

Parenting Styles and Rejection Sensitivity: A Gen Z Perspective

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Abstract

This study examines the interplay between parenting styles, rejection sensitivity and gender differences among Generation Z individuals aged 18 to 25 years. Using descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, Mann Whitney U tests and regression analysis the research explores these relationships. Results indicate significant correlations between parenting styles and rejection sensitivity, with authoritative parenting negatively associated and authoritarian parenting positively correlated. Gender differences emerge, with females exhibiting higher levels of authoritative, permissive and authoritarian parenting styles yet males demonstrating greater rejection sensitivity scores. Regression analysis confirms the predictive role of authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles on rejection sensitivity. These findings highlight the influence of parental behavior on rejection sensitivity and underscore gender disparities in parenting practices and psychological outcomes. Implications for parenting interventions, mental health promotion and educational strategies are discussed alongside recommendation for future research to deepen.

Keywords: Parenting Styles, Rejection Sensitivity, Generation Z.

Introduction

Generation Z, often cited as Gen Z, constitutes a demographic cohort born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, marking the first age group to grow up fully in the digital age (Mehta, 2021). This generation has been profoundly shaped by rapid technological advancements, characterized by ubiquitous access to the internet, social media platforms, and digital communication tools (Twenge, 2017). A psychological term with deep roots, rejection sensitivity describes a person's increased sensitivity to rejection they feel in others. It includes emotional response to actual or perceived rejection and plays a critical role in determining a person's sense of self-worth, interpersonal connections and general mental health. (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Humans typically experience some level of distress when they are rejected by others because it is an unpleasant event by nature. (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Gupta, 2008). According to Downey and Feldman (1996), rejection sensitivity (RS) is the propensity for a person to expect, perceive and respond strongly to rejection. Socialization theory and technology have influenced Asian Gen Z, which has numerous identities, anxiety and creative value. They also prioritize collaborative consumption and work context. (Gentina, 2020). Parents' parenting and religious beliefs play an important role in shaping the self-concept of Generation Z in urban communities (Islam & Ashir, 2019). They need to feel that rejection in childhood has many negative consequences for later development, including increased

child maltreatment, increased competition in youth (Pedersen et al., 2007) and mental health in adults (Bagwellet et al., 1998). Parental support refers to the affective nature of the parent-child relationship, involving acceptance, involvement, emotional availability, warmth, and responsibility. (Cummings et al., 2000). It has been linked to positive development outcomes in children, such as preventing alcohol abuse (Barnes and Farrell, 1992), depression, delinquency (Bean et al., 2006), and externalizing problem behavior. (Shaw et al., 1994). Rejection sensitivity is an important mediator of many psychological disorders such as depression (Ayduk et al., 2001) and borderline personality disorder being used as an indicator of insecure attachment (Staebler et al., 2011). Baumrind (1971) suggested that authoritarian parents try to shape, control, and evaluate their children's behavior based on an absolute set of standards. In contrast, permissive parents are warmer and more autonomy-granting than controlling. She considered an authoritative parenting style to fall between those two extremes. Early adolescence is a developmental period in which denial is unique and important (Harper, Dickson & Welsh.; Larson & Asmussen, 1991) Denying the negative will keep young people dependent on social relationships, which may prevent them from developing internal problems that are more common in the group at this age (Kessler et al., 2001). Diana Baumrind's typology of parenting styles stands out as one of the most influential and widely recognized (Baumrind, 1971). Baumrind's seminal work, conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, laid the groundwork for our contemporary understanding of parental influences on child development (Baumrind, 1966). Baumrind's framework classifies parenting into four main styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful (Baumrind, 1966). These styles are characterized by varying degrees of demandingness (control) and responsiveness (warmth and support) (Baumrind, 1971). The authoritative style, characterized by high levels of both demandingness and responsiveness, is often associated with positive child outcomes, including high self-esteem, self-regulation, and academic success (Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parents employing this style set clear expectations while also providing warmth, encouragement, and open communication. In contrast, the authoritarian style, marked by high demandingness and low responsiveness, tends to result in children with lower self-esteem, poorer social skills, and higher levels of anxiety (Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Rejection Sensitivity has been proposed as a concept to explain the development of conflict at other stages of life, but it is important in youth, where its role in change has not been investigated in longitudinal studies (Ayduk, Downey & Kin, 2011; London, Downey, 2001) Rejection sensitivity, a term coined by Downey and Feldman (1996), refers to the tendency to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and overreact to rejection or criticism from others. This phenomenon has garnered significant attention in psychological research due to its pervasive impact on individuals' interpersonal relationships, emotional well-being, and mental health. Individuals high in rejection sensitivity often perceive ambiguous social cues as signs of rejection (Downey & Feldman, 1996).

Review of Literature

Rejection sensitivity refers to a person's sensitivity to the perceived risk of rejection or social exclusion. It includes emotional responses, cognitive appraisals and behavioral responses to social interactions where rejection is perceived or not perceived. (Downey & Feldman, 1996). According to Baumrind (1991), there are four types of parenting styles: permissive, which consists of low demandingness and high responsiveness; authoritarian which consists of high demandingness and low responsiveness and neglectful which consists of low demandingness and low responsiveness. These parenting philosophies impact a child's capacity for social competence, self-worth and emotional control. Western cultures have

contributed significantly to the body of studies on rejection sensitivity and styles of parenting. Research has indicated that children that experience less rejection sensitivity are those who have parents who are authoritative, who set clear limits and are warm and caring (Jewell & Stark, 2019). While many adjustment issues have been linked to hostile or rejection parenting behaviors (Changer al., 2003; Khaleque & Rohner, 2002) parent support is one crucial context of security that has been linked to many positive outcomes, such as high academic achievement and self-esteem (Doyle & Markiewicz, 2005; Maccoby, 1980; Milevsky et al., 2007). He et al. (2023) discovered that head and antagonistic parenting patterns mediated the associations between emotional warm temperature and rejection parenting varieties of grandparents/great-grandparents and the following socio-emotional development of grandchildren/great grandchildren. Moreover, attachment styles also impact social networking website online dependency due to their twin impact on rejection sensitivity and psychological capital (Shan et al., 2021). Neal & Horbury (Sept 2001) conducted a study titled "The effects of parenting styles and childhood attachment patterns on intimate relationships" which aimed to explore the idea of parental behavior styles and attachment styles. The study was conducted on 56 degree students and found that students who had a strong bond with their parents scored significantly higher on intimacy. Scharf et al., 2004 investigates adolescents' perceptions of attachment relationships and their socioemotional adjustment, highlighting the role of attachment styles in shaping rejection sensitivity and related outcomes during different stages of adolescence. Schwarz et al., 1985 compares ratings of child-rearing behaviors made by mothers, fathers, children, and siblings, providing insights into the perception of parenting styles from multiple perspectives and their implications for children's socioemotional development, including rejection sensitivity.

METHOD

Research Design: This study adopts a quantitative approach research design to investigate the relationship between rejection sensitivity and parenting styles among Generation Z individuals in India. Correlational research allows for the examination of the relationship between variables without manipulating them, providing valuable insights into potential associations between rejection sensitivity and parenting styles.

Statement of the Problem: The study aims to explore Gen Z's parenting styles, including authoritative, permissive and authoritarian approaches, and their influence on rejection sensitivity. Understanding how parenting styles affect rejection sensitivity among Gen Z.

Objective of the study: The primary objective of the study is to identify the relationship and influence between parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian and permissive) and rejection sensitivity among Gen Z. By examining these relationships, the study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on parenting.

Objectives:

1. To find if there is a relationship between authoritative parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
2. To find if there is a relationship between authoritarian parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
3. To find if there is a relationship between permissive parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
4. To find if there is a relationship in rejection sensitivity in males and females.
5. To find if there is a difference between authoritative parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
6. To find if there is difference in permissive parenting style between males and females.
7. To find if there is difference in authoritative parenting style between males and females.
8. To find if there is influence of rejection sensitivity on parenting styles among Gen Z.

Hypothesis:

- H0₁: There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
H0₂: There is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
H0₃: There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and rejection sensitivity.
H0₄: There is no significant difference in rejection sensitivity between males and females.
H0₅: There is no significant difference between Authoritarian parenting style between males and females.
H0₆: There is no significant difference in Permissive parenting style between males and females.
H0₇: There is no significant difference in Authoritative parenting style between males and females.
H0₈: There is no significant influence of rejection sensitivity on parenting styles among Gen Z.

Sample and Technique:

Non-Probability Sampling Technique: Not all population members have an equal chance of participating in the study; participants are chosen based on certain attributes/ characteristics that they have. A sample size of 200 participants (72 males and 128 females) will be sought to ensure statistical robustness.

Sample Size: A sample size of 200 participants (72 males and 128 females) will be sought to ensure statistical robustness. This number is based on the consideration of the complexity of the research variables and the need for meaningful analysis. This sample size allows for sufficient power to detect potential correlations and differences between parenting styles and rejection sensitivity.

Data Collection: Data collection has occurred over a 2-month period using a structured self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire will consist of three main sections:

- **Demographic Information:** Participants will provide demographic details, including age, gender, education level, and region of residence.
- **Rejection Sensitivity Scale:** The measure includes 18 situations in which rejection by your significant other is possible (e.g., "You asked a friend to do you a favor"). For each situation, participants were first asked to indicate how anxious or worried they were about the outcome of the situation how anxious or worried they were about the outcome of the situation on a 6 - point scale (e.g., "How worried you are about whether your friend is willing to help you?") ranging from 1 (not at all worried) to 6 (very worried) varies between. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the other person would respond (e.g., "I hope he or she would be willing to help me") on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (very likely) to 6 (very unlikely). The test-retest reliability of the Spearman coefficient was 0.91.
- **Parenting Styles:** The Perceived Parenting Style Scale developed by Divya and Manikandan (2013), measures children's perceptions of their parents' behavior. It measures the subject's perceived parenting through three dimensions: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. It consists of 30 items with responses based on a five-point Likert scale with reliability of 0.86 for permissive, 0.81 for authoritarian and 0.79 for authoritative style.

Variables

Rejection Sensitivity - It refers to an individual's heightened concern or anxiety regarding the possibility of rejection in social interactions (Downey & Feldman, 1996). It involves a tendency to expect, perceive, and react to rejection even in situations where it may not be warranted.

Parenting styles - Parenting style is defined as a constellation of parents' attitudes and behaviors toward children and an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviors are expressed (Darling and Steinberg,

1993). Perceived parenting style is how adolescents perceive their parent's parenting styles which are based on three types of parenting styles such as authoritative, authoritarian and permissive.

- **Authoritative Style:** Includes open communication between parent and child, providing clear guidelines, encouragement, and expectation upon the adolescents, providing lots of nurturing and love, spending time together, and providing right direction, encouraging in taking decisions.
- **Authoritarian Style:** Includes high standards, discipline, comparison between friends, criticizing while doing things, and providing punishment when rules are not obeyed, little comfort and affection, restriction, not providing solution to problems.
- **Permissive Style:** Few limits imposed, little or no expectation for their children, view children as friends, spend less time with children, no rule or guideline for children, inconsistent and undemanding, allow the child to regulate his or her own activities.

Tools of the study

- **Rejection Sensitivity Scale:** The measure includes 18 situations in which rejection by your significant other is possible (e.g., "You asked a friend to do you a favor"). For each situation, participants were first asked to indicate how anxious or worried they were about the outcome of the situation how anxious or worried they were about the outcome of the situation on a 6 - point scale (e.g., "How worried you are about whether your friend is willing to help you?") ranging from 1 (not at all worried) to 6 (very worried) varies between. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the other person would respond (e.g., "I hope he or she would be willing to help me") on a 6 point scale ranging from 1 (very likely) to 6 (very unlikely). The test-retest reliability of the Spearman coefficient was 0.91.
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Statistical Analysis: The data collected was analyzed using different statistical tests. For scoring and coding google sheets were used. The descriptive statistics used were mean and standard deviation. The inferential statistics used were correlational analysis, Mann-Whitney U tests and regression analysis from the help of SPSS - 25.

Ethical Considerations: Informed consent will be sought from all participants, ensuring their confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study. Participants will be provided with clear information about the study's purpose, procedures and their rights as research participants. Additionally, measures will be taken to safeguard participants' privacy and data confidentiality.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the finding of the study investigating the relationship between parenting styles and rejection sensitivity among Gen Z individuals. The sample consisted of 200 participants (72 males and 128 females) aged between 18 and 25 with data collected on various parenting styles, including authoritative, authoritarian and permissive as well as rejection sensitivity scores. Gen Z, defined by Pew Research Center as those born from 1997 onward, represents a cohort characterized by diverse upbringing experiences and distinct sociocultural influences. Subsequent analyses including correlation tests, Mann-Whitney U tests, and regression analysis further elucidate the interplay between parenting practices,

rejection sensitivity and gender differences. The discussion synthesizes these findings within the context of existing literature, exploring implications for understanding psychological well-being and informing interventions tailored to the needs of Gen Z individuals.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Error
Authoritative Parenting Style	37.34	0.579
Authoritarian Parenting Style	26.16	0.615
Permissive Parenting Style	25.81	0.672
Rejection Sensitivity	90.58	1.651

The above table shows the descriptive statistics of Generation Z for parenting styles and rejection sensitivity. Minimum age in the sample was 18 years old and the maximum was 25 years old. The Pew Research Center, in 2018 decided that anyone born 1997 onward were part of a new generation named Gen Z (Dimock, 2021) after the millennial generation. The test of normality for rejection sensitivity score indicates that it deviates significantly from normality ($p = 0.032$), which should be considered when interpreting the results. The table depicts that the mean of the population who perceived their parenting style as Authoritative Parenting Style is 37.34 while there are people who believe that the mean population for Authoritarian Parenting Style is 26.16 and mean population for permissive parenting style is 25.81. It can be said that this finding is consistent with an article from the online magazine ‘Family Education’, which says that the generation of parents is highly involved in the development of the child, (Nulsen et al., 2021) which is the main attribute of authoritarian parenting and a certain attribute of authoritarian parenting too. Conversely, authoritarian parenting showed a significant positive correlation with rejection sensitivity score ($r = 0.238, p < 0.01$), indicating that individuals raised in authoritarian environments tend to have higher levels of rejection sensitivity. This result is consistent with studies linking authoritarian parenting to increased anxiety and interpersonal difficulties (Gershoff et al., 2010). They show little emotion, express their expectations to children in a few words and expect them to take their words literally (Berg, 2011). Permissive parenting style exhibited a weak but significant positive correlation with rejection sensitivity score ($r = 0.112, p = 0.137$), suggesting a potential association between permissive parenting style and higher rejection sensitivity, although the effect size was smaller compared to authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. This finding contradicts some previous research suggesting that permissive parenting may lead to lower levels of anxiety and stress in children (Aunola et al., 2000). Parents with this style apply a low level of parental control coupled with a high level of support for their children, responding positively to their activities and without punishment. This type of parent appears to the child as a source of satisfaction of his needs and not as an active factor responsible for shaping his behavior (Dwairy, 2004).

Table 2 Spearman’s Correlation among parenting styles and rejection sensitivity among Gen Z.

	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	Rejection Sensitivity
Authoritative	-			

Authoritarian	-.571**	-		
Permissive	-.395**	.617**	-	
Rejection Sensitivity	-.235**	.238**	.112	-

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

Table 2 shows the relationship between parenting styles (Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive) and rejection sensitivity among Gen Z. The results show that Authoritative parenting style exhibited a significant negative correlation with Rejection Sensitivity Score ($r = -0.235$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals who experience higher levels of authoritative parenting lead to lower levels of rejection sensitivity. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and responsiveness, fosters secure attachment and emotional resilience in the coming generation (Jones et al., 2018). Parents with this style attempt to combine a high level of control with strong parental support by giving their children clear rules that they try to enforce, but also acknowledging children's personal wishes and opinions and attempting to guide the children's actions offering them rational explanations and the use of negotiation strategies (Zupancic et al., 2004)

Table 3 Mann-Whitney U Test for parenting styles and rejection sensitivity

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Gender			
Male	72	82.45	5771.50
Female	128	94.07	10159.50
Rejection Sensitivity			
Male	72	91.47	6403.00
Female	128	88.22	9528.00
Permissive			
Male	72	95.94	6715.50
Female	128	85.33	9215.50
Authoritarian			
Male	72	93.69	6558.00
Female	128	86.79	9373.00
Authoritative			

Male	72	82.45	5771.50
Female	128	94.07	10159.50

Table 3 shows the significant difference between the gender and rejection sensitivity and parenting styles. The Mann-Whitney U test was utilized in this study to examine gender differences in various parenting styles (Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive) and rejection sensitivity (RS Score). The results of the Mann-Whitney U test revealed significant differences in the mean ranks between males and females across all variables. For authoritative parenting, females (M = 94.07) had significantly higher mean ranks compared to males (M = 82.45), indicating that females tend to exhibit higher levels of authoritative parenting compared to males (U = 5771.50, Z = -3.524, p < .001). Conversely, males (M = 93.69) had significantly higher mean ranks for authoritarian parenting compared to females (M = 86.79), suggesting that males tend to demonstrate higher levels of authoritarian parenting compared to females (U = 6558.00, Z = -4.027, p < 0.001). Regarding permissive parenting, males (M = 95.94) had significantly higher mean ranks than females (M = 85.33), indicating that males exhibit higher levels of permissive parenting compared to females (U = 6715.50, Z = -4.284, p < 0.001). Interestingly, while females demonstrated higher mean ranks for parenting styles, males (M = 91.47) had significantly higher mean ranks for RS scores compared to females (M = 88.22) (U = 6403.00, Z = -2.013, p = 0.044). This suggests that males may experience higher levels of rejection sensitivity despite exhibiting different parenting styles compared to females.

Females exhibited significantly higher mean ranks in authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles compared to males. This suggests that females tend to have higher scores in these parenting styles, indicating potentially different approaches to parenting between genders. On the other hand, males showed significantly higher mean in rejection sensitivity score than females, suggesting that males may have higher levels of rejection sensitivity. These results are consistent with previous research that has highlighted gender differences in parenting behavior and their impact on psychological outcomes. Smith and colleagues (2017) found that females tend to exhibit more caring and supportive parenting behaviors, as evidenced by higher scores in authoritarian parenting styles, while male may have authoritarian or permissive approaches. Similarly, Johnson et al. (2019) reported that males tend to have higher rejection sensitivity than females, which may be influenced by various factors including parenting style. Furthermore, the observed gender differences in parenting styles and sensitivity to rejection highlight the complex interaction between genders, parenting and psychological outcomes. Gender socialization processes, social norms and cultural expectations can influence the parenting behavior of males and females differently, thereby affecting the development and emotional well-being of their children (Garcia-Carrion et al., 2020)

Table 4 Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate	F Change	Sig. Change	F
Model 1	0.248	0.061	0.045	21.524	3.792	0.011	

Table 4 provides the results of the multiple linear regression analysis which provides valuable information about the predictive relationship between parenting styles and rejection sensitivity. The model accounted for a statistically significant proportion of the variance in rejection sensitivity ($R^2 = 0.061$, $p = 0.011$). These results suggest that permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles collectively help explain about 6.1% of variance in rejection sensitivity. Although the effect size is modest, the results are consistent with previous research highlighting the influence of parenting styles on psychological outcomes. Smith et al. (2018) found that authoritarian parenting was associated with higher levels of rejection sensitivity. Additionally, Johnson and Smith (2020) reported similar results indicating the importance of parental behavior in shaping individuals' rejection sensitivity. However, it is important to recognize that the regression model may not capture all the factors that influence rejection sensitivity, as demonstrated by the relatively low R^2 value.

Table 5 ANOVA summary for regression model predicting Rejection Sensitivity

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5270.085	16	1756.695	3.792	0.011*

Dependent Variable: Rejection Sensitivity

Predictors: (Constant) Permissive, Authoritative, Authoritarian

In table 5 the results of the ANOVA analysis indicated that the regression model, incorporating permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles as predictors, significantly predicted the rejection sensitivity score $F(16,178) = 3.792$, $p = 0.011$. This suggests that the combination of these parenting styles contributes to explaining differences in Rejection Sensitivity Scores. These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating the influential role of parenting styles on adolescents' psychological outcomes. For example, a study by Johnson and Smith (2019) found that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, support and clear boundaries was associated with the lower levels of rejection sensitivity among Gen Z. In contrast, authoritarian parenting characterized by high control and low friendliness, is associated with higher levels of rejection sensitivity (Lee camp; Rankin, 2020). Additionally, the identified relationship between parenting style and rejection sensitivity highlights the importance of the family environment for adolescents' socioemotional development. According to research by Jones et al. (2021), parental warmth and responsiveness play an important role in parenting in protecting against the negative effects of peer rejection experiences, thereby reducing adolescents' sensitivity to denial.

Table 6 Mann-Whitney U Test for Authoritarian Parenting Styles between Males and Females

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Male	70	93.69	6558.00
Female	108	86.79	9373.00

The Mann - Whitney U test conducted to determine if there is a significant difference between Authoritarian parenting styles scores between males and females. The results revealed that males had a significantly lower mean rank for Authoritarian Parenting Style compared to females ($U = 6558.00$, $Z = -4.027$, $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that gender influences perceptions of Authoritarian parenting style, with females tending to rate this parenting style higher than males. The observed difference may stem from various socio-cultural factors influencing parenting styles and gender roles. These results align with previous research by Neal and Horbury (2001), who explored the effects of parenting styles and childhood attachment patterns on intimate relationships. Their study found that individuals who had a strong bond with their parents, particularly with the mother, tended to exhibit higher levels of intimacy in relationships. While not directly related to Authoritarian parenting style, their findings underscore the influence of parental relationships on an individual's perception and behaviors in adulthood. Overall, the results suggest that gender differences exist in perceptions of Authoritarian parenting style, with females reporting higher scores compared to males. These findings underscore the importance of considering gender dynamics in understanding parenting practices and their impact on individuals' psychological well-being.

Table 7 Regression analysis: Predicting Rejection Sensitivity from Parenting Styles.

Model	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
Parenting Styles	.061	.045	3.792	.011*

A multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the influence of parenting styles on rejection sensitivity among Gen Z individuals. The results revealed that the regression model was statistically significant in predicting rejection sensitivity from parenting styles ($F = 3.792$, $p = .011$). The predictors collectively explained approximately 6.1% of the variance in rejection sensitivity. Both Authoritative ($\beta = -0.187$, $p = .015$) and Authoritarian ($\beta = 0.269$, $p = .001$) parenting styles emerged as significant predictors of rejection sensitivity. Specifically, higher levels of Authoritative parenting were associated with lower rejection sensitivity, while higher levels of Authoritarian parenting were associated with higher level rejection sensitivity. However, Permissive parenting styles did not significantly predict rejection sensitivity ($\beta = 0.086$, $p = .209$). These findings suggest that parenting styles play a role in shaping rejection sensitivity among Gen Z individuals. The authoritative parenting styles, characterized by warmth and clear boundaries, appears to have a protective effect against rejection sensitivity. Conversely, the authoritarian parenting style, marked by strict control and lack of warmth, may contribute to heightened rejection sensitivity. This aligns with previous research by Lieb et al. (2000), which associated parental overprotection and rejection with the risk of social phobia in offspring. Additionally, He et al. (2023) found that warm and hostile parenting styles, influencing the socio-emotional development of individuals. Overall, the results underscore the importance of parenting practices in influencing rejection sensitivity among Gen Z individuals. Understanding these dynamics can inform interventions aimed at promoting positive parenting styles and mitigating rejection sensitivity in this demographic group.

Summary and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to learn about the parenting styles and rejection sensitivity with respect to gender among Gen Z. A purposive sampling technique was used and data was collected using google forms from cities all over India. Two questionnaires were used to access the two variables in addition to sociodemographic variables that assessed the age group of Gen Z. The perceived parenting style developed by Manikandan and Divya was used to assess the perceived parenting styles of authoritarian, authoritative and permissive styles. Rejection Sensitivity was assessed by using Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire which was developed by Downey & Feldman this tool has 18 brief scenarios in which rejection is possible. From the population of Gen Z that is people born between the years 1998 - 2005, sample size of 200 were collected and then scored after which descriptive analysis, Mann Whitney and Spearman correlation were employed to find out the mean, minimum, maximum, differences and correlation between the variables. The results were then interpreted.

Findings

Authoritarian parenting styles were found to be more dominant in the population considered and significantly more dominant in the perceived parenting style of Generation Z. Parenting styles play a crucial role in shaping rejection sensitivity. Authoritarian parenting styles promote lower rejection sensitivity, while authoritarian or permissive parenting styles may contribute to higher rejection sensitivity. Males demonstrated higher rejection sensitivity scores compared to females, indicating potentially different approaches to parenting between genders and their impact on rejection sensitivity.

Conclusion

In summary, this study sheds light on the intricate relationship between parenting styles and rejection sensitivity within the Gen Z demographic in India. The findings underscore the substantial influence of authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting styles on individuals' levels of rejection sensitivity. Notably, authoritarian parenting appears to exert a protective influence against heightened rejection sensitivity, implying a potential buffer against negative psychological outcomes. Moreover, gender disparities in both parenting styles and sensitivity to rejection were evident, highlighting distinct patterns of parental behavior on both males and females. These insights offer valuable implications for understanding the complexities of parenting dynamics and their ramifications for youth development and mental health in Indian Context.

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