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Assessment of beliefs and practices of the manifestation phenomenon between millennials and generation Z in a Private Medical College of Lahore City, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objective: Manifestation and the law of attraction are new age practices. Different age groups view and practice these differently since their beliefs are influenced by their peers, families, cultures, traditions, and technology. This study compares the perceptions, interpretations, and interactions of Generation Z and Millennials in order to better understand the intricacies of the manifestation phenomenon.

Methods: It was a cross-sectional survey conducted at a private medical college in Lahore, Pakistan. A total of 266 subjects were divided into two groups according to their ages, i.e., Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) generation. Data were collected using a survey proforma created on Google Forms and statistical analysis was done using relevant tests of significance.

Results: Generation Z had better knowledge ($p = 0.045$) of the concept of manifestation and how it works. Both generations believe that practicing intentional manifestation and trusting your positive beliefs can help in achieving goals (p -value = 0.811). Both generations are somewhat affected by cultural and spiritual beliefs and technology, including social media; however, the difference in the influence between the generations ($p = 0.427$ and $p = 0.698$) is not significant.

Conclusion: The study underscores the influence of generational experiences and cultural context on the adoption and interpretation of new age practices with respect to the manifestation phenomenon.

Keywords: Millennial, generation Z, popular culture, digital technology, manifestation, law of attraction.

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Introduction

The process of bringing ideas, wants, or intentions into material reality via the force of concentrated belief, visualization, and action is referred to as manifestation.¹ It is based on the idea that one's emotions and thoughts have the power to influence the external environment, leading their dreams to come to reality. The phenomenon of manifestation is frequently associated with the law of attraction.

The law of attraction is a metaphysical and philosophical principle that implies that the major as well as the minor events in a person's life can be influenced by their thinking process and emotions.² It also contends that if a person focuses on the negativity, he might attract more unpleasant experiences. On the other hand, if one focuses on good ideas

and feelings, he might attract even better experiences. This law claims that everyone on this planet actively participates in the creation of their own reality by their feelings, thoughts, and deeds.^{2,3}

The new age practices, such as manifestation and law of attraction, have secured substantial attention among various educational fields such as psychology, spirituality, philosophy, and self-help. Multiple researchers and authors have explored these concepts from different aspects, which lead to both supportive and skeptical claims.¹

A self-help book called "The secret" by Bryne relates the law of attraction into mainstream consciousness. It focuses on the power of visualization, optimism, and gratitude as

57 means to manifest their deepest desires and dreams into
58 their existing reality.¹

59 Author Peale⁴, in his famous book “The Power of Positive
60 Thinking” claimed that a positive mindset and approach to
61 life can lead to a happy life and eternal success. His work later
62 laid the foundation for a vast discussion on the connection
63 between beliefs, thoughts, and their outcomes. Positive
64 psychology regularly explores and explains the influence of
65 an optimistic approach to life on the overall well-being and
66 goal achievement of an individual. These studies also justify
67 that maintaining a healthy positive mindset can indeed lead
68 to better outcomes and a boosted motivation.⁴

69 Numerous critics, including scientists and psychologists,
70 have raised concerns about the rational basis of the law of
71 attraction. They point out that this new age law lacks solid
72 scientific support and could be promoting magical thinking.⁵
73 The emphasis on practicing positive thinking is often criticized
74 for oversimplifying the complexity of life, which leads to
75 ignoring real-life challenges.^{5,6}

76 Some studies are focused on the neurological mechanisms
77 behind visualization and its possible influence on the
78 acquisition of certain skills and enhancement of performance
79 thus providing insights into how mental imagery can influence
80 physical outcomes, aligning with aspects of manifestation.⁷⁻⁹

81 Generational cohorts, such as Millennials and Generation
82 Z, are shaped by unique socio-cultural experiences and
83 technological advancements. These factors have profoundly
84 changed their attitudes and behaviors. Because of their mixed
85 analog and digital upbringing, Millennials may approach
86 manifestation with a combination of cultural beliefs and a
87 careful embracing of global trends. In contrast, Generation
88 Z reinterprets such customs to meet their dynamic, digital-
89 first worldview, which is fueled by their technology fluency
90 and global viewpoint. Generational disparities in adapting
91 and interpreting these effects are highlighted by the complex
92 relationships between belief systems and behavioral patterns
93 that change along with technology, communication, and
94 society standards¹⁰.

95 To further understand the intricacies of the manifestation
96 phenomena, the current study focuses on Generation Z and
97 Millennials’ perceptions, interpretations, and experiences
98 at a private medical institution. The purpose is to examine
99 the specific beliefs and strategies linked with manifestation,
100 which is becoming increasingly popular among younger
101 generations in a distinct socio-cultural environment.

102 **Methods**

103 This cross-sectional study included formal surveys using a
104 self-designed questionnaire, which was validated by piloting
105 and input from experts with a Cronbach alpha of 0.84. The
106 questionnaire was distributed among the participants and

responses were recorded after individually taking informed 107
consent. The sample size of 266 was calculated using OpenEPI 108
with a 95% confidence level. All the participants selected 109
were from Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) and 110
Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) generation. The 111
sample consisted of students and faculty members at Central 112
Park Medical College Lahore and affiliated teaching hospital. 113
The study was completed in 3 months from August to October 114
2023. Ethical approval was taken from the Institutional 115
Review Board, Central Park Medical College, Lahore. 116
117

Statistical analysis

The data obtained from the surveys were organized using 118
Microsoft Excel, and the data analysis was conducted using 119
the software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 120
version 23. The statistical significance was set at p -value 121
 ≤ 0.05 . Relationships between the categorical variables were 122
analyzed using the χ^2 analysis. For descriptive analysis, data 123
were assessed and presented in the form of frequency and 124
percentage, the results were presented in the form of tables 125
and Chi-square test, and correlation was employed to assess 126
and compare study variables among groups. 127
128

Results

129 Out of the 266 participants from two generations, 141 (53%)
130 belonged to the Gen Z generation (born between 1997
131 and 2012), while 125 (47%) belonged to Millennials (born
132 between 1981 and 1996). Of the overall respondents, half
133 were male students, and the remaining half were females.
134 Moreover, half of the students had a Bachelor’s degree, with
135 only a small percentage [56 (21%)] possessing a Master’s
136 degree (Table 1).
137

Preliminary analysis suggests that both generations hold
138 positive views toward the manifestation phenomenon.
139 Millennials appear to be more inclined toward integrating
140 manifestation practices with traditional belief systems, while
141 Generation Z tends to approach manifestation with a more
142 individualistic and holistic perspective (Table 2).
143

Generation Z exhibits a greater inclination toward
144 incorporating technology and social media platforms to learn
145 about and engage with manifestation practices (Table 2).
146 Millennials, on the other hand, are more likely to rely on
147 personal connections and self-help literature.
148

According to our findings, more participants from
149 Generation Z had a better ($p = 0.045$) knowledge of the
150 concept of manifestation and how it works. Both generations
151 believe that practicing intentional manifestation and trusting
152 your positive beliefs can help in achieving goals. Both
153 generations are somewhat affected by cultural and spiritual
154 beliefs to interfere in their practices. However, Generation
155

Table 1. Demographic information of the respondents.

Variables	Categories	n (%)
Generation	Gen Z	141 (53.0%)
	Millennials	125 (47.0%)
Gender	Male	133 (50.0%)
	Female	133 (50.0%)
Education background	High school	72 (27.1%)
	Bachelor's degree	138 (51.9%)
	Master's degree/Higher	56 (21.1%)

Z's practices of this phenomenon are more influenced by technology and social media apps.

According to the findings in Table 2, Generation Z engages in manifestation activities more frequently and uses more technology than Millennials. This generational divide emphasizes the impact of digital platforms and social media in molding the attitudes and habits of younger generations, indicating a shift in how traditional and modern influences interact. Both generations, however, believe that manifestation promotes personal progress and well-being, indicating a shared grasp of its potential benefits despite variations in cultural, spiritual, and technical factors.

Results have shown that comparatively Generation Z population practices manifestation more than Millennials and many of them do it on a regular basis.

In Figure 1, we have analyzed the key factors that influence manifestation practices. Although Generation Z believes more in the phenomenon, their practices of intentional manifestation are influenced more by the beliefs and attitudes of their friends and family, and cultural and traditional beliefs.

Figure 2 shows that both generations practice visualization, affirmation, vision boards, meditation, and journaling techniques for manifestation.

The key difference is the frequency with which they practice it. Generation Z is more likely to interact with these behaviors on a weekly basis, indicating a proactive and consistent approach. Millennials, on the other hand, may approach these behaviors with a more contemplative and occasional perspective, shaped by their experiences transitioning from the analog to digital ages.

Discussion

The findings highlight the impact of generational differences and cultural contexts on the manifestation phenomenon. Generation Z's technological prowess and global exposure have led to a unique approach to manifestation that diverges from the more community-oriented perspective of Millennials. These findings are consistent with international research, which suggests that Millennials frequently

incorporate manifestation techniques into larger wellness routines, emphasizing self-improvement and life pleasure.¹⁰ Similarly, another research suggests that Generation Z, as digital natives, engages with these notions through online platforms and social media, relying on the digital environment for exposure, direction, and community.¹¹ This could be due to their increased exposure to digital technologies and social media trends, which frequently encourage these approaches as part of a self-improvement mindset.

While the study on manifestation behaviors in Western countries is vast, studies in non-Western cultures, notably in South Asia, are few. In Pakistan, where traditional traditions and modern lives mix, comprehending and implementing manifestation practices is inextricably related to religious and cultural beliefs. Unlike in Western contexts, where manifestation is frequently associated with secular self-help ideologies¹⁰, the Pakistani interpretation combines modern techniques with spiritual frameworks, providing a culturally complex view of the phenomenon. These findings highlight the changing nature of manifestation activities in modern urban contexts.

The emergence of social media has had a tremendous impact on generational engagement with self-help activities around the world. Similar to Gatton's¹¹ findings, this study demonstrates that Generation Z in Pakistan uses internet platforms to get knowledge about manifestation, which influences their understanding and application of the practice. This technology absorption distinguishes Generation Z from Millennials, who, while digitally savvy, frequently take a more balanced approach to digital and traditional influences.

Both generations in Pakistan understand the importance of manifestation in achieving personal goals, improving well-being, and reaching financial and professional milestones. These findings are consistent with those of Hall et al.¹⁰, who emphasize the role of manifestation in promoting individual growth and self-empowerment. However, the motivations and objectives that drive these practices vary throughout generations, indicating deeper socio-cultural changes.

Recent research has looked into the psychological basis of belief in manifestation, offering light on its prevalence and

240 **Table 2.** Perspectives on beliefs and practices of manifestation across generation.

241	Factor	Category	Generation		Chi-square	p-value
242			Gen Z	Millennials		
243	Beliefs about manifestation	Strongly disagree	12 (4.5%)	14 (5.3%)	7.634	0.045
244		Disagree	-	-		
		Neutral	19 (7.1%)	32 (12.0%)		
		Agree	70 (26.3%)	51 (19.2%)		
		Strongly agree	40 (15.0%)	28 (10.5%)		
245	Practicing manifestation can help to achieve goals and desires	Strongly disagree	16 (6.0%)	9 (3.4%)	1.589	0.811
246		Disagree	13 (4.9%)	11 (4.1%)		
		Neutral	32 (12.0%)	30 (11.3%)		
		Agree	57 (21.5%)	51 (19.2%)		
		Strongly agree	23 (8.6%)	24 (9.0%)		
247	Cultural or spiritual beliefs influence my understanding of manifestation	Strongly disagree	16 (6.0%)	8 (3.0%)	3.849	0.427
248		Disagree	21 (7.9%)	13 (4.9%)		
		Neutral	32 (12.0%)	31 (11.7%)		
		Agree	50 (18.8%)	48 (18.0%)		
		Strongly agree	22 (8.3%)	25 (9.4%)		
249	Practices about manifestation					
250	I have actively practiced manifestation techniques	Strongly disagree	8 (3.0%)	14 (5.3%)	2.990	0.560
251		Disagree	21 (7.9%)	16 (6.0%)		
		Neutral	47 (17.7%)	37 (13.9%)		
		Agree	46 (17.3%)	42 (15.8%)		
		Strongly agree	19 (7.1%)	16 (6.0%)		
252	I engage in manifestation practices on a regular basis	Strongly disagree	10 (3.8%)	12 (4.5%)	6.037	0.196
253		Disagree	29 (10.9%)	33 (12.4%)		
		Neutral	40 (15.0%)	26 (9.8%)		
		Agree	39 (14.7%)	42 (15.8%)		
		Strongly agree	23 (8.6%)	12 (4.5%)		
254	Technology, such as apps and social media, has influenced my manifestation practices	Strongly disagree	11 (4.1%)	8 (3.0%)	1.431	0.698
255		Disagree	-	-		
256		Neutral	37 (13.9%)	31 (11.7%)		
		Agree	57 (21.4%)	46 (17.3%)		
		Strongly agree	36 (13.5%)	40 (15.0%)		
257	Outcomes and aspirations					
258	Manifestation efforts give positive outcomes in my life	Strongly disagree	18 (6.8%)	12 (4.5%)	1.148	0.765
259		Disagree	-	-		
		Neutral	39 (14.7%)	33 (12.4%)		
		Agree	50 (18.8%)	51 (19.2%)		
		Strongly agree	34 (12.8%)	29 (10.9%)		
260	Manifestation practices achieve personal growth and well-being	Strongly disagree	11 (4.1%)	10 (3.8%)	1.795	0.773
261		Disagree	16 (6.0%)	15 (5.6%)		
		Neutral	34 (12.8%)	31 (11.7%)		
		Agree	59 (22.2%)	44 (16.5%)		
		Strongly agree	21 (7.9%)	25 (9.4%)		

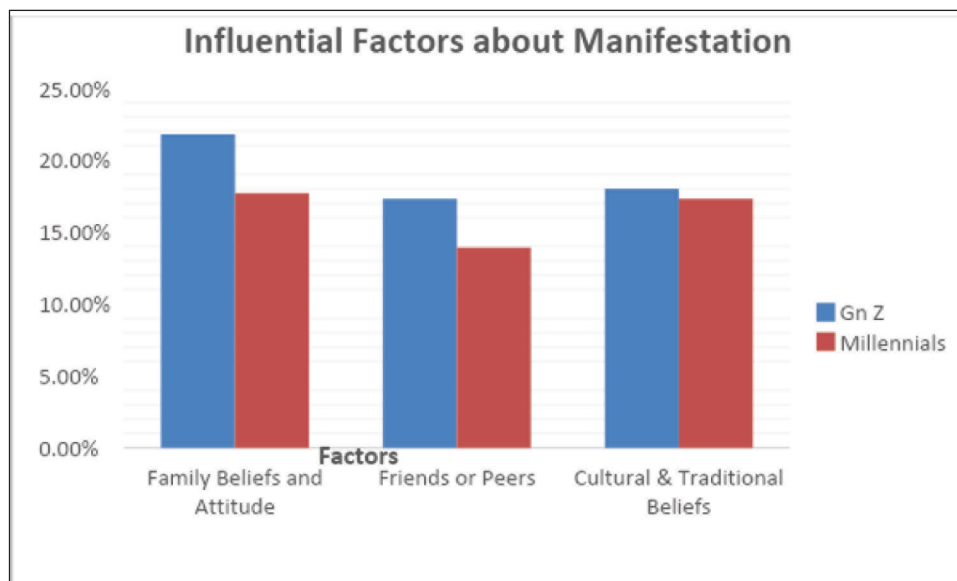


Figure 1. Key elements shaping manifestation across two generations.

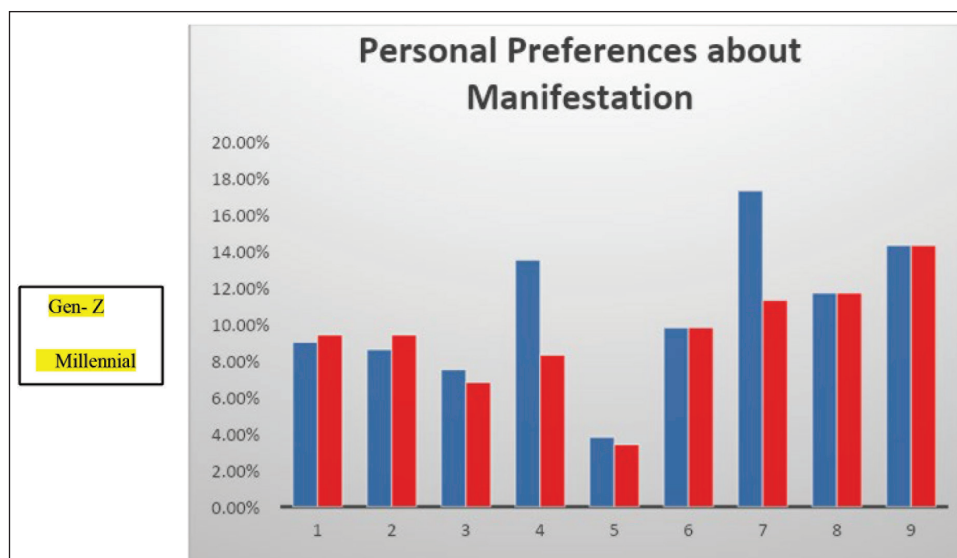


Figure 2. Comparison of the two generations' personal preferences about manifestation.

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266 implications across age groups. For example, a 2023 study
 267 called “The Secret” to Success? The Psychology of Belief in
 268 Manifestation discovered that belief in manifestation is linked
 269 to an internal locus of control and a proclivity for cognitive
 270 biases such as the illusion of control and the optimism
 271 bias.¹² This shows that those who believe in manifestation
 272 may overestimate their power to influence external events,
 273 which could vary across generations due to differences in
 274 life experiences and exposure to cultural narratives. Despite
 275 the variations in the frequency with which both generations
 276 practice these behaviors, the daily or monthly engagement
 277 rates remain consistent, demonstrating that both generations

278 understand the importance of manifestation in accomplishing
 279 personal objectives and promoting well-being. This confirms
 280 the notion that, while tactics may differ, fundamental practices
 281 are universally appealing across age groups.

282 The findings of our study have provided us with
 283 significant insights into the dynamic relationship between
 284 technology, modernity, and traditional values in influencing
 285 the expression of one’s ideas and daily life practices. This
 286 study has also enhanced our understanding of the new age
 287 phenomena such as law of attraction and manifestation
 288 by delving into the intricacies of how the Millennials and
 289 Generation Z perceive and engage with them.

290 Limitations of the Study

291 The study population belonged to a single private medical
292 institution in Lahore city, and hence, the findings might not
293 be applicable on a larger scale in particular for the rural
294 population in Pakistan. This limits the generalizability of the
295 results. Moreover, due to the narrow focus on two specific
296 generations (Millennials and Generation Z) and a specific
297 phenomenon (manifestation), the findings may not apply
298 to other age groups or to different phenomena. The results
299 might be relevant only within the context of the manifestation
300 phenomenon.

301 Conclusion

302 The study underscores the influence of generational
303 experiences and cultural context on the adoption and
304 interpretation of manifestation practices among Millennials
305 and Generation Z.

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313 List of Abbreviations

314 SPSS Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Software)

315 Conflict of interest

316 None to declare.

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318 None to disclose.

319 Ethical approval

320 Ethical approval for the study was taken from the Institutional
321 Review Board at Central Park Medical College, Lahore, Pakistan,
322 vide Letter No. CPMC/IRB-NO/1433 dated October 17, 2023.

323 Authors' contributions

324 **K:** Concept and design of study, acquisition, analysis of data, drafting
325 of manuscript.

326 **FA, NF:** Acquisition, analysis of data, drafting of manuscript, critical
327 intellectual input.

328 **FNT, SK:** Critical revision of the manuscript, acquisition of data,
329 drafting of manuscript.

330 **ALL AUTHORS:** Approval and responsibility of the final version of
331 the manuscript to be published.

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