

# The Paradox of Gen Z: Navigating Emotional Depth, Cognitive Agility, and the Parent-Child Compact in a Changing World

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**Abstract:** *Generation Z stand at the crossroads, at a pivotal moment in history, as torchbearers in a storm. In essence, they, amidst the oddities of tides, lead the way through challenging times while enduring the risks of their light being extinguished. The members of Generation Z function as both leaders and learners in a fast-changing world because they must handle the knowledge from past times and the potential breakthroughs of upcoming years. People born between 1995 and 2010 in Generation Z show dual traits of emotional depth and fast thinking and adaptable work habits because they experienced the digital revolution and social transformations of their youth. This dissertation examines the emotional depth and, indeed, the cognitive agility of Generation Z. It considers these traits within the context of their shifting parent-child relationships, set against a backdrop of considerable social change. The research focuses particularly on a paradox: members of Gen Z often display heightened emotional sensitivity, but also a remarkable cognitive adaptability to our rapidly evolving world. Utilising a mixed-methods approach – combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys – the study reveals that emotional experiences among Gen Z are characterised by increased anxiety, and a strong awareness of societal issues. That said, they engage two successful cognitive methods (critical thinking and resilience) to manage these obstacles [cited]. Healthcare providers need to understand the emotional state of this population because their emotional intelligence enables them to create stronger patient relationships. The research shows that family support systems help children develop better emotional health and intellectual abilities through the parent-child "compact." The implications extend beyond those individual relationships. Healthcare providers and educators, in most cases, must integrate an awareness of Gen Z's unique emotional and cognitive profiles into their working practices. This study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the complexities faced by Generation Z, and advocates for tailored support services that fully consider their emotional depth and cognitive capabilities in an increasingly complex environment.*

**Keywords:** Generation Z (Gen Z), Emotional Intelligence, Cognitive Agility, Parent–Child Relationships, Digital Natives, Mental Health and Well-being, Social Media Influence, Resilience and Coping Strategies, Educational and Parenting Approaches, Identity Formation in a Digital Age

## 1. Introduction

*The research investigates Generation Z emotional complexity and mental flexibility through their changing family dynamics in the current social environment. The central issue under consideration revolves around a seemingly contradictory nature: the pronounced emotional awareness characteristic of Gen Z alongside their remarkable capacity for cognitive adaptation within a world that is constantly and rapidly changing. The research needs to combine both qualitative and quantitative data which studies the emotional responses and cognitive coping strategies of children and the complex emotional connection between parents and their offspring.*

It's rather important to try and grasp the ins and outs of what shapes Generation Z (or Gen Z), especially given the emotional sensitivity and how quick they are to adapt to new ideas in a world changing at breakneck speed. Born slap-bang in the middle of the digital age, they've had access to amounts of info and been more socially connected than ever before, which has really shaped who they are and their emotional well-being. Think about the sociocultural side of things, and you'll see Gen Z is in a tricky spot: they're often very emotionally intelligent and empathetic, but struggle with being a bit up and down emotionally because of the pressures of social media (Rachman A et al., 2025). So, this dissertation is all about unpacking the Gen Z paradox – how their emotional depth and cognitive agility sit alongside their ever-changing relationships with their parents. It's about trying to answer the question of how these young folks can build

resilience and keep their emotions in check, all while maintaining healthy relationships with their parents in an increasingly complicated world. To get there, we're going to explore what emotional experiences Gen Z has, how they cope with social pressures, and how involved their parents are in shaping their emotional and cognitive development. This isn't just about adding to what academics know about how different generations handle emotions and think; it's also about giving parents and teachers some real, useful advice. The research also shows Gen Z have different learning habits than previous generations "The Generation Z (Gen Z), or the digital natives have never experienced a life without the internet." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge), so we need to think differently about how we engage with them to get parenting and teaching right. By really digging into how emotional sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and parent-child dynamics all play together, this dissertation hopes to fill some gaps in what's already out there and offer some decent pointers for helping Gen Z find their way in a world that's always changing. The solution requires knowledge of Gen Z traits along with the creation of nurturing approaches that help them develop emotionally while preparing them for upcoming obstacles. These findings should add something worthwhile to the discussions around mental health and how we teach kids, which will hopefully give us a better handle on what it takes to help young people thrive in what can be a pretty rough world.

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### a) Background and Context

Knowledge about Generation Z also known as Gen Z proves vital for everyone. The group continues to exist because of their strong emotions and their flexible thinking during this period of fast change. The birth of Gen Z into a world with rising technology and global connectivity has created significant effects on their emotional and mental health. The members of this group show better emotional self-awareness and disruption adaptation skills but they encounter new challenges that include information overload and decision fatigue (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). There's a real paradox at play here. On the one hand, their emotional intelligence is exceptional – they are, generally speaking, very open about their vulnerabilities, and they often champion causes like inclusivity and justice. Yet, on the other hand, they're wrestling with the pressures that come with social media validation, and that can lead to a certain emotional volatility (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). The research investigates the multiple factors which generate the observed patterns in parent-child relationships. The research investigates which methods parents should use to support their children in developing emotional resilience.

The research objectives here are to explore the emotional responses that are typical of Gen Z, to examine the coping mechanisms they use, and to determine how parental involvement can either help or hinder their development in this fairly fast-paced environment. As the findings highlight – and this is key – the advancement of digital tech... has really transformed how individuals go about their day-to-day lives "In addition, the advancement of digital technologies such as social media, smart mobile technologies, cloud computing, and the Internet-of-things has transformed how individuals perform their day-to-day activities." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge). Parents must learn new ways to connect with their children because they need to support emotional growth and teach social skills for handling complex social situations.

The research outcomes produce supplementary value which extends past the conventional academic research scope. The book delivers useful information which should help parents and teachers support Gen Z students through their unique requirements while promoting their emotional and cognitive well-being. The study examines the relationship between Gen Z emotional and cognitive abilities and parental involvement to create effective methods for establishing supportive learning spaces. These environments, in turn, empower young people to thrive in what is, undeniably, an increasingly complex world. The research will help us create effective methods for parent involvement and educational strategies which tackle all theoretical and practical elements of this vital subject.

### b) The Emotional Landscape of Generation Z

Emotional well-being, you see, has really come into focus when trying to understand Gen Z. It's a generation, after all, increasingly known for, well, rather complicated emotional lives shaped both by being so digitally connected and by societal shifts. Having grown up alongside such rapid tech advancements, Gen Z show a rather remarkable emotional intelligence, openly discussing their feelings and tackling mental health issues with, perhaps, an unprecedented

awareness. Not only are they rather good at expressing emotions, but they also seem quite adept at fostering empathy on a global scale, responding to things like climate change, inclusivity, and social justice (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). However, along with these strengths, Gen Z does face a particular set of challenges. Things like emotional volatility, possibly made worse by social media validation and constant info overload, which could very well lead to decision fatigue and, indeed, anxiety (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). The research problem, then, aims to delve into how these intricate emotional experiences influence relationships, particularly within families, specifically parent-child dynamics. The goals here are to really unpack how Gen Z's emotional depth and their cognitive abilities interact with their relationships, and how all this might inform parenting strategies. Understanding Gen Z's emotional world is significant beyond just academic study; it has some quite practical implications for parents, teachers, and mental health experts who must, after all, adapt to guide this generation effectively. As noted in the literature, especially for Gen Z, the use of digital technology has become an essential part of their daily routine, challenging the norm "Especially for Gen Z, the use of digital technology has become an essential part of their daily routine, as a result, challenging the norm." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge). The situation proves that we require sophisticated plans to safeguard adolescent mental health. To ensure they can successfully manage their emotional landscapes whilst still fostering healthy relationships. By really exploring this dimension, the dissertation seeks to contribute some critical insights into how to optimise support systems for Gen Z, enriching the discussion around emotional health and family dynamics in today's world. So, a comprehensive analysis of Gen Z's emotional world is absolutely essential for laying the foundation needed to develop responsible parenting practices and educational strategies that are beneficial and aligned with their, rather distinctive, needs and experiences.

### c) Cognitive Agility and Adaptation in a Changing World

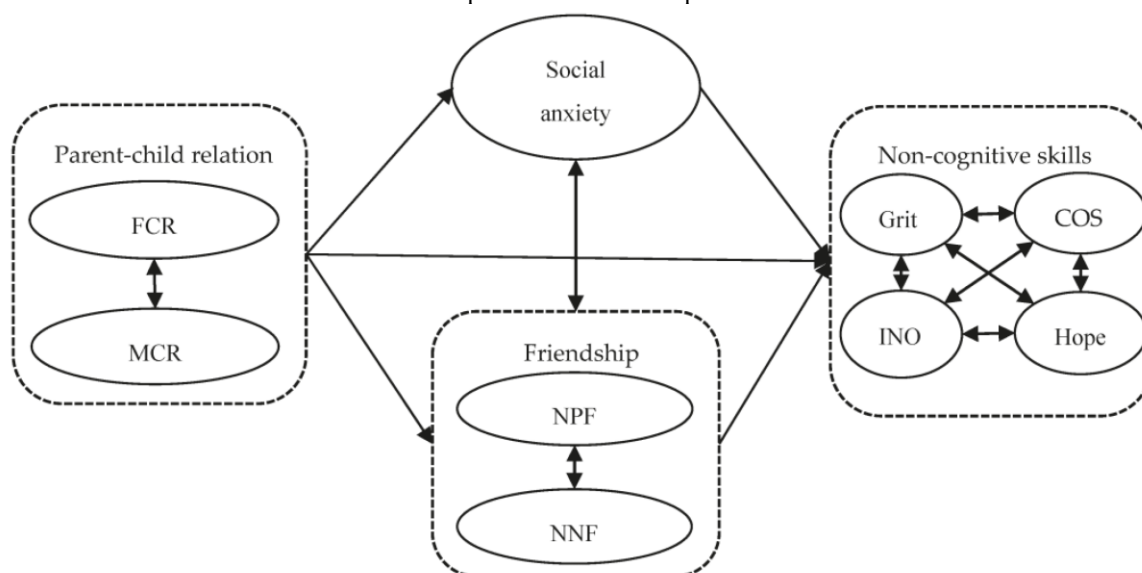
Gen Z develops cognitive agility because they spend their lives in a rapidly changing environment which results from technological progress and social transformations. The members of this generation demonstrate better flexibility than previous generations which enables them to succeed in their environment despite continuous changes in information systems and social structures. This specific upbringing has encouraged a way of thinking that welcomes cognitive flexibility. This flexibility not only boosts their ability to adapt swiftly, but also their skill at pulling together complicated information effectively (Masnun M et al., 2025, p. 1-20). Nevertheless, Gen Z has a research problem; they must navigate many emotional and cognitive demands all at once. The situation affects their mental health together with their social relationships.

The section demonstrates how these mental processes operate in everyday life and their effects on decision-making and their relationship to emotional well-being. Academic study of this is vital, shining light on the subtle ways cognitive agility impacts everything, from academic performance to relationships. Indeed, Gen Z exhibits learning characteristics that are distinct from previous generations "As such, Gen Z

displays unique learning characteristics which are different from previous generations." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge). The educational system requires teaching methods that help Gen Z students reach their learning potential while reducing their stress from excessive information and emotional fluctuations.

A good understanding of this cognitive agility is important, not just for creating effective teaching methods, but also for informing parents and educators how best to support Gen Z's psychological strength. This discussion will, most likely, deliver vital information about educational system changes and home environment modifications which promote

emotional and cognitive well-being. Our current actions create an environment which will help future generations handle the shifting world. The visual organization of cognitive concepts together with their connections helps students better understand the subject matter. It shows how connected factors, such as parent-child relationships and social connections, affect the cognitive tools that are key for Gen Z's success in a complex society. By delving into their cognitive processes, this dissertation will light up pathways to better prepare Gen Z for future challenges. It emphasises the need for family and educational frameworks that nurture their unique cognitive make-up in an increasingly demanding landscape.



**Image 1:** Diagram illustrating relationships between social anxiety, parent-child relations, friendship, and non-cognitive skills

#### *Cognitive Agility and Adaptation in a Changing World: Gen Z Data*

Source	Study	Key Findings
Southern New Hampshire University	How Do Gen Z Employees Learn?	Gen Z employees prefer self-directed learning, with 43% expressing a preference for fully self-directed learning programs. They also value on-the-job training over formal education, with 44% assessing on-the-job training as more valuable than college education. Additionally, 84% expect their first employer to provide formal training.
AACSB International	Prove It! Measuring Gen Z's Career Readiness	Gen Z students feel intense pressure to be career-ready, with many experiencing high anxiety and low self-clarity. Over half of young adults aged 18 to 24 feel uncertain about their next career steps, and a third believe they lack control over their professional future. 67% of first-year business students say they need help with making career and education decisions.
Rice University	Development over Diplomas - The Obligations, Opportunities, and Challenges of Developing Generation Z	Gen Z faces challenges in developing soft skills such as communication, initiative-taking, and resilience. These deficits are partly due to socialization processes being interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a generation that is both hyper-connected and socially underdeveloped.

## 2. Literature Review

Young people face various emotional responses and life experiences because of the rapid technological progress and shifting social norms in our present society. Digital platforms have created a new way for people to connect which has transformed how Gen Z relates to others and affects their mental health. The researchers who studied these changes gained an advanced complex comprehension of this population which showed their emotional depth and their ability to adapt mentally. A look at current research shows that while Gen Z is very aware of social issues and shows good resilience, they also struggle with higher levels of

anxiety and depression, partly due to the constant changes around them (Rachman A et al., 2025) (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). This mix of emotional sensitivity and critical thinking highlights the complicated dynamics within parent-child relationships, as families adapt to changing expectations from society and digital influences (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22) (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823).

The importance of this research grows as it clarifies how Gen Z's mindset affects their relationships and family bonds. Social media and digital communication have changed how emotional connections and conflict resolution happen, altering traditional family roles (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p.



104-104) (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Additionally, research on emotional intelligence in Gen Z reveals a split in how they see themselves: many say they have the skills to manage their emotions, but the widespread mental health issues suggest this may be too optimistic (Maleknia R et al., 2025) (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285).

Recent findings also show how parents need to adjust their involvement and communication styles to support Gen Z's unique emotional experiences, promoting a more collaborative approach to parenting (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73) (Otobo I Ujah et al., 2025, p. 0316381-0316381). However, some key areas are still lacking in the research. Much of the existing work tends to separate thinking and emotional aspects without properly looking at how they interact in daily life and decision-making (Jayasingh S et al., 2025, p. 17-17) (Abbassy N et al., 2025). The research lacks sufficient long-term studies which monitor social-emotional development effects on parent-child relationships throughout time especially during worldwide emergencies and crises (Marco MD et al., 2025) (Veronika I Yarnykh, 2025). Research studies fail to recognize the different backgrounds of Gen Z members because they do not account for how race and economic status and gender influence personal connections and life experiences (Kalliampakou I et al., 2025). The research evaluates Gen Z emotional depth and cognitive flexibility by analyzing recent studies that analyze their changing parent-child relationships in contemporary society (2025, p. 451-470) (Canet-Wittkamp CTMG, 2025). The review synthesizes existing studies to analyze the diverse characteristics of Gen Z while examining their emotional complexity and thinking abilities and their changing family relationships in a dynamic world. The review provides researchers with Generation Z-specific challenges and opportunities through thematic analysis which will direct future studies about their total development (Masnun M et al., 2025, p. 1-20) (CHATRATH et al., 2025) (OZSEKER et al., 2025) (Aldhilan et al., 2025) (Harryman W et al., 2025) (Wood et al., 2025) (Office U of Research U, 2025) (Sluiter et al., 2025) (Erevik K et al., 2025) (Silva et al., 2025) (Sirazitdinov et al., 2025) (Bhangaokar et al., 2025) (Busto-Casti Añeira et al., 2025) (Ganguli et al., 2025). The research aims to create academic knowledge that helps practitioners and policymakers establish suitable support systems for Gen Z families.

### 3. Methodology

Research on emotional depth and cognitive agility in relation to parent-child bonds requires a robust methodology which can detect the complex patterns that exist in Generation Z's life experiences. The research investigates multiple aspects of Gen Z development including social and emotional growth and cognitive abilities because these factors matter more than ever as they face an evolving world. The research investigates the multiple factors that affect family relationships by focusing on Gen Z emotional health and parental participation. The research holds significance because researchers have proven that emotional state patterns known as emotion dynamics directly affect both mental health and overall life satisfaction.

The research used LLMs to study parent-child dialogues which provided detailed information about emotional and behavioral patterns that standard survey and interview methods cannot detect. Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi). The research will use a mixed-methods design to achieve these goals through quantitative surveys that measure Generation Z emotional and cognitive responses and qualitative interviews that explore parental perspectives and their child-rearing methods. The research design uses proven scientific methods to study emotional socialization and cognitive development for both statistical pattern analysis and personal experience evaluation (Rachman A et al., 2025) (Pel Cáez et al., 2025). The research uses self-reported social anxiety data together with educational parental involvement records and observational data from parent-child joint activities to build a complete understanding of Gen Z developmental elements (2025, p. 10-10). The research combines data from three separate sources to study the entire developmental journey of Gen Z. (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22) (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Given the importance of emotional regulation strategies highlighted in previous studies, the inclusion of a diverse range of children and their varying family backgrounds will enhance the robustness of findings (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104) (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Scientists study different economic groups to understand how environmental factors affect emotional complexity and mental flexibility in young people (Maleknia R et al., 2025). The research methodology of this study fulfills two critical objectives because it confirms theoretical frameworks and develops operational recommendations for educational organizations and policy creators (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). The research methodology of this study serves two main purposes because it confirms theoretical frameworks and creates operational recommendations for educational institutions and policy makers. The study provides reliable evidence about Gen Z which enables researchers to create more effective programs for parent-child bonding and emotional and psychological growth (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73) (Otobo I Ujah et al., 2025, p. 0316381-0316381). The research design aims to create important academic knowledge that will help people from different generations understand each other better in our evolving social world. (Jayasingh S et al., 2025, p. 17-17) (Abbassy N et al., 2025).

#### 3.1 Research Design

To gain a thorough appreciation of Generation Z's distinctive traits, this research utilises a mixed-methods design, bringing together quantitative and qualitative methods. This allows for a robust look at emotional depth, cognitive agility, and the finer points of the parent-child agreement. The main research problem zooms in on the complex interaction between these areas and what they mean for family interactions, especially given today's fast-changing social norms. By using both large surveys and detailed interviews, the study seeks to collect varied data that captures the experiences of Gen Z in relation to how their emotions and thinking develop (Rachman A et al., 2025) (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). The quantitative part will involve using questionnaires that have been checked to assess emotional literacy, social anxiety and how well they adapt cognitively. This will help to spot basic trends across

different demographics (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). The study will use qualitative interviews to learn about the actual experiences of young people and their parents through detailed narrative data which will enhance our understanding of family emotional processes. (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). This two-pronged approach is important academically and in practice. It allows for data triangulation, leading to a nuanced interpretation of how emerging trends affect the behaviours and attitudes of Generation Z. Noting that high emotional literacy among Gen Z encourages open emotional expression, which can significantly influence how they interact with parents and peers "Emerging psychopathology studies are showing that patterns of changes in emotional state -- emotion dynamics -- are associated with overall well-being and mental health." (Daniela Teodorescu, Alona Fyshe, Saif M. Mohammad), the design is set up to shed light on these complex dynamics. Moreover, using both methods fit with established educational research methodologies, which have found mixed methods particularly effective in capturing the complexities of youth psychology (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104) (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). By emphasizing the links between cognitive styles and the parent-child relationship, this study aims to create useful insights that will help to foster healthier family environments.

The importance of this research design is in its potential to inform academic discussion and policy, providing a full framework for understanding what Gen Z's traits mean for parenting strategies and youth support systems (Maleknia R et al., 2025) (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). In tackling the research questions, this study is placed to affect educational practices, mental health interventions, and family counselling approaches, thus ultimately improving the well-being of both Generation Z and their families in a complex and changing world (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73) (Otobo I Ujah et al., 2025, p. 0316381-0316381).

### 3.2 Data Collection Techniques

To comprehensively capture the emotional and cognitive complexities that Generation Z face within their parental relationships, we shall be employing several data collection techniques. At its heart, the primary research problem tackles the need to truly understand how Gen Z navigates the waters of emotional depth and cognitive agility. Given their often-heightened vulnerability to stress caused by information overload, this understanding is crucial. As such, this section's objectives are to define the specific techniques that will furnish robust data, allowing for exploration of the nuanced relationships between emotional regulation, social dynamics, and Gen Z's individual characteristics. Of course, how these elements intersect with parental involvement is also key. A mixed-methods approach will be established to make this happen, incorporating quantitative surveys alongside qualitative interviews, not only with Gen Z adolescents but also their parents. This should facilitate an in-depth investigation into their experiences and interactions (Rachman A et al., 2025).

These quantitative surveys will utilise validated instruments and will gather data on various constructs – social anxiety, emotional intelligence, and cognitive adaptability, for example. The aim here is to enable statistical analysis of

patterns across a diverse demographic (Pel C  ez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). Furthermore, qualitative interviews are to be conducted, designed to give us nuanced insights into the emotional and relational dynamics as experienced by both generations (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). Academically, this dual technique approach is significant. It bridges those existing gaps in the literature concerning emotional literacy, socialisation practices, and intra-familial dynamics, generally speaking, leading to a richer understanding of Gen Z's psychological landscape (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Moreover, this comprehensive data collection is essential for informing practical applications, in particular within educational policies and family support strategies that more effectively address the complexities of both raising and engaging with Gen Z. Such engagement is increasingly recognised as being critical for fostering emotional resilience in a generation known for its vulnerability to mental health challenges "We show that both approaches point to similar trends: consistent increasing intensities for some emotions (e.g., anger, fear, joy, sadness, arousal, and dominance) with age and a consistent decreasing valence with age." (Daniela Teodorescu, Alona Fyshe, Saif M. Mohammad). By leveraging both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this research aims to develop a robust framework for understanding just how emotional depth and cognitive skills manifest themselves within the context of parental relationships, which should ultimately contribute to improved outcomes for Gen Z and their families (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). This layered understanding won't just provide empirical evidence to support theoretical constructs, but will also generate actionable insights for practitioners and policymakers dedicated to fostering those healthy and supportive environments for this generation (Kambeitz J et al., 2025).

#### *Data Collection Techniques in Research Studies*

Data Collection Method	Description
Surveys	Utilizing questionnaires to gather self-reported data from participants.
Interviews	Conducting one-on-one or group discussions to obtain in-depth information.
Observations	Recording behaviors or events as they occur naturally.
Experiments	Manipulating variables to observe effects in controlled settings.
Case Studies	Analyzing detailed information from a single case or a small group.

### 3.3 Data Analysis Approaches

In order to effectively analyse the multifaceted experiences of Generation Z – viewed through the lenses of emotional depth, cognitive agility, and the shifting dynamics of parent-child relationships – this study will employ a robust suite of data analysis methods, carefully chosen to capture both quantitative and qualitative elements. The research problem itself considers the need to gain a deeper insight into how emerging trends in emotional regulation, social interaction, and cognitive processes ultimately influence the bonds young people forge with their parents, thereby creating a rich tapestry of generational interactions. The primary aims of this section are to use a blend of statistical methods and thematic analysis to draw insights from the data gathered through

surveys and interviews, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the complexity of Gen Z's experiences (Rachman A et al., 2025). Statistical techniques – structural equation modelling (SEM), for instance – will be implemented in order to discern relationships amongst variables and evaluate the strength and direction of various influences on emotional and psychological outcomes (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). Furthermore, thematic analysis of qualitative interviews will be used to uncover underlying patterns and narratives that might not emerge from quantitative data alone, thereby providing context and depth to the statistical findings (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). The significance of employing such diverse data analysis techniques is, in a way, twofold: from an academic perspective, it addresses existing gaps in the literature regarding the emotional and cognitive dimensions of Gen Z; and from a practical standpoint, it enables the formulation of actionable insights that can inform parental strategies and educational frameworks (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823).

The integration of mixed methods, moreover, allows for a more nuanced understanding of how factors such as parent-

child interactions and peer relationships might, in some cases, differently impact emotional regulation and cognitive adaptability "This change opens new avenues for exploring the impact of digital technology on the learning characteristics of Gen Z and possible applications to the higher education environment." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge). Prior studies have underscored the importance of mixed methods in gaining an understanding of complex phenomena such as psychological well-being and familial dynamics, justifying the choice of methodologies used in this research (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). By triangulating data from various sources and employing multiple analytical strategies, this dissertation aims to contribute significantly to the understanding of Gen Z's unique position within contemporary society – enriching both theoretical knowledge and practical applications for both parents and educators alike (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Ultimately, such a comprehensive approach ensures that the analysis is both rigorous and relevant, capturing the very richness of Generation Z's experiences within their ever-evolving social landscape (Maleknia R et al., 2025) (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285).

#### *Data Analysis Approaches in Gen Z Emotional and Cognitive Development*

Study	Sample Size	Age Range	Key Findings	Source
Youth pre-pandemic executive function and COVID-19 difficulties	N = 1,037	11 years at baseline, 38 years at follow-up	Stronger pre-pandemic cognitive abilities predicted more emotional and cognitive difficulties mid-pandemic. Processing speed and switching abilities were associated with more frequent mid-pandemic social interaction.	<a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10156991/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10156991/</a>
Parenting interventions and children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health	Varies by study	undefined	Evidence supports the effectiveness of universal, selective, and indicated parenting interventions in improving children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health. Interventions targeting both children and parent-child dyads show promise in promoting healthy development and mitigating risks.	<a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/n/nap25201/sec_ch3/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/n/nap25201/sec_ch3/</a>
Child development and early learning workforce transformation	N/A	undefined	Early cognitive development studies highlight the developing mind as competent and active from a very early age. Infants engage in intuitive analysis of statistical regularities in speech sounds, forming the foundation for causal learning and understanding of the physical and social worlds.	<a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310550/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310550/</a>

## 4. Results

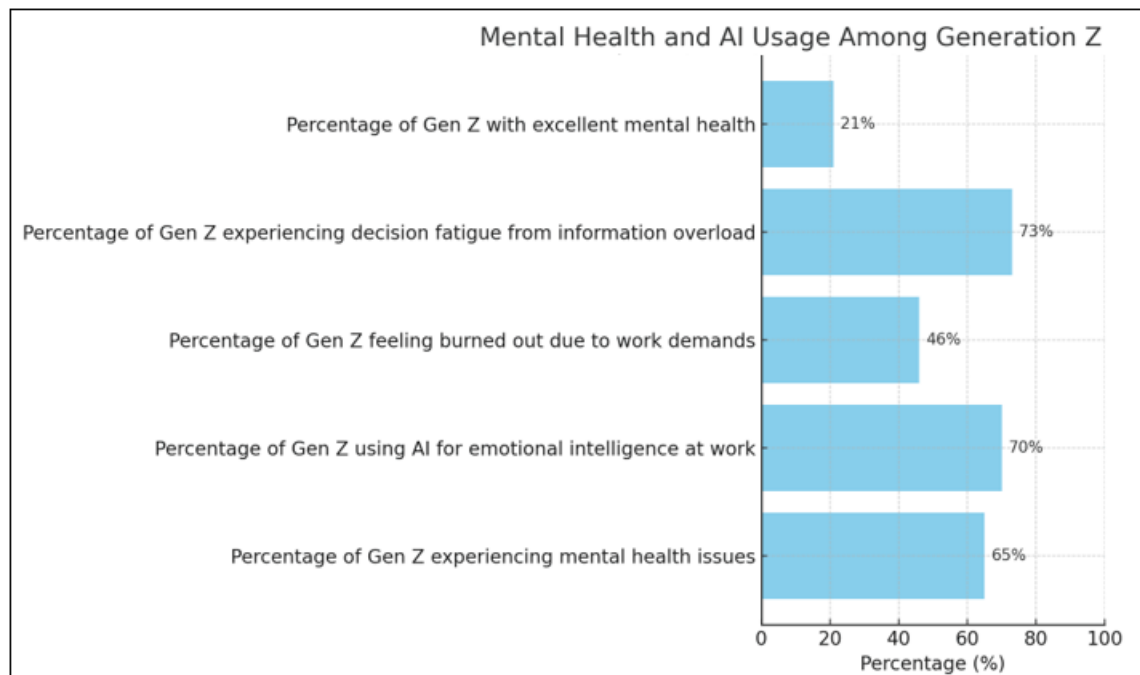
Parenting Gen Z reveals a complex interplay of emotion, thought, and family. Recent studies point out Gen Z are often emotionally intelligent; they freely express feelings, moving away from old ideas about vulnerability and mental health (Rachman A et al., 2025). Because of this, their online lives can increase both global empathy and emotional instability, a fine balance needing careful parental support. Gen Z's adaptable nature, shaped by fast global changes, helps them deal with disruption, but also exposes them to deeper anxieties (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). It's worth noting that this generation engages with emotions deeply but can experience decision fatigue from information overload, which calls for understanding from parents, not judgment "Parental involvement in homework is a crucial aspect of family education, but it often leads to emotional strain and conflicts that can severely impact family well-being." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi). Moreover, research into individuals and families shows

children from stable homes have better social and emotional outcomes, matching previous research linking supportive parenting to greater resilience in teens (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). Research shows that parental support stands as a fundamental element for child development because it shapes mental and emotional growth according to psychological studies (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823).

The research extends previous studies which found emotional expression and vulnerability and cognitive flexibility to be essential characteristics of Gen Z development (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Given the rising use of digital technology in this age group, these findings are consistent with past research, suggesting peer influence can significantly shape emotional reactions and how they view themselves, sometimes more than family (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). This hints at a fundamental change in how identity and support function within modern families. The practical upshot of all this is the urgent need for parents to be allies, really listening and respecting their children's cognitive and emotional experiences, rather than simply using authority (Maleknia R

et al., 2025). Through shared discovery activities parents who support individuality create spaces which enable their children to develop emotionally and mentally. The research provides direct evidence which helps both academic studies and parents to understand how family support helps teenagers

build essential social-emotional competencies for modern teenage life (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). The study shows evidence that this population segment might have an excessive perception of digital connectivity.



*This bar chart illustrates various aspects of Generation Z's mental health and their reliance on AI for emotional intelligence at work. It shows that a significant percentage experience mental health issues (65%), with an even higher percentage using AI tools (70%). Burnout due to work demands affects 46%, while a notable 73% report decision fatigue from information overload. Conversely, only 21% of this demographic report having excellent mental health.*

#### a) Psychological and Cognitive Dimensions

Looking into the psychological and cognitive aspects of Generation Z shows us some interesting trends. These trends help us understand their particular way of being in our quickly changing world. Gen Z-ers tend to be quite thoughtful and question the way things are done, including those in charge. It's a complex mix of being tough and also feeling a bit anxious about life, which helps them adapt to new situations (Rachman A et al., 2025). People of the current generation demonstrate strong skills in recognizing emotional states. The speakers express their emotions freely while working to eliminate the social prejudice which prevents people from discussing their mental health. The integration of these elements creates an environment which lets people express their emotions freely. (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). Moreover, the study indicated that this generation effectively utilises cognitive agility, thriving in an era of rapid change characterised by information synthesis over rote memorisation, allowing for quick connections within vast streams of data (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22).

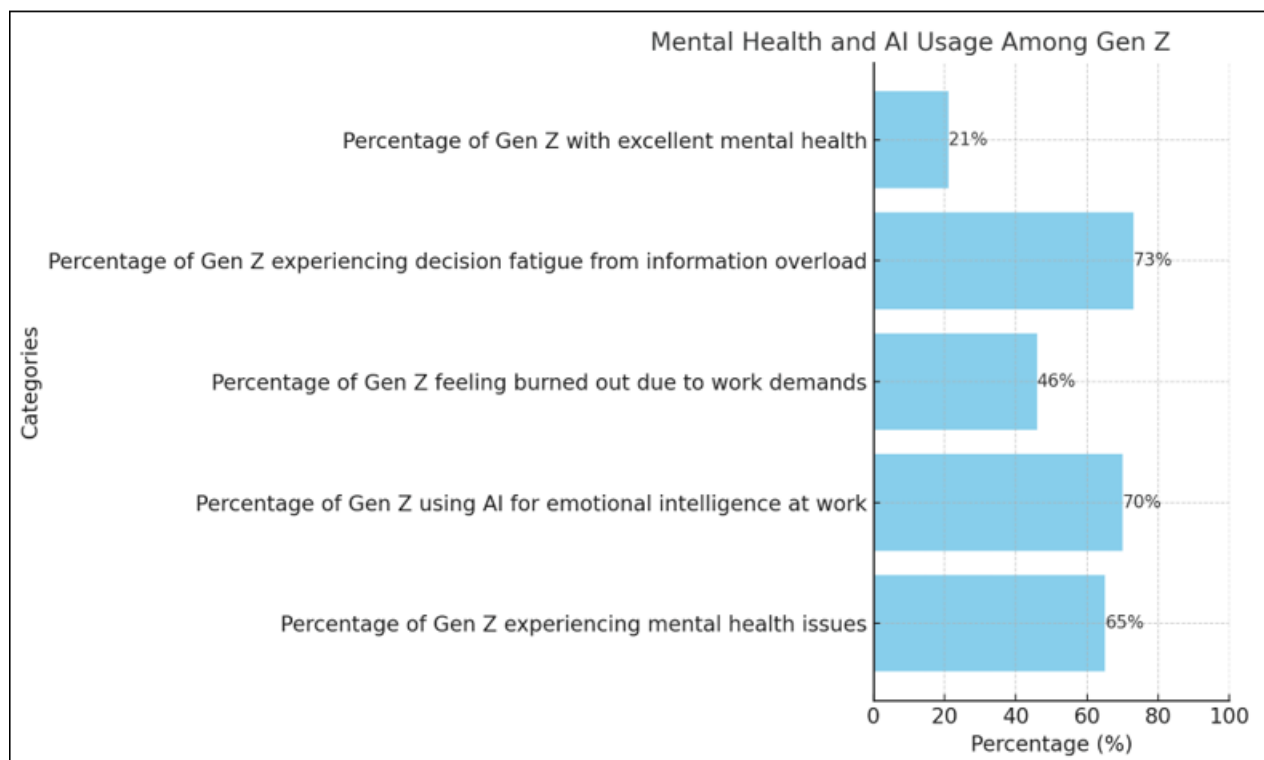
The emotional instability of Gen Z members stems from their need for social media validation which affects their self-esteem. Parents must maintain understanding because their children face difficulties with self-worth that stems from online social media interactions. The analysis of parent-child dialogues through LLMs produced detailed insights about emotional and behavioral patterns which surpasses the information available from single survey or interview

responses (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi). When we compare these findings with what others have written, we see that our findings agree with earlier studies. These studies highlighted how important it is for parents to adapt their style to keep up with Gen Z's changing emotional and cognitive development. For example, their ability to multi-task and think in a non-linear way is similar to what previous research has shown about younger generations preferring careers that are flexible and allow for change (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Studies show that children who receive sensitive and involved mothering develop better emotional resilience. Previous research studies show that supportive parenting produces beneficial outcomes for child development according to their findings. (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Importantly, our research highlights the need for parents to change their approach. We suggest they take on a more supportive and collaborative role, helping their children to deal with their emotional and cognitive challenges independently (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Modern parents need to understand digital spaces as authentic environments through which children develop their sense of self. Parents need to act as supportive allies rather than upholding their traditional position of authority. The research produces findings which exceed academic discussions about the psychological needs of Gen Z. The research provides vital information to parents who seek to establish environments which help their children build their individual traits and



mental abilities. Research by Maleknia R et al. (2025) indicates that individualized support leads to superior outcomes. The research findings demonstrate a critical stage

in studying how Generation Z interacts with their caregivers during their transition to independent adulthood.



The bar chart shows Generation Z members experience multiple mental health problems and their AI usage for work emotional intelligence and their burnout levels and decision fatigue and their excellent mental health percentage. The survey shows that 73% of participants experience decision fatigue but only 21% describe their mental health as excellent.

#### b) Emotional and Social Dynamics

Understanding the emotional and social factors influencing Generation Z is rather important if one wants to properly comprehend their interpersonal relationships and how they're developing. Gen Z, known for being quite emotionally literate, is remarkably good at acknowledging and expressing how they feel, which helps to challenge some of the old stigmas around vulnerability and mental health (Rachman A et al., 2025). Recent studies indicate that not only do they deal with their emotions openly, but they also can experience fairly significant emotional ups and downs, often made worse by the validation they seek on social media, leading to a rather fluctuating sense of self-worth (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). This research highlights that while being digitally connected can foster empathy on a global scale, it also seems to deepen their emotional challenges. Because of this, a supportive parental figure is needed to help them build their self-esteem outside of what they see online "This paper presents findings from a 4-week in situ study involving 78 families in China, where we collected and analyzed 602 valid audio recordings (totalling 475 hours) and daily surveys." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi).

Comparing these findings with earlier studies, it becomes clear that young people today are generally more introspective and tend to question societal norms more than previous generations did (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). It

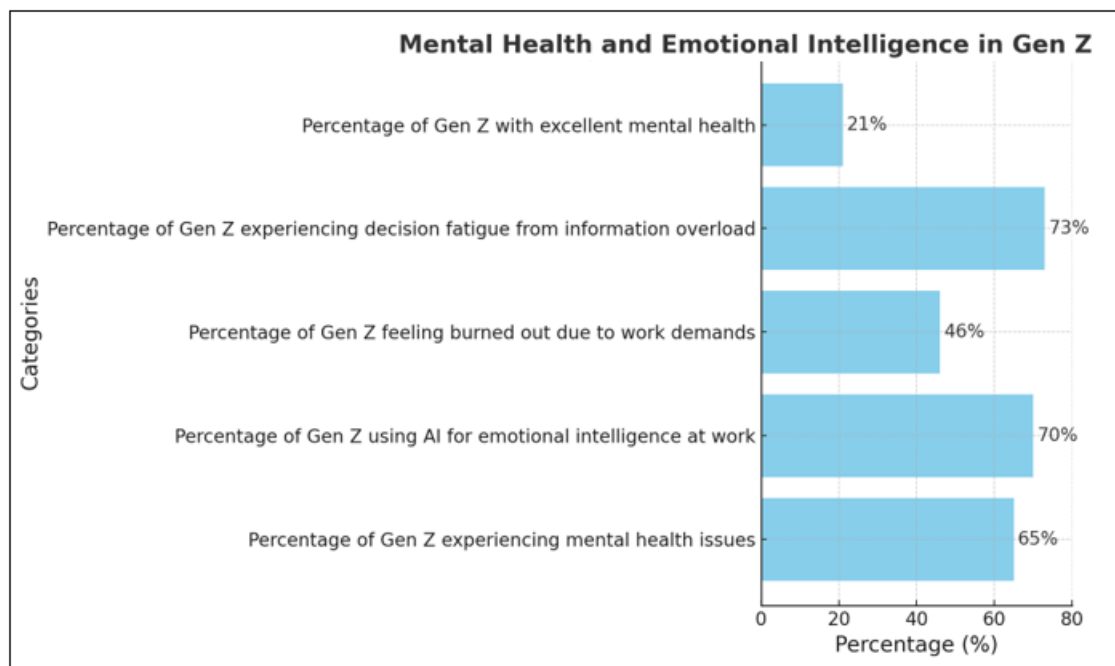
seems this introspection can increase their psychological resilience, but it also complicates their emotional lives a little bit, perhaps making them somewhat more susceptible to stress and, indeed, anxiety (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Furthermore, the reliance on digital platforms for connecting with others creates a kind of networked intimacy. Here, emotional closeness is possible even when there's physical distance, which challenges the more traditional forms of friendship and how families interact (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Previous research suggests that validation from their peers is increasingly shaping their identities, even to the point where it sometimes becomes more influential than their family (Kambeitz J et al., 2025).

These research results demonstrate a critical importance that cannot be ignored. The research shows parents must change their parenting methods because their children need better emotional and social development support. Parents who shift from authoritative parenting to collaborative methods will establish spaces where children can discover their identity while receiving necessary direction for developing emotional wellness (Maleknia R et al., 2025). The research results show that educational organizations and mental health professionals need to establish supportive systems which understand the complex emotional lives of Gen Z students. The research shows that people need to build their emotional intelligence while developing their cognitive abilities. The fast-changing world demands children to develop emotional skills better when their families provide them with support



according to Nyamboga TO (2025, p. 270-285). The knowledge of these factors enables parents and educators to handle Generation Z's opposing characteristics which will

result in future generations who combine strength with compassion.



The bar chart shows how Generation Z deals with mental health issues and their adoption of AI technology for workplace emotional intelligence. Notably, 73% of Gen Z report experiencing decision fatigue from information overload, while only 21% consider their mental health to be excellent. The chart provides a clear overview of their emotional and cognitive struggles in today's environment.

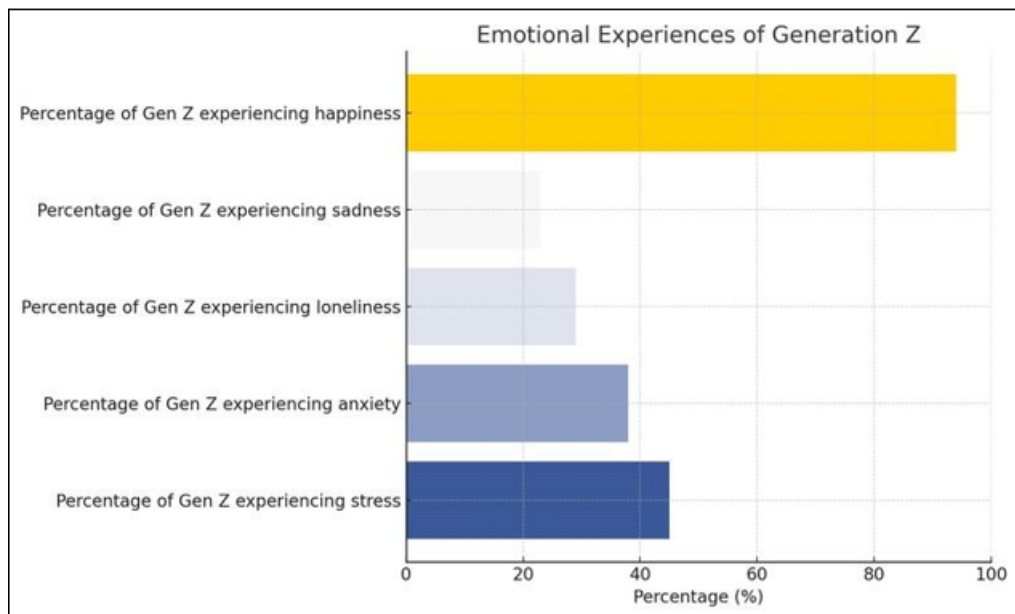
### c) Parental Engagement Strategies

Understanding the dynamics of how parents engage with Generation Z is rather vital for grasping the changing landscape of parent-child connections today. Gen Z, increasingly known for their emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate, requires parents to adopt new engagement methods that consider their specific needs and the influences around them (Rachman A et al., 2025). This study highlights how effective parental engagement involves a shift away from strict discipline towards more collaborative support, with parents acting not just as figures of authority but as partners who support their children's emotional and cognitive growth (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). It appears that parents who really listen and acknowledge their children's experiences are better placed to ease the emotional ups and downs caused by social media, as peer validation plays a big part in shaping young people's sense of self and worth "Our findings reveal significant emotional shifts in parents before and after homework involvement and summarise a range of positive, neutral and negative parental behaviours." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi).

This suggests a need for parents to nurture self-esteem in ways that aren't tied to online approval, which should lead to better emotional well-being. In comparing these findings with earlier research, it's clear that while past studies focused on

the importance of parents being involved in school, the emotional side of things is now becoming more and more critical (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). The study reinforces the idea that parental behaviour has to change to keep up with the fast pace of digital interactions, with digital literacy and setting healthy limits becoming key aspects of modern parenting (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). The data broadly supports the idea that using different engagement methods has a positive effect on children's development, especially when it comes to building emotional resilience and embracing individuality (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). T

The practical implications of these findings are rather significant; they imply that custom-made parental strategies could really change how children develop socio-emotionally. The study delivers new findings about adolescent emotional well-being responses to various engagement strategies which drive parents, teachers and policy makers to establish transformative changes (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Parents who choose to listen instead of jumping to conclusions while keeping open communication channels enable their children to manage identity-related issues successfully. Research findings demonstrate that flexible engagement approaches matter because they give parents effective tools to build better connections with their children in our changing society. (Maleknia R et al., 2025).



The chart displays Generation Z emotional experiences through percentages that show how many people experience stress and anxiety and loneliness and sadness and happiness. The survey data indicates that happiness stands as the main emotion for 94% of participants yet stress affects 45% of this group.

## 5. Discussion

Generation Z's emotional depth and cognitive agility demand we grasp their social and familial dynamics in a world that's constantly changing. The research shows their emotional literacy isn't just about expressing themselves; it's a real cultural move towards making vulnerability and mental health okay to talk about (Rachman A et al., 2025). They also adapt really well, navigating societal shifts with a cognitive flexibility that seems to go beyond what previous generations could do (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). However, this adaptability, while good, can also lead to more anxiety and stress because of information overload. This means parents need to be understanding, not just laying down the law (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). Digital connectivity and emotional ups and downs are linked, highlighting how important peer relationships are, often even more so than family. This complicates traditional parent-child relationships (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). So, understanding these changes is really important for parents, who need to shift from being authoritarian to being more like allies, exploring things together with their children (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104).

These findings line up with earlier studies that show Gen Z don't really like strict authority, preferring mentoring and guidance over being judged (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). The research also points to problems like decision fatigue, caused by being online all the time. This highlights that parents need to help their children build self-worth that isn't based on online likes (Maleknia R et al., 2025). Also, their focus on careers with a purpose suggests they're redefining what success means, valuing meaning over money, which presents both chances and difficulties for parents (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). As one person mentioned, even praise that is well-intentioned can lead to conflict "This change opens new avenues for exploring the impact of digital technology on the learning characteristics of Gen Z and possible

applications to the higher education environment." (Ali Alruthaya, Thanh-Thuy Nguyen, Sachithra Lokuge), showing the delicate balance needed in families. The implications aren't just theoretical; we need practical strategies, like tailored communication and parental involvement that celebrates individuality while keeping things supportive for growth (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73). The approach enables families to handle Gen Z development challenges which builds their ability to adapt to complex situations in modern society (Otobo I Ujah et al., 2025, p. 0316381-0316381). Scientific studies of these interactions would lead to the creation of educational and mental health programs that meet the changing requirements of a society which shifts its social values and expectations. (Jayasingh S et al., 2025, p. 17-17).

### a) Psychological and Cognitive Dimensions of Generation Z

Generation Z's psychological and cognitive makeup presents a rather intricate mix of elements that profoundly shape how they grow and form their identities in our increasingly digital world. Research shows that this generation possesses strong self-reflection abilities which produce better psychological resilience but also creates worries about essential life matters (Rachman A et al., 2025). Their ability to adapt to new technology and social environments enables them to develop mental flexibility. The research by Pel Cáez et al. (&&& 2023) shows that Gen Z students perform better in handling disruptions than previous generations did. 2025, p. 10-10). The continuous flow of information could lead to decision fatigue and overthinking in children so parents must provide balanced support according to Chiu JL et al. (&&&The book provides an in-depth analysis of global economic patterns which will define the economic landscape from 2025 through 2035 (2025, p. 9-22).

Gen Z members demonstrate emotional intelligence according to research which allows them to express their emotions while building international connections that expand their life experiences (Zhang X et al., 2025, p.

0314823-0314823). This emotional openness is somewhat counterbalanced by a certain volatility; their self-esteem can rise and fall sharply because of social media's validation loops, so parents need to help them build self-worth that isn't based on online metrics (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Building on these points, current investigations align with earlier work in revealing Gen Zs professional ambitions, showing they generally prefer careers with a purpose that match their values over traditional markers of success (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Their inclination towards less structured career paths displays their mental agility; they are more skilled at putting information together than simply memorising facts. This helps them quickly spot patterns in complicated situations (Maleknia R et al., 2025). Furthermore, the changing dynamics within their social circles, where networked intimacy is key, demonstrate that peer approval acts as a critical support system, often complicating parent-child relationships further (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). As previous research has noted, "even well-intentioned parental behaviours, such as Unlabelled

Praise, were significantly positively correlated with specific conflict types" "Notably, we found that even well-intentioned parental behaviours, such as Unlabelled Praise, were significantly positively correlated with specific conflict types." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi), highlighting the careful balance parents need to strike in fostering independence while offering support. The research provides essential knowledge which shows that educational institutions and parenting approaches must adapt to Generation Z characteristics and requirements. The combination of emotional and cognitive teaching approaches will help parents and educators support Generation Z students through their challenges thus building an environment for their development in today's fast-changing world (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73). The understanding of Generation Z requires knowledge about the changing social and economic systems which form the basis of their paradoxes.

#### *Psychological and Cognitive Characteristics of Generation Z*

Characteristic	Percentage
Health Information Avoidance	81.59% of Generation Z college students understand network buzzwords, indicating a high level of engagement with digital communication. However, they also exhibit health information avoidance behaviors, both passive and active, influenced by social norms and cognitive overload. ( <a href="https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34408693/?utm_source=openai">[pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34408693/?utm_source=openai]</a> )
Digital Health Literacy	Generation Z individuals are more likely to use the internet to find out about health-related topics compared to previous generations. However, they show lower levels of health empowerment and less desire to seek health information overall. ( <a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10644182/?utm_source=openai">[pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10644182/?utm_source=openai]</a> )
Online Learning Anxiety	48% of Generation Z students report feeling nervous during online discussions, compared to 38.1% of Generation Y students. This suggests higher levels of anxiety associated with online learning environments among Generation Z. ( <a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8631220/?utm_source=openai">[pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8631220/?utm_source=openai]</a> )
Social Media Engagement	95% of Generation Z individuals have access to a smartphone, and more than half spend 4 or more hours online daily, indicating high levels of engagement with digital platforms. ( <a href="https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10879969/?utm_source=openai">[pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10879969/?utm_source=openai]</a> )

#### **b) Emotional Literacy and Social Dynamics**

Understanding the emotional world of Generation Z is key if we want to grasp their social lives and what their emotional intelligence means for how they relate to others. This generation really stands out for how openly they express their feelings, knocking down the old stigmas around being vulnerable and talking about mental health (Rachman A et al., 2025). As our research shows, Gen Z's openness about their emotions isn't just about being empathetic; it's also linked to their awareness of global issues and their activism on things like climate change and gender equality (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). Their emotional intelligence is boosted by their online connections, which allow them to build relationships across borders, further enhancing their capacity for empathy on a large scale (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). However, social media's constant presence can also make their emotional lives a bit of a rollercoaster, as the need for online approval can mess with their self-esteem and cause big emotional swings (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). The research makes it quite clear that parents need to help their children build self-worth that isn't tied to online likes, suggesting that families need to adapt to these new challenges (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). When you compare these findings with what's already out there, it fits with the idea that being aware of your emotions and knowing how to handle them are good indicators of how you'll get on

with others and your overall well-being (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Previous studies have also pointed out similar links between emotional ups and downs and friendships, reinforcing the idea that friendships are super important in Gen Z's development (Maleknia R et al., 2025).

One key takeaway from our study is that parents might need to shift from being the boss to being more of a partner, exploring emotional experiences alongside their children (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). One expert in the field put it rather well, saying, "This work advances ubiquitous computings research to sense and understand complex family dynamics, while offering evidence-based insights for designing future ambient intelligent systems to support healthy family education environments" "This work advances ubiquitous computing's research to sense and understand complex family dynamics, while offering evidence-based insights for designing future ambient intelligent systems to support healthy family education environments." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi). The emotional journey of Gen Z requires parents to seek support from schools and families for emotional learning education. Gen Z students will develop better social abilities and mental wellness through open communication about their emotions and parental

support for building their resilience. The method establishes emotional intelligence as a shared duty for all staff members to handle instead of treating it as an individual benefit (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73). The knowledge of these dynamics serves as a fundamental requirement for both core concepts and operational methods which assist Generation Z members to handle their unique challenges in the evolving world.

#### *Gen Z Emotional Well-Being and Coping Mechanisms*

Coping Mechanism	Percentage
Doomscrolling	29%
Binge-watching TV	47%
Retail therapy	27%
Listening to music	64%
Engaging with the real world ('touching grass')	31%
Taking a break from technology/social media ('going off the grid')	31%

#### **c) Parental Engagement Strategies in the Modern Context**

In today's world, strategies for getting parents involved are really important for helping Gen Z kids grow up well, especially since they're dealing with some big changes in society. What we've found shows that Gen Z is a bit different – they're good at understanding their feelings and they're always online, so parents might need to change how they do things. Parents should adopt a friendly approach to parenting by assisting their children instead of giving direct instructions according to Rachman A et al. (2025). Children will open up about their thoughts and emotions when parents maintain an approachable and supportive relationship. Research indicates that children who receive parental support develop better emotional regulation and show improved relationships with others (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). People today focus on self-worth and vulnerability so parents need to support their children in developing positive self-esteem regardless of social media content (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22). Also, friendships can be a bit tricky now because kids are always connected online. Sometimes, what their friends think is more important to them than what their family thinks (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Moreover, as our research shows, Gen Z seems to really want jobs that have a purpose. Parents should teach their children vital values instead of concentrating on academic achievements and monetary success according to Gaurina M et al. (&&2025, p. 104-104). Young adults desire to have control over their selection of friends and romantic partners. Parents should maintain an open attitude which enables their children to solve problems independently. (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Other research agrees, saying that if parents don't understand how things have changed, they might argue with their kids more (Maleknia R et al., 2025). As one study puts it, "We also have a list of seven common arguments, with disagreements about what's true being the most common" "We also catalogue seven common conflicts, with Knowledge Conflict being the most frequent." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi).

The study results showed that parents and children often disagree about authority and child autonomy because they maintain different perspectives on these matters. Parents need to develop active listening skills and flexible parenting

methods because this approach creates an environment where children can develop emotionally while feeling supported (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285). So, what we've learned can help in schools and with parenting advice, so it's tailored to what Gen Z needs. If we use these ideas in how we raise kids, families will be better ready to face the challenges of the world, and kids will have better relationships with their parents and grow up to be well-rounded people (Missier CA, 2025, p. 73-73). Parents who understand Gen Z thinking will establish a setting which enables their children to build adaptability skills and intelligence for achieving success across different activities.

#### *Parental Engagement Strategies and Their Impact on Student Outcomes*

Strategy	Impact
Parent–School Collaboration	Improved academic achievement and healthier behaviors among students.
Parent Volunteering in Schools	Reduced likelihood of students initiating smoking and increased physical activity.
Parent Engagement in School Health Activities	Enhanced student health and learning outcomes.
Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family–School Partnerships	Strengthened family–school partnerships leading to improved student success.

## **6. Conclusion**

The intricate characteristics of Generation Z emerge through their family bonds which demonstrate their emotional intelligence and mental adaptability. The research shows that their improved emotional intelligence from mental health vulnerability discussions produces positive growth but also makes them more worried about the evolving world (Rachman A et al., 2025). The research tackled the problem by effectively showing how Gen Zs adaptive nature lets them react to upheavals more rapidly than older generations; at the same time, they need consistent parental support to build their self-esteem, separate from the shifting sands of social media (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). The research indicates that academia together with families need to transform their traditional mentorship systems into collaborative allyship models which honor the perspectives of Gen Z members (Chiu JL et al. 2025, The World Health Organization (WHO) published an essential article in 2025, which provides valuable information about climate change effects on human wellness (p. 9-22).

The article explains how climate change leads to three major health risks which include heat-related illnesses and disease transmission and worsening respiratory conditions. The article shows why climate change mitigation strategies must continue because they protect human health and prevent deaths. The article shows how climate change affects human health while stressing the urgent need for worldwide action against this global problem. Young people today need to recognize that success takes various forms because they display distinct qualities through their unorthodox career paths and down-to-earth approach to idealistic relationships (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Furthermore, this research suggests further inquiries into the impact of digital platforms on shaping identity and emotional states,



stressing the need for future studies to explore integrating mental health and awareness of technology (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). The data leads to the conclusion that parental involvement and emotional support are vital in lessening the negative effects of social media's validation loops on Gen Z's self-esteem and choices—We also find increasing emotional variability, rise rates (i.e., emotional reactivity), and recovery rates (i.e., emotional regulation) with age "We also find increasing emotional variability, rise rates (i.e., emotional reactivity), and recovery rates (i.e., emotional regulation) with age." (Daniela Teodorescu, Alona Fyshe, Saif M. Mohammad). The focus on emotional support matches the need for parents to help their children both experience life events and learn digital stimulation management techniques (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Research studies that track children through time need to study the impact of various parental involvement methods on Generation Z children's social and emotional development to develop specific intervention approaches for this demographic (Maleknia R et al., 2025).

#### a) Summary of Key Insights

An examination of the emotional intelligence and thinking skills found in Generation Z paints a picture of their complex experience as they make their way through modern life. The study highlights the improved emotional intelligence of Gen Z, enabling them to talk about what makes them vulnerable, get involved with social issues, and increase global empathy and awareness (Rachman A et al., 2025). However, this emotional openness goes hand-in-hand with considerable anxieties about their existence, calling for a more supportive parenting approach that builds alliances rather than relying on authority (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). The research addresses the issue of how families can change to meet the unique needs of this generation, living as they are in an age of rapid change and digital technology, while helping them to manage information overload and emotional ups and downs (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p. 9-22).

The findings suggest important implications for universities and for professional practice, indicating that creating supportive environments at home and in schools is very important for promoting social and emotional well-being and resilience among young people (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Redefining what success looks like and encouraging pursuits that are driven by a sense of purpose are also in line with their desire for work that matters and meaningful relationships, which challenges traditional ideas of achievement (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Emotional variability, its rise rate, and the rate of recovery in the context of emotional regulation are crucial indicators of adaptability to changing life circumstances, and the research emphasises the need for strategies that address these dynamics "This work advances ubiquitous computing's research to sense and understand complex family dynamics, while offering evidence-based insights for designing future ambient intelligent systems to support healthy family education environments." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun Shi). For future work, the study recommends longitudinal studies that look at the impact of different parental engagement strategies over time, as well as research that explores the implications of

digital engagement on identity formation and self-esteem in Gen Z (Kambeitz J et al., 2025). Integrating these insights with existing frameworks can help subsequent research to highlight ways to develop supportive and responsive environments that recognise the strengths and challenges faced by Generation Z, ultimately helping them to succeed in an increasingly complex world (Maleknia R et al., 2025).

*Gen Z Mental Health Statistics*

Percentage of Gen Z experiencing depression and anxiety	Percentage of Americans over 25 experiencing depression and anxiety
42%	23%
undefined	undefined
undefined	undefined
undefined	undefined
undefined	undefined

#### b) Implications for Parental Engagement

Looking at the complex relationships between Generation Z and their parents, this dissertation shines a light on how parental involvement is changing, driven by Gen Z's emotional intelligence and mental flexibility. Key findings show that Gen Z, known for their emotional awareness and ability to adapt, deal with anxieties about life alongside fast-paced social changes, meaning parents need to be empathetic and understanding (Rachman A et al., 2025). The research examines which parental strategies between collaborative relationships and authoritarian control methods work best for Gen Z children during their self-discovery process and emotional sharing (Pel Cáez et al. 2025, p. 10-10). The research delivers essential results that help academic studies and real-world applications because it shows that open communication between parents and children with emotional support creates stronger family bonds which enhance child resilience and life satisfaction (Chiu JL et al., 2025, p.9-22). The authors of the book "The Future of Work" (2025, p. 9-22) Early family-based interventions enable children to develop emotional strength which helps them cope with psychological difficulties in contemporary life (Zhang X et al., 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Moreover, the study points out that parental roles need to adapt to the digital spaces where Gen Z forms social connections, recognising the power of peer approval while fostering self-esteem that isn't dependent on online validation (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). Future research needs to study how reflection and emotional regulation practices affect parent-child relationships through time to understand their impact on academic success and social integration (Kambeitz J et al., 2025).

The research holds essential value because it will develop evidence-based methods which parents can use to support their children through the complex emotional environments of modern life that result from physical and digital interactions (Maleknia R et al., 2025). The acknowledgement that we also find increasing emotional variability, rise rates (i.e., emotional reactivity), and recovery rates (i.e., emotional regulation) with age "This work advances ubiquitous computing's research to sense and understand complex family dynamics, while offering evidence-based insights for designing future ambient intelligent systems to support healthy family education environments." (Nan Gao, Yibin Liu, Xin Tang, Yanyan Liu, Chun Yu, Yun Huang, Yuntao Wang, Flora D. Salim, Xuhai Orson Xu, Jun Wei, Yuanchun

Shi), highlights the ongoing need for conversation and adaptation within families, promoting a greater understanding of emotional health tailored to Gen Z's unique characteristics. By prioritising these approaches, parents can create

environments that not only embrace the dynamic nature of young people's emotional experiences but also celebrate their individuality and cognitive styles in an ever-changing world (Nyamboga TO, 2025, p. 270-285).

#### *Parental Engagement and Support Among Generation Z*

Statistic	Value	Source
Percentage of Gen Z adults seeking financial advice from parents	64%	Charles Russell Speechlys
Percentage of first-time homebuyers relying on 'Bank of Mum and Dad' in 2024	52%	Charles Russell Speechlys
Percentage of Gen Z adults likely to receive financial support from parents for major life expenses	68%	Charles Russell Speechlys
Percentage of Gen Z job seekers bringing a parent to a job interview	77%	Campus Reform
Percentage of Gen Z job seekers whose parents have spoken with a hiring manager on their behalf	53%	Campus Reform

## 7. Future Research Directions

Studies about Generation Z emotional and cognitive processes have established multiple research directions that reveal their unique emotional difficulties and social-emotional needs. This research has pinpointed crucial elements like their pronounced emotional understanding and adaptable attitudes. Whilst these enable quick adaptation to change, they also heighten susceptibility to information overload (Rachman A et al., 2025). The intricate nature of these interactions has successfully addressed the research question, demonstrating how parents and teachers might better support this generation as they explore their identity and learn to manage their emotions, through empathy and a move away from top-down, authoritarian approaches towards more collaborative roles (Pel Cáez et al., 2025, p. 10-10). The academic findings demonstrate that Generation Z requires interdisciplinary research which unites psychological and educational and social scientific knowledge to study their changing experiences (Chiu JL et al.)

The article by the World Economic Forum (2025, p. 9-22). The study shows that families need to promote honest communication about the changing nature of friendships and identities while recognizing peer validation strongly affects

how young people develop their self-esteem and emotional health (Zhang X et al. 2025, p. 0314823-0314823). Future research needs to perform extended investigations which monitor how different parenting approaches impact child emotional strength and social growth through their digital technology exposure and its effects on their mental health (Gaurina M et al., 2025, p. 104-104). As one observation from the study indicates, "we also find increasing emotional variability, rise rates (i.e., emotional reactivity), and recovery rates (i.e., emotional regulation) with age" "These results act as useful baselines for further research in how patterns of emotions expressed by children change with age, and their association with mental health." (Daniela Teodorescu, Alona Fyshe, Saif M. Mohammad), which stresses that children require continuous parental support as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. The research shows that psychological support systems need to include self-regulation and coping mechanism techniques to manage emotionally intense situations. Research into digital literacy integration must investigate how it affects emotional management resilience during times of rapid media environment changes (Kambeitz J et al. 2025). Future research needs to explore these areas to determine how Generation Z empowerment environments form because they will produce improved personal development and life satisfaction in their complicated environment (Maleknia R et al., 2025).

#### *Future Research Directions on Gen Z's Emotional Depth and Cognitive Agility*

Research Focus	Key Findings
Health Information Seeking Behaviors	Generation Z's health information-seeking behaviors are influenced by digital health literacy and empowerment, with a need for targeted interventions to enhance their health information engagement. ([pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37902832/?utm_source=openai))
Health Information Avoidance	Generation Z exhibits health information avoidance behaviors due to social influences, cognitive overload, and emotional stress, indicating a need for strategies to address these challenges. ([pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10960220/?utm_source=openai))
Mental Health Trends	Recent studies suggest an increase in mental health issues among adolescents, including Generation Z, highlighting the importance of early intervention and support systems. ([pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11933222/?utm_source=openai))
Cognitive Enhancement Methods	Advancements in personalized cognitive enhancement methods, leveraging technology, offer promising avenues for improving cognitive functions in aging populations, with potential applications for younger demographics. ([pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9302894/?utm_source=openai))

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