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# **Leading Generation Z Towards Academic Independence and Confidence in Decision Making**

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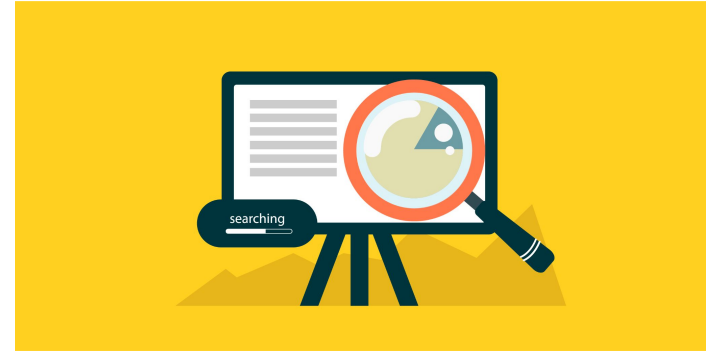
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# Background and Implications



# Who is Gen Z?

Table 1. The factors that shaped Gen Z (versus millennials)

	Gen Z	Millennials	Reference
Technology	<p><b>Internet technology and smartphones always a part of their lives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of teens have access to smartphone (2018)</li> <li>• 45% of teens online constantly (2018)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Internet technology and smartphones are innovations to which they adapted</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73% of teens have access to smartphone (2014)</li> <li>• 24% of teens online constantly (2014)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anderson and Jiang (2018)</li> </ul>
Mental health	<p><b>Elevated levels of depression and anxiety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50.4% of males and 34% of females report above average emotional health</li> <li>• Undergraduate student rates of anxiety, self-injury and attempted suicide increase, some doubling since 2007 (2018)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Moderate levels of depression and anxiety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59% of males and 43.7% of females report above average emotional health</li> <li>• Undergraduate student rates of anxiety, self-injury and attempted suicide are moderate (2007)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stolzenberg et al. (2019)</li> <li>• Duffy et al. (2019)</li> </ul>
Individualism & teamwork	<p><b>More individualistic and less social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxious about group member contributions</li> <li>• 27% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders get together with friends every day (2015)</li> <li>• 70% of Gen Zers struggle with in-person communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>More group-oriented and more social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to enjoy camaraderie in group</li> <li>• 47% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders get together with friends every day (2000)</li> <li>• 50% of early millennials struggle with in-person communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schlee et al. (2020)</li> <li>• Twenge (2017)</li> <li>• Bridgeworks (2017)</li> </ul>
Diversity	<p><b>Most diverse generation ever</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48% are non-white</li> <li>• 62% believe increasing diversity is good for society</li> <li>• 81% rated tolerance for others with different beliefs as strong (2019)</li> <li>• 78% rated ability to see world from others' perspectives as strong (2019)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Diverse generation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38% are non-white</li> <li>• 61% believe increasing diversity is good for society</li> <li>• 73% rated tolerance for others with different beliefs as strong (2008)</li> <li>• 65% rated ability to see world from others' perspectives as strong (2008)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fry and Parker (2018)</li> <li>• Parker et al. (2019)</li> <li>• Pryor et al. (2008)</li> <li>• Stolzenberg et al. (2019)</li> </ul>



# The impact of COVID-19 on Gen Z students in higher education

“Surprisingly, a lower affinity for e-learning was reported by the younger Gen Z group. Even though they were socially and digitally skilled, they were characterised by low self-confidence related to e-learning education. This effect is attributable to the negative emotional impact of changes in their social, academic, and community activities, which play an important role in the academic experience and growth of undergraduate students, especially junior students” (Ranieri et al., 2021).

“A few students who dislike teamwork expressed open satisfaction with the new modus operandi as it enables them to pursue a more individualistic learning approach. However, **most students enrolled in traditional programmes had not chosen a distance-learning type education and were consequently disappointed by the remote learning experience.** In fact, they expressed a strong preference for face-2-face interaction and longed for a return to the classroom. **It’s clear that studying at a university campus does provide more than an opportunity to study and expand one’s knowledge and professional skills. It means meeting others and expanding one’s social circle and developing a network of friends**” (Frank, 2022).



# Does perfectionism exist within Gen Z?

Influencing factors may include:

- **Family history**
- **Learned behavior**
- **Other phobias outside fear of failure (atychiphobia)**
- **Traumatic experiences**





# What can we do?



# NACADA Core Value of Empowerment

*Academic advisors motivate, encourage, and support students and the greater educational community to recognize their potential, meet challenges, and respect individuality.*

How do we actually do this?



# NACADA Core Value of Empowerment

“To see advising as a verb is to define advising as an active process of integration. From this view, **advising is the convergence of information about the institution and the person of the student.** This dynamic process involves both exploration and assessment of the student as well as the institution. Not only are the student’s needs, capabilities, and desires explored, but each is then connected and matched with appropriate campus resources and activities in a meaningful way. **Where advice would be telling a student the importance of campus involvement and what opportunities exist, the act of advising would be the exploration of the student’s interests, past experiences, and future goals and connecting these to what the campus has to offer that may be of benefit and a good fit for the student. In this way, advising is listening turned into meaningful reflection and action. It is thought provoking and purposeful.**” (Ogburn, 2013).



# Setting the Expectations

- Proactive communication to students
- [Advising syllabus](#)
  - Put in an easy to find location for students

# Teaching Students Risk

- Getting caught up in the “what-if” game
- Accepting potential consequence(s) from decision

# Promoting Resilience

## Resiliency Themes from Student Interviews (Ang et al., 2021)

1. Resilience is having the tenacity to push through
2. Resilience is dynamic
3. Resilience is necessary to survive university

## Building Blocks of Resilience (Ang et al., 2021)

1. Desire and determination to build resilience
2. Friends impact resilience
3. Resilience is a lesson from significant people



# Conclusions and Takeaways

- Should students still come to us with questions and concerns? Yes!
- The philosophy from this presentation is geared towards resourcefulness and confidence to make decisions.
- Parents may not be telling their students these things and shielding them from making mistakes.



# Sources

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