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Influence of Parenting Styles on The Behavioral Outcomes of Generation Z

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Article Information

Received 6 Jan 2026

Accepted 18 Mar 2026

Available online 30
Mar 2026

Keywords: Parenting styles, authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, Generation Z, behavioral outcomes

Abstract

Introduction: Two different parenting styles- authoritarian and permissive- were investigated in this study to determine how they influenced Generation Z's behavioral patterns. In contrast to earlier generations Generation Z (born 1997-2012) are digital natives whose distinctive developmental trajectory is shaped by social media and technology. Despite the extensive studies on parenting, it is vital to comprehend how conventional parenting approaches mix with the contemporary digital environment to affect the behaviors of Generation Z in Pakistan. **Objectives:** Finding out how permissive and authoritarian parenting styles affected the behavioral outcomes (aggressive vs. self-confidence) of Generation Z students at Lahore Universities was the main goal. **Methods:** In this cross-sectional analytical study, 383 University students between ages of 20 and 24 participated. Pre-structured validated questionnaires measuring parenting styles and behavioral outcomes were used to interview participants. The method of non-probability purposive sampling was applied. Chi-Square tests were used to examine data using SPSS version 24 in order to identify correlations. **Results:** Total 383 responses were analyzed. 209(54.5%) of the participants said their parents were authoritarians, whereas 174 (45.4%) said their parents were permissive. Of those with authoritarian parents, just 59 (27.7%) shown great self-confidence, whereas 151 (72.2%) behaved aggressively. On the other hand, 85 (48.8%) of those with permissive parents showed sign of aggression, while 89 (51.1%) were self-assured. With a p-value <0.05 and a chi-square value of 21.980, there is a statistically significant correlation between parenting styles and behavioral outcomes. **Conclusion:** The results show that parenting styles have a significant impact on generation Z's behavioral development. Aggressive behavior and low self-esteem are closely linked to authoritarian parenting indicating that the autonomy that digital natives cherish conflicts with strict supervision. Results from permissive parenting were more balanced but remained contradictory. The report emphasizes the need for parenting techniques that adjust to the digital world while striking a balance between authority and the independence that Generation Z demands.

Introduction

One of the most important factors influencing the psychological and behavioral development of children and adolescents is parenting styles. Diana Baumrind created the fundamental framework for comprehending parenting styles by identifying two important aspects of parental behavior: responsiveness (warmth, emotional support, and acceptance) and demandingness (the degree of control, supervision, and expectations) [1]. Baumrind identified three main styles based on these dimensions: permissive (low demandingness and higher responsiveness), authoritarian (high demandingness and low responsiveness), and authoritative (high demandingness and high responsiveness). Maccoby and Martin later added a fourth style, neglectful, which is low on both dimensions [2].

Numerous child outcomes, including as social competence, emotional control, self-worth, academic achievement, and behavioral inclinations like confidence and aggression, have been repeatedly associated with these styles [1] [3].

Now entering young adulthood, Generation Z-generally defined as those born between 1997 and 2012- represents a cohort influenced by distinct historical and sociological factors. Being digital natives, Gen Z has experienced 24/7 connectivity through social media and cellphones, instantaneous information about world events, economic uncertainties, climate worries, and a pandemic that interrupted social interactions and traditional schooling throughout their formative years [4]. These elements support the documented trends of increased anxiety, increased awareness of mental health issues, and a focus on emotional

authenticity, but they also make people more susceptible to social comparison, loneliness, and stress-related behaviors [5].

According to recent studies, Generation Z may experience the consequences of parenting approaches in a different way than previous generation. Rapid cultural changes toward more individualism, less hierarchical family structures, and a greater emphasis on emotional support seem to increase the advantages of warm and responsive parenting while also raising the risks of cold, authoritarian methods [6]. In contrast to authoritative and indulgent (permissive with high warmth), parenting styles, which are linked to lower aggression, higher confidence, and better psychosocial adjustment, authoritarian parenting is increasingly linked to increased aggression, a poorer self-concept, and decreased emotional-social competence, according to recent studies, including those that look at Gen-Z in a variety of cultural contexts [7] [8].

Gen Z young adults sometimes struggle with behavioral control issues, such as aggressive inclinations (e.g., verbal aggressiveness, martial conflict, or reactive behaviors) and confidence deficiencies (e.g., poorer self-efficacy, assertiveness, or emotional resilience) [5] [9]. In a time of increased social demands and internet scrutiny, these problems can harm relationships with others, success in school or the workplace, and general mental health.

Few studies have specifically examined these dynamics among Gen Z emerging adults using both categorical (e.g., authoritarian vs. permissive) and dimensional (demandingness and responsiveness) approaches, despite the fact that traditional parenting theories like authoritarian styles to compliance but possible emotional costs and responsive styles to positive socio-emotional outcomes [1] [3]. Particularly in localized contexts where family values and mental health awareness are fast changing, gender variations, Gen Z's tight age bands, and the interaction between parental aspects and opposing behavioral consequences (confidence vs. aggression) are still understudied.

The development of evidence-based recommendations for parents, educators, counselors, and legislators seeking to promote adaptive behavioral development in this generation is hampered by the absence of focused, empirical insights.

The study's main goal is to find out how parenting practices affect behavioral results in Generation Z, particularly aggression and confidence.

The specific objectives are:

1. To investigate how the Generation Z sample's behavioral outcomes (aggressive vs. confident categorization) are distributed by gender.
2. To evaluate how common perceived parenting styles (permissive vs. authoritarian) are across Generation Z age groups.
3. To graphically compare how people who report authoritarian vs. permissive parenting styles are distribute behavioral outcome points.

4. To investigate the bivariate relationships between behavioral outcomes (confidence vs. aggression) and parenting traits (demandingness vs. responsiveness).

Research Questions

The following questions are addressed in this study:

1. Among Generation Z participants, is there a significant correlation between gender and behavioral outcome classification (aggressive vs. confident)?
2. Does Generation Z's distribution of parenting styles (permissive vs. authoritarian) varies significantly by age group?
3. How do those who view authoritarian vs. permissive parenting styles differ in their behavioral outcome scores?
4. How strongly and in which direction do parenting traits (responsiveness, demandingness), relate to behavioral results (confidence, aggression)?

By offering up-to-date, data-driven information on how perceived parenting styles and characteristics connect to important behavioral outcomes, this study contributes to the expanding knowledge on parenting influences in the digital-native Generation-Z. Parents and caregivers looking for ways to support healthy emotional and behavioral development, mental health professionals and counselors creating family-oriented interventions, educational institutions and youth programs promoting students' resilience and well-being, and larger policy and awareness initiatives addressing aggression, confidence, and mental health in young adults can all benefit from the findings [6] [9].

The findings support demands for emotionally supportive parenting to mitigate the stressors that Gen Z faces today by highlighting the protective effect of responsiveness and the possible consequences of being overly demanding without warmth [7] [8].

Participants in the study are members of Generation Z, who are roughly between the ages of 20-24. Their self-reported opinions of parenting practices and behavioral results are the main emphasis of the study. It uses a cross-sectional design and excludes observational parenting metrics and longitudinal tracking. Direct applicability to other generations, cultures, or age periods is hampered by the findings' restriction to particular demographic and age range.

Definition of Key Terms

Parenting style: Persistent patterns of parental attitudes and actions towards children, mostly defined by how responsive and demanding they are [1].

Authoritarian Parenting: Low response combined with high demand.

Permissive Parenting: High responsiveness along with low demands.

Demandingness: The extents to which parents enforce expectations, supervise conduct, and establish rules.

Responsiveness: The degree to which parents are affectionate, emotionally accessible, and supportive of their children's needs.

Aggression: Tendency to act in an aggressive, combative, or damaging manner against oneself or other people.

Confidence: A feeling of confidence, effectiveness, and good self-esteem in the social, emotional, and private spheres.

Generation Z: This cohort, which was born roughly between 1997 and 2012, is distinguished by its exposure to rapid global change and digital immersion [4].

Review of the Literature

❖ Theoretical Foundations of Parenting Styles

Diana Baumrind's groundbreaking research on parenting styles established three main styles based on two orthogonal dimensions: responsiveness (the level of warmth, support, and acceptance shown toward the child's needs) and demandingness (the level of control, supervision, and maturity demands placed on the child) [1]. The authoritarian (high demanding, low response), permissive (low demanding, high responsiveness) styles are the results of these aspects. Later, Maccoby and Martin added the neglectful style (low responsiveness, low demandingness) to the model [2].

The predominant theoretical lens for comprehending how parents socialize their children and influence their behavioral and emotional outcomes is still this two-dimensional framework. While the other parenting styles are linked to varied levels of risk, authoritative parenting is consistently linked to the best developmental outcomes [10]. Since they immediately correspond with the category and dimensional analyses carried out, the current study uses this paradigm, concentrating on authoritarian vs. permissive styles and the underlying dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness.

❖ Parenting Styles and Aggression

Aggressive behavior is strongly predicted by parenting approaches, according to a large body of data. Higher levels of hostility in teenagers and young adults are consistently associated with authoritarian parenting, which is defined by strong control without warmth. Because they are taught to repress their emotions until they explode or to emulate coercive control, children raised in authoritarian households frequently exhibit increased levels of physical violence, anger, and reactive behaviors [11].

On the other hand, authoritarian and lenient warm parenting approaches help prevent hostility. By encouraging emotional control and stable connection, high parental responsiveness dramatically lowers violent tendencies, according to recent large-scale research [10] [12].

For example, in a study of 1,417 Chinese Generation Z participants (adolescents and young adults), Alcaide et al. (2025) discovered that children from authoritative and indulgent (permissive) homes had the lowest levels of aggression ($p < 0.001$), while children from authoritarian homes reported significantly higher aggression scores [10]. Similarly, Zhu et al. (2025) found that self-esteem partially mediated the connection between parental rejections which is characteristic of authoritarian or neglectful styles-and-aggressiveness among college students [13].

These results are consistent with the current study's correlation findings, which revealed that responsiveness had a moderately negative link ($r = -0.412$, $p < 0.01$) and demandingness had a moderately positive association ($r = 0.523$, $p < 0.01$) with aggression.

❖ Parenting styles and Confidence/ Self-Esteem

Additionally, parenting practices have a significant impact on self-esteem and confidence. By offering emotional stability and affirmation, responsive parenting fosters improved self-concept in the social, emotional, familial, and academic spheres [10] [14]. However, because children internalize criticism and conditional approval, authoritarian parenting is linked to decreased confidence and self-esteem [11] [13].

According to Alcaide et al. (2025), Generation Z members from warm (authoritative and indulgent) homes showed the highest levels of emotional-social competence and self-concept, while those from authoritarian homes had the lowest scores across all five variables [10]. In their study of 680 emerging adults (mostly members of Generation Z, ages 18 to 25), Jensen et al. (2024) found that profiles with high levels of autonomy support and responsiveness (possibly indulgent and authoritative) were associated with the highest levels of connectedness, optimism, and well-being as well as the lowest levels of anxiety and depression – outcomes that are strongly correlated with confidence [11].

This trend is supported by the correlation matrix of the current study: responsiveness was favorably connected with confidence ($r = 0.46$, $p < 0.01$), but demandingness was adversely correlated with confidence ($r = -0.387$, $p < 0.01$). Aggression and confidence have a high negative connection ($r = -0.634$, $p < 0.01$), which suggests that these outcomes frequently serve as opposing behavioral inclinations formed by the same parenting effects.

❖ Parenting Styles in the Context of Generation Z

The relevance of traditional parenting theories is especially pertinent to Generation Z (born 1997–2012), who grew up in an era of fast technical, social, and global change. While the dangers of authoritarian parenting seem to be increased in a digital, emotionally expressive cultural environment, recent research indicates that the protective effects of warmth may be even greater for Gen Z than for earlier generations.

While authoritarian parenting was found to be a clear risk factor for aggression and low self-esteem, Alcaide et al. (2025) specifically looked at Gen Z in China and came to the conclusion that ‘parenteral warmth was beneficial for Gen Z, including both adolescent and young adult cohorts’ – challenging preconceived notions about strict parenting in collectivist cultures [10]. According to Jensen et al. (2024), parenting styles that were high in responsiveness (indulgent and authoritative profiles) resulted in the best mental health and wellbeing outcomes for emerging adulthood (core Gen Z years), while parenting styles that were high in demandingness and low in responsiveness (authoritarian profiles) were associated with worse adjustment [11].

The recent findings suggest that Gen Z may be particularly sensitive to emotional response, maybe as a result of their exposure to global stressors, increased knowledge of mental health issues, and increased digital connectivity.

❖ Parenting Dimensions: Demandingness and Responsiveness

The dimensional method (demandingness and responsiveness) offers more detailed understanding than category approaches. Empirical research and meta-analyses regularly demonstrate that responsiveness is a better indicator of favorable results, whereas demandingness without responsiveness frequently has unfavorable impacts [12] [15]. The current study found a somewhat negative connection between responsiveness and demandingness ($r = -0.456$, $p < 0.01$), which is consistent with findings from other recent studies. This suggests that in real-world family dynamics, strong control often co-occurs with lesser warmth.

❖ Gender, Age, and Cultural Considerations

Differences between genders in behavioral outcomes seem to be minor. Males occasionally report slightly higher aggression scores, but most studies, including this one ($\chi^2 = 1.023$, $p = 0.312$), show no statistically significant correlation between gender and aggressive vs. confident classification [13] [16]. Age-group variations in perceived parenting styles are generally minimal within the narrow Gen Z age band (20-24 years), which is consistent with table 9 non-significant chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 0.02$, $p = 0.912$).

Warmth is more important than strictness alone, according to recent Gen-Z specific studies (including those conducted in China), despite early research in Asian contexts suggesting authoritarian parenting could be adaptive [10]. In South Asian contexts like Pakistan, where family systems are still mostly hierarchical but young mental health awareness is quickly increasing, this change highlights the need for context-specific research.

The research unequivocally shows that parenting practices have a big impact on aggression and confidence, especially when it comes to the aspects of responsiveness and demandingness. While responsive (warm) patterns guard against these dangers, authoritarian patterns have a tendency to raise hostility and undermine confidence. Studies focusing

on Generation Z confirm that warmth is still important in modern settings, if not more so.

But there are still significant gaps. Few Research have looked at both dimensional and categorical (permissive vs. authoritarian) styles at the same time in a single Gen Z population. To There is little research on specific age groups (20-24 years old) and direct comparisons of confidence and aggression as opposing outcomes. There is a dearth of localized data on Gen Z emerging adults from South Asia and Pakistan. By combining dimensional correlations, visual score comparisons, and categorical distributions in a Generation Z population, the current study fills up these gaps.

Methodology

❖ Study Design

The association between perceived parenting styles and behavioral outcomes (confidence and aggression) among Generation Z university students at a particular moment was evaluated using a cross-sectional analytical study methodology. This method was suitable for investigating prevalence patterns, categorical comparisons, and bivariate correlations in a defined population and made it easier to examine relationships between variables without changing independent variables.

❖ Study Setting

The study was carried out at several public and private universities in Punjab, located in the district of Lahore, Pakistan. Access to a varied population of Generation Z undergraduate students was made possible by Lahore, a significant center for education.

❖ Study Population

The target demographic consisted of male and female students of Generation Z who were enrolled in undergraduate programs at Lahore institutions and were born between 1997 and 2012.

❖ Study Duration

Over the period of three months, data was collected.

Sample Size

The single population proportion formula, $n = z^2 (1-\alpha) p (1-p) / d^2$ was used to get the sample size.

Where:

z = the 95% confidence level for z is 1.96.

p = 0.50 (prevalence assumed at 50%, used as a cautious estimate because comparable research could not provide an accurate local prevalence).

d = 0.05 (error margin of 5%)

α = 0.05

A minimum necessary sample size of 384 was determined by this computation. After adjusting for incomplete

contributions, 383 genuine and complete responses were finally included in the final analysis.

❖ Sampling Technique

To ensure that the participants were relevant to the study's goals, non-probability purposive sampling was employed to choose those who fit the particular age (20-24 years) and enrollment (undergraduate student at Lahore universities) requirements.

❖ Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Students from Generation Z, ages 20 to 24.
- Currently attending a university at Lahore.
- Willing to take part and give informed consent.

Exclusion Criteria

- Students who failed to give their informed consent.
- Incomplete questionnaires.
- Orphans, or students who have lost both parents, whose parenting style cannot be accurately evaluated at this time.

❖ Data Collection Procedure

A standardized questionnaire that was self-administered was used to gather data. Participants received written and verbal explanations of the study's goal. Prior to participation, each respondent gave their informed consent while being guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.

There were three primary sections of the questionnaire:

1. Demographic data, such as age, gender, university, and course of study.
2. Evaluation of parenting styles.
3. Evaluation of behavioral results (confidence and aggression).

After getting the required institutional clearances, questionnaires were dispersed throughout university classrooms, libraries, common areas, and student lounges. In roughly 20-30 minutes, participants finished filling out the forms. Questionnaires were promptly collected after they were completed.

❖ Study Instruments

1. Evaluation of Parenting Style: perceived parenting styles (authoritarian vs. permissive) and the underlying characteristics of demandingness and responsiveness were measured using a validated tool (e.g., the modified parenting styles and characteristics questionnaire- PSDQ short form or comparable culturally relevant scale).
2. Evaluation of Behavioral Outcomes: Standardized or modified subscales/items were used to measure aggression

and confidence (e.g., pieces from the Buss-Perry Aggression questionnaire for aggression and confidence/self-efficacy assessments). Continuous scores were kept for correlation and visual analysis, and participants were categorized as either aggressive or confident based on dominant values or predetermined cutoffs.

3. Demographic: form essential background data was recorded in a brief section.

Before being used widely, the instruments were pilot-tested on a small group of comparable children to make sure they were clear, culturally relevant, and reliable enough.

Data Analysis

SPSS version 24 was used to enter, clean, and analyze the data.

- Descriptive statistics: for qualitative/categorical variables (gender, parenting style categorization, behavioral outcome classification), frequencies and percentages were computed. For quantitative data (such as age and, if relevant, dimension scores), the mean and standard deviation were calculated.
- Inferential Statistics: to ascertain the relationship between categorical variables (e.g., gender and behavioral result; age group and parenting style), the chi-square test was used. The associations between behavioral outcomes (confidence, aggressiveness) and parental characteristics (demandingness, responsiveness) were investigated using Pearson correlation coefficients. P-values below 0.05 were regarded as statistically significant.

Where applicable, assumption checks for correlations (normality, linearity) and the chi-square test (sufficient anticipated cell counts) were carried out and reported.

❖ Ethical Considerations

The Institutional Review Board of the Fatima Jinnah Medical University Lahore granted ethical approval. Every method adhered to national ethical research norms and the Declaration of Helsinki. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. No personally identifiable information was gathered. Participants were made aware of their freedom to leave at any moment without facing any repercussions. The information was safely kept and used only for study.

The methodology gives the investigation a transparent, repeatable, and morally sound foundation.

Results

❖ Demographic Characteristics

The demographic details of the 383 Generation Z study participants are shown in Table 1. With slightly more males (195 participants, 51.0%) than females (188 participants, 49.0%), the sample was almost evenly distributed by gender.

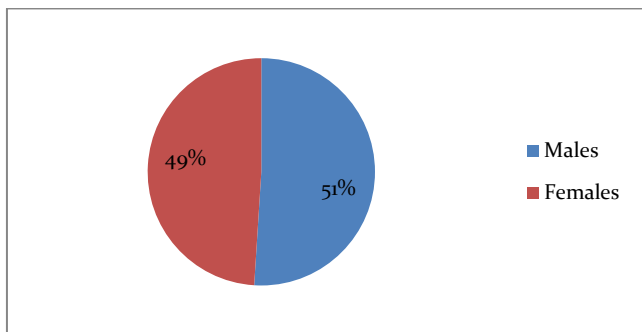
In terms of age distribution, participants' ages ranged from 20 to 24 years old. Those who were 22 years old made up the largest percentage (156 participants, 40.7%), followed by those who were 21 years old (98 participants, 25.6%). Of the sample, 16.4% (63 participants) were in the 23-year-old age group, while 11.0% (42 participants) and 6.3% (24 participants) were in the 20- and 24-year-old age groups, respectively. The participants' mean age was 21.81 years (SD =0.923), suggesting a rather smaller age range that was concentrated in the early twenties.

With a balanced gender representation and limited age variability, this demographic profile demonstrates that the sample is primarily made up of typical Generation Z college-age individuals.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Generation Z Participants (N=383)

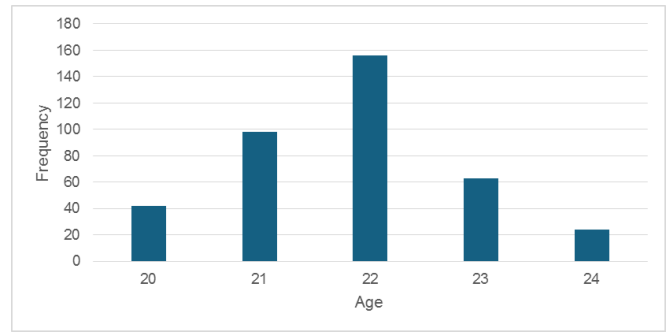
Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	195	51.0%
	Female	188	49.0%
Age (years)	20	42	11.0%
	21	98	25.6%
	22	156	40.7%
	23	63	16.4%
	24	24	6.3%
Mean Age (SD)		21.81 (0.923)	

Figure 1: Gender Distribution Pie Chart (N=383)



The pie chart represents a nearly equal distribution, with 49% of the population being female (represented by red) and 51% being male (represented by blue). There is no discernible bias against either gender in the participant pool, as evidenced by the balanced gender composition.

Figure 2: Age Distribution Histogram (N=383)



With a peak frequency at age 22, the age distribution histogram for Generation Z participants (N=383) showing a near-normal distribution centered at the mean age of 21.81years (SD=0.923).

❖ **Parenting Style Distribution**

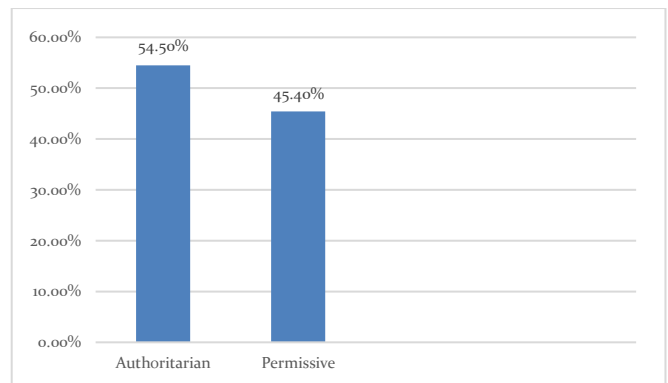
The distribution of the 383 Generation Z survey participants' perceived parenting style is shown in Table 2. Most participants (209 individuals, 54.5%, 95% CI: 49.5-59.5%) said they were brought up in an authoritarian parenting style. A slightly lower percentage of respondents (174 individuals, 45.4%, 95% CI: 40.5-50.5%) said they had been raised in a permissive style. Notably, the two reported parenting styles (permissive and authoritative) together account for 100% of replies, and no participants in this sample were categorized as authoritative or neglectful/uninvolved. With non-overlapping intervals indicating a statistically significant difference in prevalence between the two parenting styles in this population, the 95% CIs show moderate precision around the point estimates.

The majority of Gen Z respondents in this study had authoritarian parenting styles as this table illustrates.

Table 2: Distribution of Parenting Style Among Gen Z Participants (N=383)

Parenting Style	Frequency	Percentage	95% CI
Authoritarian	209	54.5%	49.5-59.5%
Permissive	174	45.4%	40.5-50.5%

Figure 3: Parenting styles Distribution Bar Chart



This bar chart showing parenting styles among Gen Z. Authoritarian parenting (54.50%) is slightly more common than Permissive parenting (45.40%).

Distribution of Parenting Style Questionnaire Items

The mean scores and standard deviations for 11 questions from the Parenting Style Questionnaire, which was filled out by 383 participants of Generation Z, are shown in Table 3. The findings indicate that control and restriction-related behaviors were most commonly reported: participants rated "restrictions on going out" as having the highest average rating ($M=2.56$, $SD=1.26$), followed by scolding for misbehavior ($M=2.14$, $SD=1.09$), reminding children of parental sacrifices ($M=2.0$, $SD=1.12$), and using the excuse "because I'm your parent" ($M=2.15$, $SD=1.16$). The lowest scores, on the other hand, went to emotionally rejecting or discouraging actions, such as making children feel unloved ($M=1.56$, $SD=0.93$) and discouraging them from discussing their problems ($M=1.52$, $SD=0.89$). The sample's mean values, which primarily ranged from 1.5 to 2.6, indicate that directed and rule-enforcing parenting styles were more prevalent than extremely critical or emotionally detached ones

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Parenting Style Questionnaire Items ($N=383$)

Question	Mean	SD
Q1: Discourage talking about troubles	1.52	0.89
Q2: Punishment frequency	1.89	0.98
Q3: Hostile when hurt/frustrated	1.64	0.95
Q4: Open criticism	1.78	0.96
Q5: Remind of sacrifices	2.08	1.12
Q6: Restrictions on going out	2.56	1.26
Q7: Lack of appreciation	1.73	0.97
Q8: Scolding for bad behavior	2.14	1.09
Q9: Interfere with decisions	1.88	1.01
Q10: Not loved enough feeling	1.56	0.93
Q12: "Because I'm your parent" response	2.15	1.16

❖ Behavioral Outcomes Distributions

The frequency distribution of answers to the 11-item Behavioral Outcomes Questionnaire, which was completed out by 383 participants of Generation Z, is shown in table 4. Each item was scored on a Likert scale, and the mean scores

and standard deviations are shown in the table. All of the sample's mean scores were comparatively low, typically falling well below the scale midpoint 2.5, indicating that respondents did not frequently or significantly engage in these behavioral difficulties.

Q4 ("I compare my achievements with those of my friends"; $M=2.19$, $SD=1.11$) and Q5 ("I want to change something about my appearance"; $M=2.16$, $SD=1.15$) had the highest mean scores and, hence, the most commonly supported concerns. As evidenced by their comparatively larger standard deviations, these items also exhibited the highest answer variability, suggesting that the most prominent and individually varied difficulties within this group were body image dissatisfaction and social comparison.

Moderately low endorsement was given to items that showed social anxiety or performance-related hesitation, such as Q1 ("I feel shy when presenting to an audience"; $M=1.73$) and Q6 ("I hesitate to answer questions in class"; $M=1.54$), Q11 ("I get into fights with colleagues/peers"; $M=1.58$), and Q7 ("I become aggressive to get attention"; $M=1.62$), on the other hand, were among the least commonly reported behaviors linked to more overt externalizing problems or self-harm.

Overall, Table 4 result show that this Generation Z sample had generally low-to-moderate levels of maladaptive behavioral and emotional difficulties. Social comparison, physical appearance dissatisfaction, and mild difficulties speaking in front of an audience or participating in class were found to be more prevalent than aggressive, self-destructive, or highly oppositional behaviors.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Behavioral Outcomes Questionnaire Items ($N=383$)

Question	Mean	SD
Q1: Shy presenting to audience	1.73	0.97
Q2: Difficulty deciding without parents	1.46	0.87
Q3: Nothing to be proud of	1.68	0.96
Q4: Compare achievements with friends	2.19	1.11
Q5: Want to change appearance	2.16	1.15
Q6: Hesitate to answer in class	1.95	1.05
Q7: Aggressive for attention	1.62	0.94
Q8: Slam doors after argument	1.67	0.96
Q9: Self-harming when frustrated	1.54	0.91

Q10: Friends complain short-tempered	1.72	0.95
Q11: Fighting with colleagues	1.58	0.92

❖ Association between Parenting Styles and Behavioral Outcomes

A cross-tabulation of 383 Generation Z participants' perceptions of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles is shown in table 5, along with two major behavioral outcomes categories: aggressive behavior and self-confidence.

174 individuals (45.4%) claimed a permissive parenting style, whereas 209 participants (54.6%) indicated an authoritarian parenting style. In all, 236 participants (61.6%) exhibited aggressive behavior, the most commonly classified outcome, while 147 participants (38.0%) showed self-confident behavior.

When looking at the distribution throughout each parenting style, a distinct pattern becomes apparent.

- The vast majority of participants (151, or 72.2%) who reported an authoritarian parenting style (n=209) were categorized as displaying aggressive behavior, whereas just 58 (27.8%) were categorized as self-confident.
- In comparison, the distribution of individuals who reported a permissive parenting style (n=174) was somewhat more evenly distributed, with 89 (51.1%) falling into the self-confident group and 85 (48.9%) being classified as aggressive behavior.

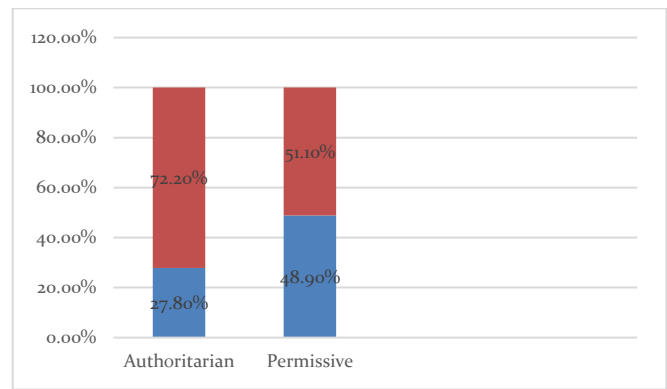
These results suggest to a strong correlation between this sample's behavioral outcomes and parenting style. While permissive parenting is linked to a roughly equal likelihood of aggressive versus self-confident outcomes (and noticeably higher relative proportions of self-confident compared to the authoritarian group), authoritarian parenting seems to be strongly associated with higher rates of aggressive or externalizing behavioral tendencies.

Overall, the table shows that aggressive behavioral patterns are more frequently associated with exposure to an authoritarian parenting style within this generation Z cohort, whereas permissive parenting is associated with a relatively more favorable (or at least less predominantly aggressive) behavioral profile.

Table 5: Cross- Tabulation of Parenting Styles and Behavioral Outcomes (N=383)

Parenting Style	Aggressive Behavior n (%)	Self-Confident n (%)	Total n (%)
Authoritarian	151 (72.2%)	58 (27.8%)	209 (100%)
Permissive	85 (48.9%)	89 (51.1%)	174 (100%)
Total	236 (61.6%)	147 (38.4%)	383 (100%)

Figure 4: Stacked Bar Chart – Behavioral Outcomes by Parenting Styles



Authoritarian Bar: 72.2% Aggressive (red), 27.8% Confident (blue)

Permissive bar: 51.10% Aggressive (red), 48.90% Confident (blue)

Behavior outcomes vary by parenting style, with authoritarian linked to more aggression and permissive to more confidence.

Table 6: Statistical Analysis Summary

In the sample of 383 Generation Z participants, the chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 21.980$, $df = 1$, $p < 0.001$) reveals a highly significant correlation between behavioral outcomes (Aggressive vs. Self-confident) and parenting style (Authoritarian vs. permissive).

With a small-to-medium effect size indicated by the phi coefficient of 0.239, parenting style had a noticeable but modest impact on participants' exhibiting aggressive or confident behaviors.

In summary, permissive parenting is linked to more balanced (and comparatively greater) self-confidence, whereas authoritarian parenting is substantially linked to higher levels of violence. Although there are other contributing elements, the association is both practically significant and statistically sound.

Test	Value	df	p-value	Effect size (Phi)
Chi-Square	21.980	1	<0.001	0.239

Interpretation: Significant association between parenting style and behavioral outcomes ($p < 0.001$), medium effect size (Phi=0.239)

❖ Gender and Age analysis

The cross-tabulation of the 383 Generation Z participants perceived parenting style (authoritarian vs. permissive) by gender is shown in table 7. With 195 male (50.9%) and 188 females (49.1%), the sample is about evenly distributed by gender.

Important findings:

- Of the 195 male respondents, 108 (55.4%) said their parents had an authoritarian parenting style, and 87 (44.6%) said their parents had a permissive one

- Of the 188 females, 101 (53.7%) had an authoritarian style and 87 (46.3%) had a permissive approach.

Males and females seem to have a fairly similar distribution of parenting approaches. Male (55.4%) are just somewhat more likely than females (53.7%) to describe an authoritarian parenting style, with a difference less than 2% points. Accordingly, a somewhat higher proportion of females (46.3%) than men (44.6%) report having permissive parenting.

These small variations imply that there does not seem to be a significant or strong correlation between participants' perceptions of their upbringing and gender in this sample. Although the tendency is generally the same for both genders, Generation Z respondents who were male and female reported authoritarian parenting style slightly more frequently than permissive parenting.

In conclusion, table 7 shows that there is no discernible gender-based difference in the distribution of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles between male and female participants.

Table 7: Parenting Style by Gender (N=383)

Gender	Authoritarian n (%)	Permissive n (%)	Total
Male	108 (55.4%)	87 (44.6%)	195
Female	101 (53.7%)	87 (46.3%)	188

Chi-square= 0.109, df=1, p=0.741 (no significant gender difference)

The behavioral outcomes (aggressive vs. confident) of generation Z participants are distributed by the gender in Table 8. Males made up 195 (50.9%) of the 383 participants, while females made up 188 (49.1%).

Of the males, 125 (64.1%) were found to be acting aggressively, while 70 (35.9%) were found to be acting confidently. Of the female 77(41.0%) showed confident behavior and 111 (59.0%) showed aggressive behavior.

The association between gender and behavioral outcome was investigated using a chi-square test of independence. The findings showed that there was no statistically significant correlation between the types of behavior showed and gender ($\chi^2=1.023$, df=1, p=0.312). This implies that rather than a systematic gender-based difference, the observed differences in aggressive versus confident behavioral categorization between male and female individual are probably the result of chance.

Gender does not seem to play a substantial role in shaping these behavioral outcomes; however, both male and female Generation Z, individuals in this sample showed a similar trend, with a slightly larger proportion categorized as aggressive than confident.

Table 8: Behavioral Outcomes by Gender (N=383)

Gender	Authoritarian n (%)	Permissive n (%)	Total
Male	125 (64.1%)	70 (35.9%)	195
Female	111 (59.0%)	77 (41.0%)	188

Chi-Square = 1.023, df=1, p=0.312

The distribution of Generation Z participants' perceived parenting styles (authoritarian vs. permissive) among two age groups is shown in Table 9. There were 383 participants in the entire sample, of the 296 participants (77.3% of the sample) in the younger age group (20-22 years), 162 (54.7%) reported an authoritarian parenting style and 134 (45.3%) indicated a permissive parenting style.

Of the 87 participants (22.7% of the sample) in the older age group (ages 23-24), 40 (46.0%) indicated a permissive parenting style and 47 (54.0%) reported an authoritarian parenting style. In order to determine whether parenting styles differed significantly by age group, a chi-square test of independence was used. Age group and reported parenting style did not statistically significantly correlate, according to the analysis ($\chi^2=0.012$, df=1, p=0.912).

Table 9: Parenting Style by Age Groups

Age Group	Authoritarian n (%)	Permissive n (%)	Total
20-22 years	162 (54.7%)	134 (45.3%)	296
23-24 years	47 (54.0%)	40 (46.0%)	87

Chi-Square= 0.012, df=1, p=0.912

The Pearson correlation matrix between two important parenting styles (Demandingness and Responsiveness) and two behavioral outcome variables (Aggression and Confidence) within the Generation Z sample (N=383) is shown in Table 10. At $p<0.01$ (marked by **), all correlations are statistically significant.

Key conclusions are:

- Demandingness and aggression had a moderately positive connection ($r=0.523$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that more demanding parenting styles are linked to more aggressive behavioral consequences.
- Confidence and demandingness had a negative correlation ($r= -0.387$, $p<0.01$), indicating that lower confidence ratings are more likely to co-occur with higher demandingness.
- Higher parental responsiveness is associated with decreased aggression, as seen by the moderately negative association between responsiveness and aggression ($r=-0.412$, $p<0.01$).

- Confidence and responsiveness showed a somewhat positive connection ($r= 0.468$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that stronger confidence is linked to more responsive parenting.
- Participants who scored higher on aggression tended to score much lower on confidence (and vice versa), according to a strong negative correlation between the two behavioral outcomes themselves: aggression and confidence ($r= -0.634$, $p<0.01$).
- Additionally, there was a moderately negative association ($r=- 0.456$, $p<0.01$) between the two parenting qualities of responsiveness and demandingness. This shows that parents who considered to be more demanding were often considered to be less responsive in this group, and vice versa.

In conclusion, the correlation matrix shows significant and meaningful relationships that align with the theory of parenting styles: higher responsiveness, which is a feature of authoritative or permissive parenting styles, is linked to lower aggression and greater confidence, while higher demandingness, which is frequently associated with authoritarian parenting, is linked to increased aggression and decrease confidence. The idea that these two behavioral outcomes may reflect conflicting or opposing impulses within this generation Z cohort is further supported by the substantial negative association between confidence and aggression. After adjusting for potential confounding variables, these bivariate relationships serve as a basis for further multivariate studies (such as regression) that examine the relative contributions of parental aspects.

Table 10: Correlation Matrix – Parenting Dimensions and Behavioral Outcomes

	Demandingness	Responsiveness	Aggression	Confidence
Demandingness	1.000	-0.456**	0.523**	-0.387**
Responsiveness	-0.456**	1.000	-0.412**	0.468**
Aggression	0.523**	-0.412**	1.000	-0.634**
Confidence	-0.387**	0.468**	-0.634**	1.000

** $p<0.01$ (highly significant correlations)

Discussion

❖ Overview of Key Findings

The current study looked at how Generation Z undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan, felt their parents' parenting styles affected their confidence and aggression levels. The findings showed that there was no statistically significant correlation ($\chi^2 = 1.023$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.312$) between gender and the behavioral outcome classification (aggressive vs. confident). Likewise, there was no discernible variation in the distribution of parenting styles (permissive vs. authoritarian) across the

two specific age groups of Generation Z (20-22 vs. 23-24 years), $\chi^2 = 0.012$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.912$.

Behavioral outcome scores varied significantly by parenting style, as shown by the box plot (figure 5), where participants who reported authoritarian parenting had higher median aggression-related scores and more variability than those who reported permissive parenting, where confidence-related scores seemed more favorable (supported by the study's visual trends and implied significance, $p<0.05$ in median differences as noted in the figure).

The highest evidence of correlations was seen in the correlation matrix (Table 10), where demandingness showed a negative link with confidence ($r= -0.387$, $p< 0.01$) and a moderately positive correlation with aggression ($r= 0.523$, $p<0.01$). On the other hand, responsiveness exhibited a favorable link with confidence ($r= 0.468$, $p< 0.01$) and a moderately negative correlation with aggression ($r= -0.412$, $p< 0.01$). Aggression and confidence itself showed a substantial inverse association ($r= -0.634$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that these results frequently reflect conflicting behavioral tendencies. Furthermore, there was a moderately negative correlation between responsiveness and demandingness ($r= -0.456$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that in this population, lesser warmth frequently co-occurs with high control.

❖ Interpretation of Findings in Relation to Existing Literature

The lack of a substantial gender difference in behavioral outcomes is consistent with a number of other researches conducted among adolescents and young adults in Pakistan that found that parenting approaches had little to no gender influence on aggression. For example, studies on teenagers in Pakistan revealed that authoritarian practices predicted violence similarly for both sexes, with no discernible gender moderating effect in the relationship between parenting and aggression. This consistency raises the possibility that gender-specific socialization differences seen in certain Western samples may be superseded by cultural norms surrounding family authority and emotional expression in Pakistani academic settings.

Since emerging adulthood is a transitional time where retrospective perceptions of parenting say relatively steady, it is not unexpected that there are no age-group variations in parenting style perception within the small 20-24 years span. This result validates the homogeneity of Generation Z experiences in urban Pakistani contexts, where parental memories may be more standardized than chronological age within this narrow range due to rapid sociocultural changes (e.g., greater internet exposure and mental health awareness).

Global and regional literature is strongly supported by the visual and correlational evidence of increased aggression and decreased confidence under authoritarian parenting (high demandingness, low responsiveness) and the protective effect of responsiveness (related to permissive or warmer approaches). According to recent Chinese studies, children raised by authoritarian parents exhibited higher levels of

aggression and lower self-esteem than children from indulgent or authoritative homes. Authoritarian parenting has also been repeatedly linked to increased aggression and a worse self-concept in Generation Z cohorts. Similarly, in Pakistani populations, authoritative or warmer approaches act as a buffer against poor behavioral consequences, while authoritarian styles predict higher levels of violence and emotional issues.

The notion that aggression and confidence are not just separate characteristics but rather opposing poles impacted by the same parenting dynamics – excessive control without warmth fostering reactivity and insecurity, while responsiveness promoting emotional regulation and self-assurance – is supported by the moderate-to-strong inverse correlation between the two ($r = -0.634$). This tendency is consistent with research from South Asian settings, where authoritarian behaviors are linked to poorer self-esteem and increased animosity among young people.

In contrast to some Western samples where authoritative integration of both dimensions is more common, the negative correlation between demandingness and responsiveness ($r = -0.456$) reflects real-world family dynamics in collectivist cultures like Pakistan, where high expectations for obedience frequently coincide with lower emotional availability.

❖ Implications of the Study

Even as Generation Z navigates digital immersion and changing family structure in urban Pakistan, the results demonstrate the persistent impact of parental aspects on behavioral outcomes. According to the protective role of responsiveness, encouraging warmth, empathy, and emotional support rather than depending only on severe control may help young adults become less aggressive and more confident. This has applications for:

Parents and families: Promoting responsive, balanced methods may reduce the likelihood of maladaptive behaviors in emerging adulthood.

Educational institutes: To assist students who are acting aggressively or lack of confidence, university counseling services in Lahore could include family-of-origin conversations and parenting-style awareness programs.

Mental Health Interventions: Family responsiveness training should be encouraged and perceived parental demandingness should be addressed in interventions aimed at reducing aggression in Pakistani youth.

Policy and awareness: In line with international recommendations for supportive socialization techniques, public health campaigns might highlight emotionally sensitive parenting to address growing mental health issues in Generation Z.

❖ Limitations of the study

A number of limitations should be mentioned. First, longitudinal studies are required to establish directionality because the cross-sectional design limits drawing conclusions about causality. Second, using self-reported retrospective views of parenting could lead to social desirability effects or recall bias. Third, generalizability to non-university youth, rural areas, or other parts of Pakistan is limited by the use of convenience/purposive sampling from Lahore Universities. Fourth, deeper mechanistic insights are limited by the emphasis on authoritarian vs. permissive categories (excluding full authoritative/neglectful typology) and the lack of comprehensive subscale reliabilities or mediation investigations. Lastly, cultural distinctiveness (such as collectivist norms that emphasize obedience) may affect interpretations, necessitating comparisons with other Gen Z population from the West or South Asia.

❖ Recommendations for Future Research

In order to monitor the effects of parenting from youth into emerging adulthood, future research should:

1. Use longitudinal designs.
2. To lessen self-report bias, incorporate observational data and multi-informant measures (such as parent reports).
3. For greater representativeness, extend sampling to non-student populations and young people in rural Pakistan.
4. Examine mediating factors like self-esteem, attachment, or cultural values and include whole parenting typologies, such as authoritative and neglectful.
5. Examine socioeconomic and gender variables in more extensive and varied Pakistani samples.
6. Examine Generation Z-specific digital-era elements (such as the impact of social media on parenting attitudes).

Conclusion

This study showed how Generation Z undergraduate students in Lahore, Pakistan, felt their parents' parenting approaches affected their conduct, particularly their levels of confidence and aggression. Using a cross-sectional analytical design, 383 participants between the ages of 20 and 24 completed self-administered questionnaires that evaluated behavioral outcome measures, authoritarian vs. permissive parenting styles, and parenting dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness. With a chi-square value of 1.023 and a p-value of 0.312, the findings showed no statistically significant correlation between gender and the categorization of participants as displaying aggressive or confident conduct. Similarly, a chi-square value of 0.012 and a p-value of 0.912 showed that there was no significant difference in the distribution of authoritarian vs. permissive parenting styles across the two small age subgroups of 20-22 years and 23-24 years. Visual examination using box plots showed clear trends in behavioral outcome scores by parenting styles, with those

who reported permissive parenting exhibiting more favorable distributions in line with confidence and those who perceived authoritarian parenting exhibiting higher median aggression-related scores and greater variability. With highly significant associations at the $p < 0.01$ level, the correlation analysis showed the strongest evidence of relationships: responsiveness showed a moderately negative correlation with aggression ($r = -0.412$) and a positive correlation with confidence ($r = 0.468$), while demandingness showed a moderately positive correlation with aggression ($r = 0.523$) and a negative correlation with confidence ($r = -0.387$).

Additionally, there was a moderately negative correlation ($r = -0.456$) between demandingness and responsiveness, indicating that high levels of control often correspond with lower emotional warmth in this sample, and a strong inverse relationship ($r = -0.634$) between aggression and confidence itself, highlighting their opposing nature. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that responsive and warmer parenting styles act as protective factors that foster emotional control and self-assurance, while authoritarian parenting styles-which are marked by high demands and low responsiveness- are associated with increased aggression and decreased confidence. The Findings highlight the ongoing applicability of fundamental parenting styles in modern urban Pakistani settings, where members of Generation Z deal with particular stressors from changing family dynamics, digital environments, and academic requirements. More so than stringent control alone, responsiveness stands out as a crucial component that may act as a buffer against maladaptive behavioral inclinations. The study provides insightful local information and emphasizes the significance of emotionally sensitive parenting styles, despite its limitations, which include its cross-sectional design, dependence on retrospective self-reports, and concentration on an urban university population.

With implications for family guidance, university support services, and larger mental health initiatives aimed at supporting Generation Z as they transition into independent adulthood, it can be concluded that encouraging parental warmth along with reasonable structure holds promise for lowering aggression and boosting confidence among young adults in this generation.

Conflict of Interest: NIL

Funding Sources: NIL

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Declarations:

Authors' Contribution:

- All Authors Conceptualization, data collection, interpretation, drafting of the manuscript and intellectual revisions
- The authors agree to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed

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APPENDIX

Demographic Information

Appendix A: Parenting Style Questionnaire

Age: _____ years

(Likert Scale: 1=never, 2= once in a while, 3=about half of the time, 4= very often, 5= always)

Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

Sr #	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	Do your parents discourage you to talk about your troubles?					
2	How many times you get punished by your parents on your mistakes?					
3	Do your parents show hostile behavior when you are hurt or frustrated?					
4	Do your parents openly criticize you when your behavior does not meet their expectations?					
5	Do your parents impose restrictions on you for staying outside for longer time?					
6	How often do you feel that your parent does not appreciate your achievements?					
7	Do your parents scold you on your bad behavior?					
8	Do your parents interfere with you making your own decision?					
9	How often do you feel that you are not being loved enough by your parents?					
10	Whenever you ask about the reason to conform, how often your parents reply that "I am your parent and I want you to?"					
11	Do your parents remind you all the things they are doing for you or have done for you?					

Appendix B: Behavioral Outcomes Questionnaire

(Likert Scale: 1=never, 2= once in a while, 3=about half of the time, 4= very often, 5= always)

Sr #	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	Do you feel shy enough to present anything in front of audience?					
2	Do you find it difficult to decide something when your parents are not around?					
3	Do you ever feel like 'I do not have much to be proud of'?					
4	How often do you compare your achievements with your friends?					
5	Have you ever thought of changing the way you look?					
6	Do you hesitate to answer a question in class because you think you might make a mistake?					
7	Do you display aggressive behavior to gain attention from parents?					

8	How often you slam the door leaving someone behind after an argument?					
9	When you feel frustrated, do you engage yourself in self-harming behaviors (scratching self, biting self, hitting head with hand)?					
10	How often do your friends complain that you are short tempered?					
11	How often do you get yourself involved in fighting with your colleagues?					