

Research Paper

## Parenting in the Age of Screens: NLP as a Tool for Emotional Resonance with Generation Alpha

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### ABSTRACT

Parenting Generation Alpha—children born from 2010 onward—requires adaptive strategies that align with their heightened digital exposure, emotional sensitivity, and cognitive precocity. This paper explores the integration of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques into parenting frameworks to enhance emotional attunement, communication efficacy, and behavioural outcomes. Drawing from empirical literature on NLP and developmental psychology, the study investigates how anchoring, reframing, and meta-model questioning can foster resilience, empathy, and self-regulation in Gen Alpha children. A quasi-experimental method design was employed, with quantitative surveys of 120 parents to assess the perceived impact of NLP-informed parenting interventions. Findings suggest that parents who consistently applied NLP strategies reported statistically significant improvements in child emotional responsiveness, reduced behavioural conflicts, and increased parental self-efficacy. The paper discusses the implications of these findings for designing replicable, culturally sensitive parenting protocols that leverage NLP's core principles. Limitations include sample homogeneity and reliance on self-report measures. Future research should explore longitudinal effects and cross-cultural applicability. This study contributes to the emerging discourse on psychologically attuned parenting and positions NLP as a promising tool for nurturing emotionally intelligent, resilient Generation Alpha individuals.

**Keywords:** *Neuro Linguistic Programming, Generation Alpha, Parenting Strategies, Emotional Intelligence, Behavioural Interventions*

**Background and Rationale:** Generation Alpha, born from 2010 onward, is growing up in an era defined by rapid technological advancement, hyper-connectivity, and shifting socio-emotional landscapes. Unlike previous generations, their cognitive and emotional development is shaped by early exposure to digital media, algorithmic content, and AI-driven interactions. These factors present both opportunities and challenges for caregivers

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seeking to foster emotional intelligence, resilience, and authentic connection. Traditional parenting models often fall short in addressing the nuanced needs of this cohort, whose attention spans, emotional triggers, and learning modalities differ significantly from those of Millennials or Generation Z. As such, there is an urgent need for adaptive, psychologically attuned frameworks that empower parents to engage with Generation Alpha in ways that are emotionally resonant, developmentally appropriate, and behaviourally effective.

**Neuro Linguistic Programming as a Parenting Tool:** Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), originally developed as a therapeutic and communication methodology, offers a rich toolkit for enhancing interpersonal dynamics. Techniques such as reframing, anchoring, sensory acuity, and meta-model questioning have shown promise in improving emotional regulation, empathy, and behavioural outcomes in various contexts. However, the application of NLP within parenting—particularly in relation to Generation Alpha—remains underexplored in empirical literature. This study aims to bridge that gap by investigating how NLP-informed parenting strategies can support emotional attunement, reduce behavioural conflicts, and enhance parent-child communication. By integrating NLP principles into everyday parenting practices, caregivers may be better equipped to navigate the complexities of raising emotionally intelligent, self-aware children in a digital-first world.

### ***Research Objectives***

The primary objectives of this study are to:

- Examine the efficacy of NLP techniques in improving emotional responsiveness and behavioural outcomes in Generation Alpha children.
- Assess parental perceptions of NLP-based interventions in real-world parenting scenarios.
- Develop a replicable framework for NLP-informed parenting that can be adapted across diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts.

### ***Significance of the Study***

This research contributes to the evolving discourse on psychologically informed parenting by positioning NLP as a viable, evidence-based approach for engaging with Generation Alpha. It offers practical insights for educators, therapists, and caregivers seeking to cultivate emotionally resilient children while fostering deeper relational bonds. Moreover, it lays the groundwork for future studies exploring the longitudinal impact of NLP on child development and family dynamics.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Neuro Linguistic Programming: Foundations and Applications:** Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the 1970s, is a behavioural modelling system that explores the relationship between neurological processes, language, and learned behavior. NLP techniques such as anchoring, reframing, and meta-model questioning have been widely applied in therapeutic, educational, and coaching contexts to enhance emotional regulation, communication, and behavioural change (Wake, 2010; Stipancic et al., 2010). Empirical studies have demonstrated NLP's efficacy in improving interpersonal dynamics and emotional intelligence. For instance, Gray (2011) found that NLP-based interventions significantly improved self-awareness and empathy among adolescents. Similarly, a randomized controlled trial by Tosey and Mathison (2009) reported measurable gains in emotional resilience and goal setting among adult participants using NLP strategies. However, despite its widespread use, NLP remains under-researched

in parenting contexts. Most existing literature focuses on adult coaching or therapeutic applications, leaving a gap in understanding how NLP principles can be adapted for caregiver-child interactions.

**Parenting Generation Alpha- Challenges and Shifts:** Generation Alpha—children born from 2010 onward—are the first cohort raised entirely in the digital age. Research highlights their unique developmental profile: shorter attention spans, heightened emotional sensitivity, and early exposure to algorithmic content (McCrindle, 2020; Twenge, 2018). These factors demand parenting approaches that are emotionally attuned, flexible, and grounded in psychological insight. Traditional parenting models, such as authoritative or permissive styles, may not fully address the socio-emotional needs of Gen Alpha children. Studies by Goleman (2006) and Siegel & Bryson (2011) emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence and co-regulation in modern parenting, especially in fostering resilience and empathy. Recent literature also points to the need for communication strategies that go beyond behavioural correction. For example, Denham et al. (2012) argue that emotionally responsive parenting is critical for developing self-regulation and social competence in children. Yet, few studies explore structured, replicable methods for achieving this—particularly through language-based interventions like NLP.

**NLP and Parenting: Emerging Connections:** While formal research on NLP in parenting is limited, anecdotal evidence and practitioner reports suggest promising applications. NLP techniques such as reframing can help parents shift their interpretation of challenging behaviours, while anchoring may support emotional regulation during conflict. Meta-model questioning enables deeper conversations that promote child autonomy and emotional expression. A pilot study by Kaur & Sharma (2022) explored NLP-based workshops for parents of pre-teens and found improvements in parental self-efficacy and child cooperation. However, the study lacked a control group and relied on qualitative feedback, underscoring the need for more rigorous, quantitative research.

**Identified Gaps and Research Justification:** Despite growing interest in NLP and the evolving demands of parenting Generation Alpha, there is a clear gap in empirical, quantitative studies that evaluate NLP's impact on parenting outcomes. Specifically:

- i. Few studies have measured changes in child emotional responsiveness or behavioural conflict using validated instruments.
- ii. There is limited data on how NLP techniques affect parental self-efficacy in real-world settings.
- iii. No existing frameworks offer a structured, replicable NLP-based parenting protocol tailored to Generation Alpha.

This study addresses these gaps by applying a structured NLP intervention to a diverse sample of parents and measuring its impact using standardized quantitative tools. It contributes to the literature by offering empirical evidence for NLP's role in enhancing emotionally intelligent parenting in the digital age.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

This study utilized a **pretest-post-test quasi-experimental design** to evaluate the impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP)-based parenting strategies on emotional responsiveness and behavioural outcomes in Generation Alpha children. The intervention

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was delivered to a single group of parents, with measurements taken before and after the program to assess changes attributable to the NLP techniques.

### *Participants*

A total of **120 parents** (aged 28–45) of Generation Alpha children (ages 5–12) were recruited through digital parenting communities, school outreach programs, and wellness networks across India. Inclusion criteria required participants to:

- Have at least one child aged 5–12
- Commit to a 6-week structured intervention
- Be fluent in English or Hindi

Demographic profile:

- Gender: 60% female, 40% male
- Education: 88% held undergraduate degrees or higher
- Socioeconomic status: Middle to upper-middle class
- Prior NLP exposure: 18% had basic familiarity; 82% were new to NLP

### **Intervention Protocol**

Participants engaged in a **6-week structured NLP parenting program**, delivered via weekly online modules and guided home practice. Each module introduced one core NLP technique:

- Week 1: Sensory acuity and rapport building
- Week 2: Anchoring for emotional regulation
- Week 3: Reframing child behavior
- Week 4: Meta-model questioning for deeper communication
- Week 5: Future pacing and goal setting
- Week 6: Integration and review

Parents received a workbook with structured exercises and fidelity checklists to ensure consistent application of techniques.

### *Instruments*

Three validated quantitative instruments were used to measure outcomes:

- Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (PSES)** – 5-point Likert scale measures parental confidence in managing child behavior and emotional needs.
- Child Emotional Responsiveness Inventory (CERI)** – 4-point frequency scale assesses frequency and quality of child emotional expression and regulation
- Behavioural Conflict Frequency Tracker (BCFT)** - Tracks weekly frequency of parent-child behavioural conflicts using numeric count per week

All instruments were administered at baseline (Week 0) and post-intervention (Week 6).

### *Procedure*

Baseline assessments were conducted one week prior to the intervention, with participants completing the PSES, CERI, and BCFT via secure online forms. The six-week intervention was delivered asynchronously, allowing parents to engage with the content at their convenience while maintaining weekly progress checkpoints. Post-intervention assessments were administered within one week of program completion, using the same instruments to ensure consistency. All data were anonymized and stored securely, with unique participant codes used to match pre- and post-intervention responses.

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- **Week 0:** Baseline assessments (PSES, CERI, BCFT)
- **Weeks 1–6:** Weekly NLP modules and home practice
- **Week 6:** Post-intervention assessments using the same instruments
- Data were collected digitally and anonymized for analysis

### Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS

- **Paired t-tests** were conducted to compare pre- and post-intervention scores on all three instruments
- **Effect sizes (Cohen's d)** were calculated to determine the magnitude of change
- **Pearson correlations** explored relationships between self-efficacy and child emotional responsiveness
- Significance threshold was set at  $p < .05$

### Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was secured digitally, and participants were assured of confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any time. No identifying data were retained.

## RESULTS

The data collected from 120 participants were analyzed to assess the impact of the six-week NLP-based parenting intervention. All participants completed both pre- and post-intervention assessments, resulting in a 100% response rate and a complete dataset for analysis.

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Paired Sample t-Test Results*

Measure	Pre-Intervention Mean (SD)	Post-Intervention Mean (SD)	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d	Interpretation
Parenting Self-Efficacy (PSES)	3.2 (0.6)	4.1 (0.5)	12.84	< .001	1.17	Large positive effect
Emotional Responsiveness (CERI)	2.8 (0.7)	3.6 (0.6)	10.21	< .001	0.93	Strong improvement
Conflict Frequency (BCFT)	5.4 (2.1)	3.1 (1.7)	-9.45	< .001	0.86	Significant reduction

### Parenting Self-Efficacy (PSES)

Pre-intervention scores on the Parenting Self-Efficacy Scale (PSES) indicated moderate confidence levels among participants, with a mean score of 3.2 (SD = 0.6) on a 5-point Likert scale. Post-intervention scores showed a statistically significant increase, with a mean of 4.1 (SD = 0.5). A paired sample t-test revealed a significant difference between pre- and post-intervention scores,  $t(119) = 12.84$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating a substantial improvement in parental confidence following the NLP intervention. The effect size (Cohen's  $d = 1.17$ ) suggests a large practical impact.

### Child Emotional Responsiveness (CERI)

Scores on the Child Emotional Responsiveness Inventory (CERI) also demonstrated notable improvement. The mean pre-intervention score was 2.8 (SD = 0.7), reflecting moderate

levels of emotional expression and regulation. Post-intervention scores increased to a mean of 3.6 (SD = 0.6), indicating enhanced emotional responsiveness as perceived by parents. The paired t-test yielded  $t(119) = 10.21, p < .001$ , with a Cohen’s  $d$  of 0.93, signifying a strong effect size and meaningful behavioural change.

### Behavioural Conflict Frequency (BCFT)

Behavioural conflict frequency, measured as the number of reported parent-child conflicts per week, showed a marked reduction. The average number of weekly conflicts decreased from 5.4 (SD = 2.1) pre-intervention to 3.1 (SD = 1.7) post-intervention. Statistical analysis confirmed this reduction was significant,  $t(119) = -9.45, p < .001$ . The effect size (Cohen’s  $d = 0.86$ ) indicates a substantial decrease in conflict frequency, suggesting improved relational dynamics.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix (Post-Intervention Scores)**

Variables	PSES	CERI	BCFT
Parenting Self-Efficacy (PSES)	1.00	.62**	-.48**
Emotional Responsiveness (CERI)	.62**	1.00	-.55**
Conflict Frequency (BCFT)	-.48**	-.55**	1.00

**Note:**  $p < .001$  for all correlations

### Correlational Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between increased parenting self-efficacy and child emotional responsiveness ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ), suggesting that as parents became more confident in applying NLP techniques, they observed greater emotional engagement from their children. Additionally, a negative correlation was found between self-efficacy and conflict frequency ( $r = -.48, p < .001$ ), indicating that higher parental confidence was associated with fewer behavioural conflicts.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence for the efficacy of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques in enhancing parenting outcomes for Generation Alpha. Across all three measured domains—parenting self-efficacy, child emotional responsiveness, and behavioural conflict frequency—statistically significant improvements were observed following the six-week intervention. These results affirm the hypothesis that NLP-informed parenting strategies can positively influence both caregiver confidence and child behavior in real-world settings.

The increase in parenting self-efficacy suggests that NLP techniques such as anchoring, reframing, and sensory acuity may empower caregivers to feel more competent and emotionally attuned in their interactions. This aligns with prior research by Gray (2011) and Tosey & Mathison (2009), which highlighted NLP’s potential to enhance emotional intelligence and interpersonal effectiveness. In the context of parenting Generation Alpha—whose emotional landscapes are shaped by digital immersion and rapid cognitive development—such tools appear particularly relevant.

Improvements in child emotional responsiveness further underscore the value of NLP as a communication enhancer. Techniques like meta-model questioning and rapport-building may have facilitated deeper emotional engagement, allowing children to express and regulate feelings more effectively. These findings echo the work of Denham et al. (2012),

who emphasized the role of emotionally responsive parenting in fostering self-regulation and social competence.

The reduction in behavioural conflict frequency is especially noteworthy. It suggests that NLP strategies not only improve emotional dynamics but also contribute to tangible behavioural shifts. This supports the emerging view that psychologically attuned parenting—grounded in language, empathy, and behavioural modelling—can reduce friction and promote cooperative behavior, even in digitally saturated environments.

The positive correlations between self-efficacy and emotional responsiveness, and the inverse relationship with conflict frequency, further validate the interconnected nature of these constructs. As parents become more confident and emotionally skilled, their children appear to respond with greater emotional openness and reduced behavioural resistance.

### ***Limitations***

Despite these promising results, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the absence of a control group limits causal inference. While the pretest-post test design offers valuable insights, future studies should incorporate randomized controlled trials to strengthen validity. Second, the reliance on self-report measures introduces potential bias, particularly in assessing child behavior. Third, the sample was geographically and socioeconomically concentrated, which may affect generalizability across diverse populations.

### ***Future Directions***

Future research should explore the longitudinal impact of NLP-based parenting interventions, assessing whether observed improvements are sustained over time. Additionally, cross-cultural studies could examine the adaptability of NLP techniques in varied parenting contexts. There is also scope for integrating NLP with digital tools—such as mobile apps or AI-guided coaching platforms—to enhance accessibility and engagement for modern caregivers.

### ***Implications***

This study contributes to the growing discourse on emotionally intelligent parenting by positioning NLP as a viable, evidence-based framework for engaging with Generation Alpha. It offers a replicable intervention model that educators, therapists, and wellness practitioners can adapt to support caregivers in cultivating emotionally resilient, communicative, and cooperative children. As parenting continues to evolve in response to technological and psychological shifts, NLP may serve as a bridge between traditional wisdom and contemporary behavioural science.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study provides robust quantitative evidence that Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) techniques can significantly enhance parenting outcomes for Generation Alpha. Through a structured six-week intervention, parents demonstrated marked improvements in self-efficacy, observed greater emotional responsiveness in their children, and reported fewer behavioural conflicts. These findings affirm the utility of NLP as a psychologically attuned, language-based framework for modern parenting—particularly in navigating the emotional and behavioural complexities of children raised in a digital-first environment.

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By applying core NLP strategies such as anchoring, reframing, and meta-model questioning, caregivers were able to foster deeper emotional connection, reduce reactive behaviors, and cultivate a more resilient and communicative family dynamic. The strong correlations between increased parental confidence and improved child behavior underscore the transformative potential of empowering parents with structured, replicable tools grounded in behavioural science.

This research contributes meaningfully to the evolving discourse on emotionally intelligent parenting and fills a critical gap in the literature by offering a replicable, evidence-based NLP intervention tailored to the unique needs of Generation Alpha. While limitations such as sample homogeneity and lack of a control group warrant cautious interpretation, the results lay a strong foundation for future studies exploring longitudinal effects, cross-cultural adaptation, and integration with digital platforms.

In an era where parenting demands are rapidly shifting, NLP offers a promising pathway for caregivers to move beyond reactive discipline toward intentional, emotionally resonant engagement. As Generation Alpha continues to evolve, so too must the tools we use to guide, support, and connect with them—and NLP may be one of the most powerful tools yet.

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***Conflict of Interest***

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