and Baughan, 2003). There is however, few studies on voting and voting behavior.

4. Methods, The Hypothesized Model & Results

4.1 Sample

A total sample of 155 undergraduate students in a medium-sized, mountainous U.S. city participated in this study. All subjects agreed to participate voluntarily and signed consent forms as required by the Institutional Review Board for research involving human subjects. This research effort was considered “exempt” from full board review. Subjects were given no course credit for their participation nor were they given any compensation. 93 subjects were female. The ages of participants ranged from 18 to 24 and were drawn from across the campus academic community, although with very low participation from the business school. All subjects that participated in the study were self-reported registered voters. Because the study was voluntary, twelve potential subjects did not participate because they were ineligible to vote, and nine potential subjects did not participate of their own volition.

4.2 Procedure

Approximately 8 months before the general election in November of 2012, a 46 item questionnaire consisting of 7 and 3 point Likert type scales, and variables for gender and intention to vote. Questions were administered at the beginning of a class period. A script was read after the researcher introduced himself. The script was to reduce variance in instructions given. About half the questions in the questionnaire were reverse coded in order to avoid any left or right tendency. The questionnaire was developed specifically for this study, although the original questions from the 1992 study were intact except for the causality orientation items, which were rewritten to better match the electoral purpose of the survey and the specifications of causality orientation. Intention to vote questions were placed at the beginning of the questionnaire for half of the respondents and at the end of the questionnaire for the other half. This was done in order to test for priming and consistency artifacts. There was no significant difference in correlations between these two conditions. The entire data gathering process, including instructions and script, took about 14 minutes, with the questionnaire itself taking approximately 5 – 6 minutes to complete.

Ajzen (1991) outlined three conditions that must be met in order to reliably predict behavior from intentions and perceived behavioral control. First, the measures of intention and of perceived behavioral control must correspond to or be compatible with the behavior that is to be predicted. Since the behavior in question was voting in a presidential election, it is unlikely that the first condition was violated in this study. The second condition for accurate behavioral prediction is that the interval between the pre-assessment and post-assessment (or actual behavioral observation) must be stable. In this case a percentage of likelihood for actually voting was obtained. It seems reasonable to conclude that the data reflected stable and accurate information. The third requirement for predictive validity is that perceived behavioral control

should realistically reflect actual control.

4.3 The Election Questionnaire

The questionnaire items centered on Ajzen's (1985) model of planned behavior. Specifically, personal norms, social norms, attitudes toward the voting behavior, perceived behavioral control, impersonal orientation, past voting behavior, and voting intention were measured by the instrument. Each item was rated on a seven point scale. As an illustration, the salient referents for the voting behaviors were; friends, fellow students, co-workers, and other respected persons. Respondents rated, on a 7 point scale, the degree to which the referents would support or influence their voting behavior. These normative beliefs were multiplied by perceived motivation to comply with the referent. This yielded a rating of social norms.

Table 1 is a summary of the questions used to measure the various antecedents to voting behavior. The reliability coefficients of each factor are also included in Table 1 along with the formulas used to derive the constructs to the hypothesized model. The pre-election questionnaire also inquired about the respondent's past voting behavior.

Table 1. Factors and Their Reliabilities

FACTOR	Questions	Type	Calculation	Reliability α
Causality	Would candidate: Be responsible; bring quality of life up; be effective; would I have regrets?	Likert "L" 7.	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .476
Attitudes	Voice is heard; my vote matters; brings important change; brings significant change; is a necessity of society; is rewarding; is personally rewarding; voting counts;	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .701
Norms	Degree to which friends, co workers, significant others, and those who respect support, motivate voting	L-7 Reverse Coded.	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .864
Behavior Control	I'm fully able to vote; could get hindered by weather; voting could be inconvenient for me or others; there are conditions that may prevent.	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .786
Past Behavior	I've voted in the past.	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α 1.0
Intentions	I intend to vote this coming election. I will vote this coming election	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .788
Media Network	News media like MSNBC, CNBC, FOX, or CNN help me form an opinion; helps me form a decision; motivates me to vote.	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .767
Media Satire	Satire media like the Daily Show with Jon Stewart or the Colbert Report help me form an opinion; helps me form a decision; motivates me to vote.	L7 Reverse Coded	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .874
Media Social	Social Media like Facebook or Twitter or others help form an opinion; helps form a decision; motivates my vote	L-7	$\Sigma(a*b*c*n)/n$	Cronbach α .935

4.4 Some Hypotheses

According to Ajzen (1991), it may be possible to distinguish between different kinds of normative pressures. In fact, the original Fishbein-Ajzen model consisted of three components; attitudes, social norms, and moral norms (Fishbein, 1967; Madden, Ellen, and Ajzen, 1992). The third component was eliminated from the model by Ajzen and Fishbein (1970) because it was believed that moral norms merely served as an alternate measure of behavioral intention. Although the third component was eliminated, Ajzen and Fishbein indicated that the issue might not be completely resolved (1985). A study by Gorsuch and Ortberg (1983) provided evidence that supported the inclusion of moral norms in "moral situations" but not in "nonmoral" situations. They used criteria presented by Hart (1961) to distinguish between the two types of situations. The criteria were importance, immunity from deliberate change, and form of moral pressure. The moral situations were a decision to return an overpayment on an income tax return, and a decision to take a job that would require missing church.

A study of college students (Beck and Ajzen, 1991) considered perceived moral obligations in addition to social norms in the context of unethical behaviors. Results indicated that the addition of perceived moral obligations made a significant contribution to the prediction of behavioral intentions. In the above study, the behaviors observed were cheating on a test, shoplifting, and lying. Beck and Ajzen (1991) suggested that moral issues may take on added salience with respect to behaviors of this kind and that a measure of perceived moral obligation could add predictive power to the model.

One of the objectives of the present study is to observe the effect of perceived obligations in terms of personal norms in a context with somewhat less salient moral implications. The inferences about the generalizability of the construct across situations might be drawn through a positive statistical relationship. The decision to vote or not vote in a presidential election probably does not carry the personal norm implication as the behaviors tested by Gorsuch and Ortberg or Beck and Ajzen. As Figure 2 indicates, norms are expected to have a direct effect on behavioral intentions, yielding **H1 of “Personal obligations towards voting behavior will be positively related to intention to vote.”** This was found to have a statistically significant relationship in the 1992 and in the 2012 measurement.

4.5 Causality Orientation

Deci and Ryan (1985) describe the development and validation of a general causality orientations scale. Causality orientations are conceptualized as "relatively enduring aspects of people that characterize the source of initiation and regulation, and thus the degree of self determination of their behavior" (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 109). An impersonal orientation involves persons' experiencing behavior as being beyond their intentional control. Persons with an impersonal orientation believe they will be unable to control their behavior in a way that will lead reliably to outcomes. Such a trait would be expected to influence perceived behavioral control as it pertains to a specific situation.

Deci & Ryan (1985) propose that causality orientations are related to a wide range of variables, including the level and awareness of individual needs and emotions, the level and orientation of self related cognition and affects, and the types of behaviors in which persons engage. A person with an impersonal orientation is likely to have negative feelings about the current situation, and is likely to be anxious about entering a new situation. The hypothesized model proposes that a person's causality orientation will **(H2) positively affect that person's attitude toward voting intention.** This is not supported by the measurement in either year. The interpretation seems to be that people don't think about the causality orientation variables until after they vote, not before they vote.

4.6 Past Behavior

Ajzen (1991) maintains that past behavior can not usually be considered a causal factor in its own right, but that it may well reflect the impact of factors that influence later behavior. He further contends that a significant residual effect of past on later behavior will indicate that an important factor is missing in the theory being tested.

Some theorists (Bentler and Speckart, 1979; Fredricks & Dossett, 1983) have suggested adding

past behavior as a substantive predictor of later behavior. The proposed model does not presume that past behavior will directly affect subsequent intentions or behavior. Rather, it proposes that past behavior will make a unique contribution to the formation of an individual's attitude toward voting, and toward perceived behavioral control regarding voting.

Individuals who have voted in the past may seek to justify prior actions. One way they will accomplish this justification is through the formulation of a positive attitude toward voting behavior. Conversely, individuals who have not voted in past elections may seek to justify non-voting actions by formulating negative attitudes toward voting behavior. The tendency to justify prior actions by changing subsequent attitudes is supported by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957; Bem, 1970; Petty, Ostrum and Brock, 1981).

According to Ajzen (1991), perceived behavioral control is most compatible with Bandura's (1977, 1982) concept of self-efficacy. Several investigations (Bandura, Adams, & Beyer, 1977; Bandura, Adams, Hardy, & Howells, 1980) have shown that behavior is influenced by confidence in ability to perform the behavior (ie. perceived behavioral control). Since past performance is a critical determinant of self-efficacy in Bandura's (1991) model, we should expect past behavior to, likewise, be a critical determinant of perceived behavioral control, thus yielding **H3 - Past voting behavior will be positively related to attitude toward voting and perceived behavioral control with respect to voting**, which is very strongly supported in the 1992 and 2012 measurement. It would appear that the best predictor of voting intent is past voting behavior.

4.7 Media Source or Origination

While very little is written on this topic, a chief difference between 1992 and 2012 is in the forces that address technological and social changes in the audience of 2012. In this case:

H4: Access to cable news networks, CNN, MSNBC, FOX, or Current TV will have a moderating impact through influencing opinion, attitude and behavior. Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Sig.<.05, News and its significance to Generation Snark, attitude formation.		
Opinion – not significant.	Cable News Moderators	DV = Intentions
Intention – not significant.	Opinion	F= 2.5; Sig.> .05
	Decision	F=1.85; Sig>.05
Behavior – not significant	Intended Behavior	F=.004; Sig >.05

Figure 3.

H5: Access to social media will have a moderating impact on causality orientation, norms, attitudes, and intentions.

Figure 4 - Sig.<.05, Social Media and its significance to Generation Snark, attitude formation.		
Opinion formation – not significant.(F = 3.7)	Social Media	DV = Intentions
Intention – Significant, F = 13.3*	Opinion	F= 3.7; Sig.> .05
Behavior – Significant, F = 4.8*	Decision	F= 13.3*; Sig.<.01
	Intended Behavior	F=4.8*; Sig. <.05

Figure 4.

H6: Access to satirical cable television will have a moderating impact on causality orientation, norms, attitudes, and intentions.

Figure 5 - Sig.<.05, Satirical Media and its significance to Generation Snark, attitude formation.		
Opinion, Significant (F=10.1)	Satire	DV = Intentions
Intention, Significant (F=7.6)	Opinion	F= 10.1*; Sig.< .01
Behavior, Significant (F=6.2)	Decision	F= 7.6*; Sig.<.01
	Intended Behavior	F=6.2*; Sig. <.05

Figure 5.

While the original model was generally supported in 2012, this study goes on to discuss some moderating variables. Beyond the original addition of causality orientation and past behavior, this paper suggests that there may be media influences affecting Generation Snark today.

The hypothesized model in this study appears in Figure 6 with results from the 2012 questionnaire inserted to the upper right.

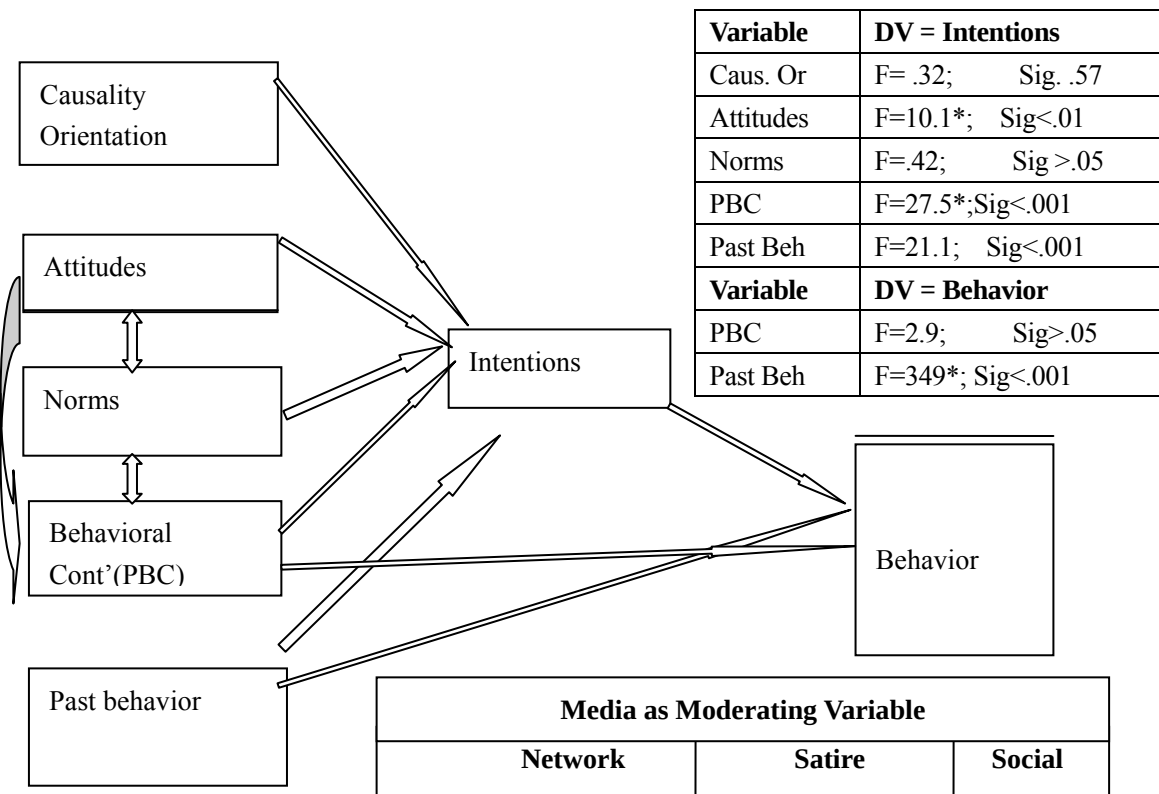


Figure 6.

The correlations of the main constructs are reported in Table 3. It is very interesting to note that the role of political satire and social media become more pronounced. First order correlations were calculated between the variables in the model. These correlations are shown in Table 3. Both intentions and behavior are strongly correlated with past behavior, indicating that individuals who have voted in past elections are likely to have intentions to vote, and then to vote in a current election. The strong association between perceived behavioral control and intentions indicates that the more control respondents felt they had over the situation, the more likely they were to have intentions to vote. A similarly strong association exists between perceived behavioral control and voting behavior. As expected, there was a strong correlation between voting intention and voting behavior.

Table 3. Correlations

Correlations										
		INTENTIO N	ATTITUD E	SOCIAL	PBC	PBEHAV E	CAUSALI TY	SATIRE	NEWSs	SOCIAL
INTENTIO N	Pearson Correlation	1	.261**	-.193*	-.015	-.411**	-.054	-.206*	-.209*	-.173
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004	.034	.867	.000	.554	.023	.022	.058
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
ATTITUD E	Pearson Correlation	.261**	1	-.065	.245**	-.025	.053	-.131	-.231*	-.156
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004		.480	.007	.785	.561	.153	.011	.088
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
SOCIAL	Pearson Correlation	-.193*	-.065	1	.134	.174	.079	.066	.233*	.262**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.480		.142	.057	.389	.473	.010	.004
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
PBC	Pearson Correlation	-.015	.245**	.134	1	.208*	.044	.156	-.015	.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.867	.007	.142		.022	.633	.088	.870	.720
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
PBEHAVE	Pearson Correlation	-.411**	-.025	.174	.208*	1	-.112	.184*	.167	.131
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.785	.057	.022		.221	.044	.067	.153
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
CAUSALI TY	Pearson Correlation	-.054	.053	.079	.044	-.112	1	.168	.155	.178
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.554	.561	.389	.633	.221		.065	.089	.051
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
SATIRE	Pearson Correlation	-.206*	-.131	.066	.156	.184*	.168	1	.626**	.302**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.153	.473	.088	.044	.065		.000	.001
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
NEWSs	Pearson Correlation	-.209*	-.231*	.233*	-.015	.167	.155	.626**	1	.686**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.011	.010	.870	.067	.089	.000		.000
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121
SOCIAL	Pearson Correlation	-.173	-.156	.262**	.033	.131	.178	.302**	.686**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.058	.088	.004	.720	.153	.051	.001	.000	
	N	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121	121

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.8 Direct Comparisons with the 1992 Study

Stepwise regression analyses were used to examine the direct contributions of the variables on voting intention. Voting intentions explained 48 percent of the variance in voting intention. This is roughly the same as the 1992 model where 55 percent of variance was explained and .02 was added through additional variables. The main effect of the variables on intentions was statistically significant at $F = 24.187$, $\text{sig} = .001$. The Azjen model in this case seems to be intact.

When causality orientation was tested on voting intention, no significant predictability was found. It would appear that in this population of voters, there is no significant concern about what might happen when they vote as a result of their vote.

Next, when past behavior was tested against voting intention, $F = 24.1$, $\text{Sig.} < .001$. It would seem that past voting behavior is one of the better predictors of voting intention and according to Ajzen (1985) better predictors in most PBC studies.

4.9 Impact of Media, Social Media and Satire Oriented Media Television

In the final stage of this particular analysis, the questions were asked regarding whether subjects thought cable news media like FOX, MSNBC, CNN, CNBC, or Current TV influenced their opinions, intentions or behaviors. While no significant statistical outcomes come from calculated variables, individual variables paint a nicer picture. In the case of cable news media, there were no predictive effects on intention, opinion formation, or decision formulation. There were some differences with satirical television and social media.

With satire oriented “fake news shows”, the results are far more interesting. When the variables of satire television like The Daily Show with Jon Stewart was entered into regression, the numbers seemed to suggest that satirical TV assists in opinion formation ($F = 10.1$, $\text{sig} < .01$), but not decision making or attitude formation.

When the same calculations are performed on social media, the main effect statistical significance seems to be on decision making with $F = 7.6$ $\text{sig} < .001$. and decision making $F = 6.2$, $\text{Sig} < .05$.

With social media like Facebook® among others previously mentioned, the results are similarly interesting. With Facebook® et al the numbers seemed to suggest that social media does not seem to have an impact on opinion formation, $F = 3.8$, $\text{sig} > .05$) but does have significant predictable relationships with decision making $F = 14.3$ $\text{Sig} < .01$ and behavioral intention $F = 4.8$, $\text{sig} < .05$.

5. Discussion

The results of the present study provide additional support for sharpeners to the TPB for the young generation of voters. As was evident in the 1992 study, the ability to predict voting intentions was significantly enhanced when the factors past behavior, impersonal orientation, and personal norms were added to the model. As hypothesized, personal norms, had a direct effect on voting intentions, with past behavior and impersonal orientation having indirect effects on voting intentions.

In this study, the theory of planned behavior was used to predict intention to vote and voting behavior. The results indicate that by separating the construct of subjective norms into two sub-constructs, personal norms and social norms, the predictive ability of the model can be enhanced. In the case of voting behavior, it appears that a person's inner convictions (personal norms) play a more important role in determining intentions than the person's perception of the opinions of significant others (social norms). This is in accordance to Parker et.al. (1992) where it is reasonable for a person to form an intention about a behavior that carries important

implications for others. The perceived views of significant others should be of lesser importance, however, when a person forms an attitude toward a behavior that is more private and likely to affect the actor concerned. Prior studies have demonstrated the efficacy of adding a moral component to the model. Gorsuch and Ortberg (1983) found that the addition of "moral norms" to the theory of reasoned action enhanced the model in "moral situations". In this study, the addition of personal norms only touched on Gorsuch and Ortberg's material.

Beck and Ajzen (1991) found that the addition of "perceived moral obligation" enhanced the theory of planned behavior, Doll and Orth (1993) found support for the construct "psychological meaningfulness", and Randall and Gibson (1991) found support for a moral component in the medical profession. All of these studies obtained significant results using behaviors that had a rather strong moral component (skipping church, cheating on taxes, cheating on a test, lying, and shoplifting). The present study provides evidence which can extend the boundary of what constitutes a moral situation. Clearly, voting does not carry the heavy moral implications of the behaviors examined in the above studies, but does carry a moral component for some persons.

The present study also illustrates the usefulness of past behavior and perceived behavioral control. It appears that past voting behavior might influence an individual's attitude toward voting. Perhaps by going through the process of voting, an individual's sense of citizenship is enhanced. It would be an interesting study to see whether the form the ballot takes, paper, electronic, or mail has an impact on the sense of satisfaction a person exhibits from the voting behavior. A person who has voted in the past may also tend to justify past behavior by forming an attitude that coincides with that behavior. Also, past voting behavior might cause an individual to experience an increase in the amount of perceived control that he or she has over voting behavior. It seems likely that a voter who has been through the process before will imagine fewer obstacles than will a first time voter.

The present study provides support for all the components of the theory of planned behavior in the study from 1992, both significant and not significant (in this case, the variable causality orientation). Subjective norms did not make a significant contribution to the predictive validity of the theory of planned behavior. Similar results showing non-significant contributions of subjective norms have been reported by Ajzen (1991) for engaging in unethical behaviors, or Netemeyer, Burton, and Johnston (1991) for voting in a governor's election primary. The nature of the behavior in question should determine whether it is appropriate to add personal norms to the theory of planned behavior. Likewise, the nature of the behavior should indicate the appropriateness of the inclusion or exclusion of subjective norms. Further research is needed to determine the conditions under which either or both of these two variables should be used.

Hypotheses were supported to varying degrees in this study. H1, that personal obligations (or norms) would be positively related to intention to vote was supported in the 1992 sample, however not in the 2012 sample. There are perhaps a few reasons for this, all of which require some more research. First, the current situation of Congressional debate and lack of decision will may have created a lackadaisical attitude toward voting, and therefore creating a downward attenuation of the morality and personal importance of the voting process among generation snark. Perhaps also, it's too early in the electoral cycle for persons to report a personal norm for

voting as the “Get Out the Vote” or “GOTV” processes for political organizations haven’t yet begun in this election cycle. It would be interesting to repeat this process at other colleges closer to the polls and see whether a felt personal desire or moral requirement was becoming evident. In H2, where a personal causality orientation was not supported in 1992 and is not supported in this current study. While Deci and Ryan (1985) would suggest that the self efficacy of the voter and surety for getting to the polling places is a mitigating factor of forming intention to vote and following through with voting behavior, it may be that the demographic 18-24 feels capable of mostly anything. Perhaps another study of differing demographics, like women 35 – 54, or inner city residents 24 – 54 may show differing abilities perceived to vote and different perceptions of self efficacy.

In H3, past voting behavior is the best predictor of positive voting attitudes and intention to vote. This was true in the 1992 and the 2012 study. H4, on the other hand showed some remarkable support for the necessity of cable news for the 18 – 24 demographic. There were no supportable positive hypotheses in this particular case. Perhaps it’s because this demographic doesn’t watch the “pundocracy” of Keith Olbermann, Rachel Maddow, or Bill O’Reilly. Perhaps they have no interest, and perhaps it’s because this particular group, like in the CNN report mentioned above, gets their news from other sources, the bathroom wall, perhaps.

H5 and H6 are similarly interesting. For H6, satirical television like *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart® and *The Colbert Report*®, or *Real Time* with Bill Maher provide information and commentary that is of a similar cultural and economic content. Perhaps also, for this group the material from Jon Stewart and Steven Colbert “RAT”, or relevant, appropriable and transferable to the particular desire for world news. Note that Colbert and Stewart get a larger swath of newsmakers (e.g. King Abdullah, King of Jordan; past and current Presidents of the United States; past and current Secretaries of the Treasury, State, Housing and Urban Affairs, and Education) than do shows on cable news. They provide information that is culturally, administratively, geographically, and economically relevant. Call it “Caged Rats”. H5 is also quite interesting. It would seem that Facebook® and Twitter® provide an exploratory and discussion forum for the demographic. Given the nature of the F statistics and the significance, it would seem that the demographic 18-24, the “Generation Snark” gets cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic information that is relevant, appropriable, and transferable in a useful way from satirical television for opinion and some attitude formation, and then uses social media for attitudinal and behavioral formation and follow through.

In addition to extending the theory of planned behavior, this paper suggests implications for improving voter turnout in future elections. Based on the evidence provided above, we can conclude that attempts to increase voter turnout which are directed at an individual’s “sense of personal/moral obligation” would be effective at increasing the possibility of voting behavior than efforts using a more social component, but in getting the vote out, it is probably very useful to understand the current media environment that Generation Snark uses. From this study, we know that the generation consumes very little cable news products. We also know from reports that the Generation Snark and some of the older demographics prefer to get their daily news from satirical television shows like *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart® or *The Colbert Report*® on basic cable. The generation then, appears to formulate stronger opinion and intentions to vote

by discussing preferences on FaceBook® or through 140 character Tweets through Twitter®. It would seem, that the effective use of these media sources could be important to the political process, should candidates choose to use them in that order. In other words, it's not enough to just have a Facebook® page or Twitter®, it is important where they are used. John Stewart and Stephen Colbert appear to assist in attitude or opinion formation, Facebook® and Twitter® seem to allow for the creation of a communication mechanism to triangulate opinions on the way to the voting booth. In other words, it doesn't matter if you have it, it depends upon what you do with it.

For further research, it would be interesting to ask very simple questions: "why do some candidates (organizations?) formulate better messages through social media and cable advertising/press than others?" This directs a generalization of this study: could it be supported that one media helps persons, managers, voters, stakeholders, or activists to bring attention to a subject while others help more in opinion formation and action? Rather than relying on one media for all those purposes, could it be possible that a combination of two or more would be more effective. The question would certainly have application to business and management, strategic implementation, public administration, research, and even social services. That's the question this paper raises, and that is probably the research questions it raises for this author and for others.

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The Hypothesized Model

The hypothesized model (Figure 2) and results were generated by integrating TPB with the proposals of the paper.

