

Baby boom

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Baby boom is generally referred to the 18 years period from 1946 to 1964 that saw the birth of around 76 million babies in the USA. Today the baby boomers forms almost one third of the total American population and they have been instrumental in changing USA in cultural, societal and political ways (Russell, 1987, 27). Baby boomers have been different from their preceding and succeeding generations in their philosophical and political outlook and hence critically affect the US policy as they mature and take important posts in academic, political and business realms.

Baby boomers: Social and Political Outlook As the baby boom generation approaches middle and older ages, its voice and opinion would carry tremendous weight in affecting US policy and politics trends (Boulard, 2000). As the baby boom generation is generally affluent, politically and socially conscious and a distinct philosophical outlook, they carry a very powerful voting force with them, compelling state legislators to listen to them.

Baby boomers carry the crucial political weight more because the generation X, the generation that is in its 20s and 30s today, lacks enough political enthusiasm and motivation to seriously consider their voting rights. On the other hands, the maturing and graying baby boomers have started to show better understanding of social causes, taxes, and education and hence become active participants in construction of political voting patterns. Older and Younger Baby Boomers Baby boomers, being born over a period of 19 years, do not constitute one single generation.

Instead, they are two distinct blocs within the baby boomers themselves, that have traditionally differed in their attitude and outlook major issues affecting politics and society. Baby boomers born between 1946 and 1955

are called as older baby boomers, while those born after 1955 to 1964 are referred as younger baby boomers. Older baby boomers have inclined to be less materialistic, more philosophical, drawn to social causes and have advantage over younger generation in taking up best jobs and greater economic prosperity.

On the other hand the younger baby boomers have been typically hard boiled, concerned with money, less interested in social and political cause and preferred leisure over work (Russell, 1987). However, despite their ideological differences, together baby boomers constitute a massive force with huge economic leverage and power in shaping USA's destiny. According to MetLife Mature Market Institute's Demographic profile of American baby boomers, the baby boomers have combined annual spending power of more than \$ 2 trillion, making them economically and financially most well off segment in USA.

Future Implications By 2030, the baby boomers will be in the age group from 66 to 84, making up 20 % of the total American population. With their immense economic power and concern about their old age security, they will cast determining affect on government policies. It is natural to expect that the aging baby boomers will support a government that is more attuned to their aging needs, security, health- care services, insurance services, tax rebates structure, pension policies, and issues concerning welfare of their families and children.

Baby boomers, have a full spectrum of political views. As a group they have shared values of their parents, they are generally patriotic, and moderate in their social views. They voted two to one for Ronal Reagan
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in 1984 presidential elections (Light, 1988). In general baby boomers would be against the baby buster generation that succeeded them and each one of them would claim to generational identities and form distinct political block (Torres Gil, 1992, 137).

It is likely that baby boomers will display generational identification and cohesion and hence the competition they are likely to enter with the younger generation would be along electoral strength and taxation. With their 76 million votes, it is unlikely that there is any conceivable political force can afford to overlook their demands, if they decide to vote on common issues affecting them (Torres Gil, 1992, 137). Reference Boulard, G. (2000). Challenges of a New Century. State Legislatures.

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