



# EXPLORING GENERATION ALPHA WITH AN HR PERSPECTIVE

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*Abstract* : This exploratory paper attempts to explore Gen Alpha from the millions of children born past 2011 and are being termed Generation Alpha. The exploratory study tries to identify the consequences of the millions of children in the year 2050 from the limited studies done so far across the world including India. While it is obvious that the Gen Alpha is purely a technology dependent generation, the study has set objectives to find the other than technical issues that are in favour and contra to the expectations of the Generation Alpha, from their social, personal and educational life. This study in particular tries to explore with all limitations what the Generation Alpha expects from the society and what the sociological and psychological changes would impact due to the changes that will be sought by the generation alpha. Attempts to analyse a few of the research findings with the secondary data on the predictions by the HR are part of the study, to support the efforts from various countries, that put their HR strategists to design policies that can accommodate the newer generation who are smarter with technology, than the physical offline mode of work that is present now. The study also comes with a graphical representation of the previously cited research studies to provide a deeper understanding of the sociological importance that needs to be given to the Generation Alpha, and suggest a few of the policy measures that need to be taken care of by the HR specialists in the years to come.

**Key Words:** Generation, Alpha, Strategists, SHRM, Policy, Sociological, Psychological

## I. INTRODUCTION

**Gen Alpha** or Generation Alpha named after the Greek alphabet is the first born after the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and is generally the children of millennials (Yancey-Bragg, N'dea 2020). This generation alpha or Gen A terminology was generated from a 2008 survey report conducted by Australian Consulting agency McCrindle Research, (Pinsker, Joe 2020) where its founder Mark McCrindle is considered the father of this term Generation Alpha (Shaw Brown, 2020).

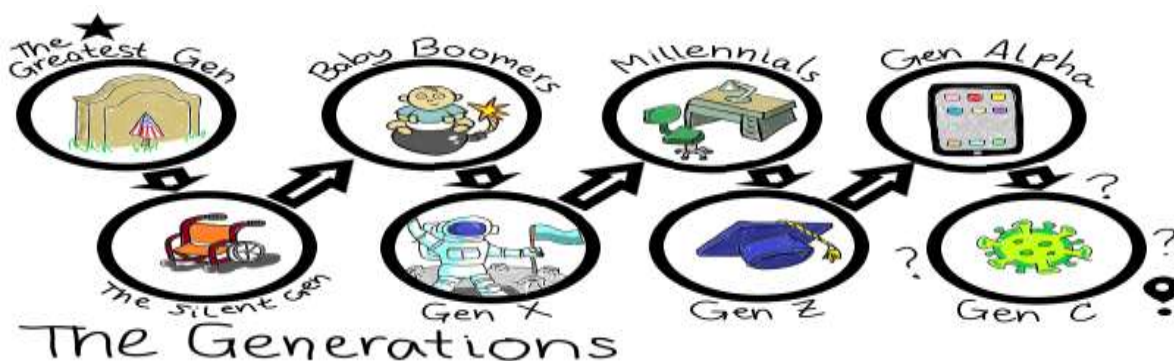


Fig 1: Conceptual diagram to clarify Generation Alpha: For Educational Purpose only: Source: Google Graphics

As of now Generation Alpha is considered to be born between 2013 to 2016 and is turning into 12, 11 or around 9 years of age as of 2022. The Indian Scenario on the fertility rate since 1960 has come down to 2.0 percent from 5.9 and the desire in the women, ( Yancey-Bragg, N'dea 2020). who were liking to have more than one child has declined significantly from the reports of the NFHS (National Family Health Survey) conducted in 2018(Perano, Ursula 2019). The research found that the number of Indian women who are not interested in a second child has gone up to 68 percent from 24 percent a decade ago (Carter, Christine Michel 2021). In India, the falling fertility rates are correlated to the increasing women’s literacy rates like the level of education, rising economic prosperity and improved mobility due to extended career facilities and the late marriages becoming normal (Yong, Ed 2020).

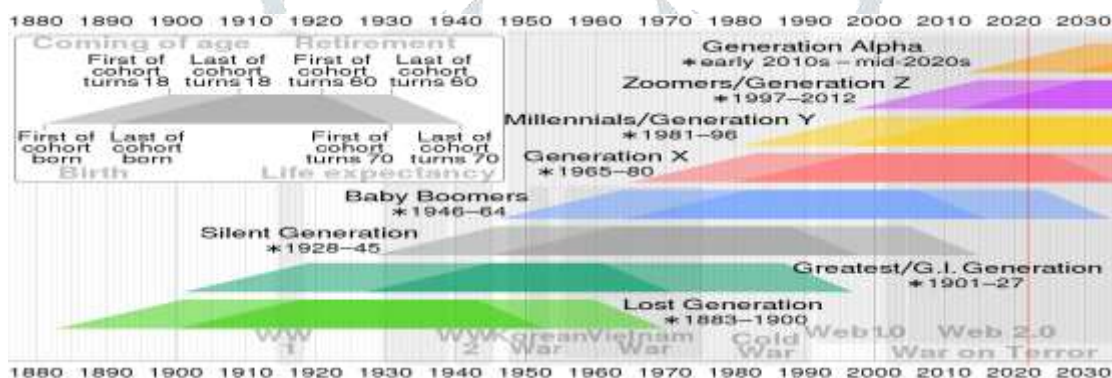


Fig 1a: National Family Health Survey Graphical Analysis: Source: JB Research through Google Graphics

The Alpha Kids are very unique in terms of the choice of careers where it was found during the research survey conducted in the countries like China, the UK and the United Kingdom by the LEGO and the Harris Poll, where around 3000 alpha children participated said that they are wanting to become a

- a. Video blogger or a You Tuber was the most popular choice among the British children than an astronaut
- b. Chinese kids were choosing to be astronauts compared to the Britons and American Children
- c. School teachers than becoming an astronaut were the choice for most Chinese children.

Let us understand how the characteristics have evolved over the years from the Fig: 2: below



Fig:2: Characteristic changes of generations over the years to status quo: Source: Google graphics

**The objective of the study**

**Objective:** To explore the impact of Generation Alpha in the present scenario of population growth across the world, from the SHRM angle as to how Generation Alpha will accommodate the other generations in their life. The study also includes exploring options that Generation Alpha will be using

**Alpha generation problems related to personal and social issues:** The pressing issue for these younger generations is the increased hours of screen time on the digital gadgets than the books or writing or other work (Dedczak, Michele 2021).

- Eye problems are on the rise.
- Near-sightedness is on the increase in the UK
- Regular use of electronic devices and eyestrain is found to be correlated with symptoms of digital eye strain, computer vision syndrome, dry and irritated eyes, fatigue, eye strain, blurry vision, and difficulty in concentration or focus with regular headaches (Safi, Michael 2020).

Everywhere around the world, the struggle to reduce screen time from the use of digital screens is arising since the parents are finding it difficult to control the screen time of their children. Apart from the above, the consumption patterns are now almost influenced by the Gen Alpha at the home level. Take any product, or service, their demands and utilities matter, and the market economies are having exclusive research done for the same. The matrix down in fig 3 is evidence of the growing instabilities influenced by Generation Alpha more than any of the previous generations so far (Grantham-Philips, Wyatt 2020).



Source: JB Research Company

Fig 3: the impact on Generation Alpha in the Marketing Matrix for Companies in the future to strategically position their products: Source: JB Research and Google graphics



Apart from the above some of the other research findings done by the WHO across the world found that the generation alpha children who spent more than an hour per day in front of a screen were having less development in the brain's white matter where the region was responsible for the cognitive and linguistic skills since the most important development happens during these years (Bricker, Darrell; Ibbitson, John 2019), excessive usage of screentime on the digital gadgets will bring in the

- a. Sleep deprivation
  - b. Impaired language development
  - c. Behavioural problems
  - d. Difficulty paying attention
  - e. Problems in thinking clearly
  - f. Poor eating habits
- and overall damages to the executive functions of the body and mind.

**The exposure for Generation Alpha:** Excessive use of media technologies while using the ICT. While the use of ICT (Information Communication Technologies) is unavoidable Generation Alpha is well versed in that for interaction as well as for teaching and learning. They grew up seeing smartphones and tablets as entertainment with digital gadgets than the previous generations (Lopez, Rachel 2020). The other indirect self-inflicted issues that are looming large is the heavy use of electronic devices is bringing in its challenges like cyber-bullying, screen addiction, and inappropriate content (Leng, Sidney 2020).

- The menace of cyberbullying.
- The addiction to screen usage.
- Exposure to inappropriate content.
- More physical idle time.
- Wastage of mental energy.
- Loss of intellectual curiosity due to heavy entertaining content.

**Gen Alpha in their acculturation process towards internet use by consistent usage by parents while working from home:** The younger generation is always staring at their parents who are mostly involved in the gadgets due to the present digital work style, and parents who are millennials are naturally the heavy users of social media, digital gadgets and clinging to the internet (Linh Do 2020). Most millennial parents since their pregnancy had been involved in social media usage and millennial mothers refer to those more than anything else (Viet Tuan 2020).

**Gen Alpha and their outlook of life through a virtual route:** Facebook, Instagram, and other relevant social media sites for their entertainment. The seamless television streaming 24/7/365 is part of the consequences of heavy usage of handheld devices. Recent pandemics like the COVID 19 I, II and IIIrd wave made all and sundry get inside the gadgets to catch up to the real world through a virtual world accession to the televised mode of programmes via internet streaming has caught up with the millennials as well as the Gen Alpha (Keyser, Zachary 2019).

**Negative impact on family and social life:** Challenges are ever increasing in the families of the Gen Alpha with the millennial parents struggling to juggle their career busy nature of life and upbringing of their generation Alpha (Kennedy, Merrit 2020). Lack of development of general ability in formative years various research studies across the world are reporting incidents on the negative impact of the damages created by the heavy usage of the social media by the Gen Alpha are:

- Children cross the primary school year undeveloped even in the areas of “ability to assess and manage risks of very minute nature” when they are alone.
- Since the children are getting less time to play in the outdoors or go on adventurous due to the mental health impact and the issues of overall wellbeing.
- Too much supervision from the present-day parenting too is the reason for the same.

**Ability to take unprecedented situations positively with upskilling as per the demands of technology:**

During the recent pandemics and other unnatural ways, when it was challenged to hinder positive growth in the Gen Alpha, the response that was garnered for facing the challenge was immensely appreciated (Soldatkin, Vladimir; Golubkova, Katya 2020). They almost managed newer methods of learning online, almost instantly and strode in terms of demands despite stress induced by online traumatisation. The Gen Alpha is the first ever generation to face the worst of the pandemics for almost 3 years and although they are now almost immune to the risk of becoming seriously ill with this kind of disease, still they are impacted by other means like the:

- Excessive time in day-care or out of school time and too long time inside the house due to the pandemic (Teivainen, Aleksii 2020).
- Malnourishment due to pandemic impact on the economy in poor countries.
- Gen Alpha are capable of associating themselves with the negative emotions that happened due to the problems like the “sacred”, and “angry” and are more confused due to the kinds of impacts that are created by the virus and restrictions that are enforced in the communities for various reasons (Pope, Connor 2019).
- Almost the most dreaded times for children were in the times of COVID 19 in the 75-year history.
- Child poverty came to a maximum with the 21<sup>st</sup> century Gen Alpha.

**Few Personal and Socially worrying projections in the coming time for Gen Alpha:** By 2030s the Generation Alpha will be in the stage of adulthood and the world population will be around 9 billion and the world will be carrying the highest population over the age of 60.

The entire burden of the ageing population will have to be taken care of by the present Gen Alpha. Generation Alpha will be delaying the standard life markers like marriage, childbirth, and retirement as found by the Australian researcher Mark McCrindle and also the Gen Alpha will be almost 11 percent of the workforce around the world.

- Gen Alpha will live longer (Roberts, Leslie 2020).
- Will have smaller families.
- Will have most formally educated.
- Will belong to the wealthiest generation ever.
- Will face extreme weather conditions 2 to 7 times more than previous generations.

Research findings and predictions from a socio psychological angle by a few of the HR policy makers across the world are, especially while joining the workforce will be a very challenging task of studying and understanding (Searing, Linda 2020). The experts predict them to be, they will be more entrepreneurial and, taking risks will be very natural for them since they had taken more risks than any other previous generations since the changes are faster compared to earlier times (Reeves, Richard V; Pulliam, Christopher 2020). They will communicate more through gadgets and sophisticated means rather than in person and will be gravitating towards the mobile friendly applications for any service seeking, and hence corporates need to plan their positioning of the products in a tech savvy way. They may be loners since many of them are singletons in their homes, and they are more into gadget based virtual contacts than real (Szabo, Liz 2020). Very coddled and protective parenting by Gen X and Y parents. They will become more independent than any other generations so far, and they will not fear being alone in acquiring single status. They will be self-sufficient and better educated with huge expectations for the future. They will acquire all the skills required to tackle the global challenges and will be more socially secured than the previous generations. They will prefer the online mode of learning to coming to classes since they are better at understanding concepts and sharp in grasping newer concepts.

## The power of influence with the Generation Alpha



Fig 4: The iGeneration Projection: For Academic understanding only

Generation Alpha or otherwise known as iGeneration, who are born between 2011 to 2025. They are considered to be the best and most sophisticated generation, from the results of observation on some of the interesting characteristics;

- They can't imagine how life was without these gadgets.
- They are fearless about technology and its growth(Cunliffe, Rachel 2021).
- They love to grow with the latest happenings in technology and like connecting through technology(Low, Elaine 2020).
- They interact with Siri and Alexa or Google Assistant more than any other.

**Cerebral blessing:** A generation that would have the greatest chance to expand mars and the moon with the next civilisation. They have the brightest chance to populate the moon and Mars in a significant way. The general blessing with the Indians is that they are cerebrally blessed. Gen Alpha is a sequence of this generation earlier who were the sharpest minds like the Aryabhata, Chanakya, Ramanujam and Homi Bhaba with Dr APJ Abdul Kalam the latest in the lead. While still, Generation Alpha is adept in using AI and Voice Assistants is very natural. Gen A is highly blessed not only with the Cerebral blessing but with special reference to children from India. They are an exciting generation not only for their active life with the use of gadgets like the smartphones, tablets, iPhones, pads and Apps related to every kind of software directly or indirectly related to life but the fearlessness in using the gadgets and the operational intelligence they possess to handle these gadgets to their best advantage(Weale, Sally 2021). Their fearlessness irrespective of their age differences are inspiring all the elders around. They are not afraid to learn from difficulties. They are now very casual in their approach to the competitive life even as a sibling. They are very familiar with voices like that of the Siri, Alexa and Google Assistant even in their homes while living with their parents(Strauss, Valerie 2020). They are articulating their work with AI and voice assistance with all ease, which keeps them superior in adjusting to life with technological developments. The Gen Alpha in the Indian Scenario, including the Gen Alpha related to the Indian Diaspora across the world, learns quickly to adjust to the requirements of living with untoward circumstances as in India, since life in India involves struggle by all means, due to constraints of economy, space and other socio psychological reasons of diversity that it gives(Robson, David 2020).

**Learning the competitive environments:** The Gen Alpha is continuously exposed to the highly competitive environment by their parents, and they are constant motivation by the competition that they had to face in day to day life, even as simple as boarding a bus and getting a seat inside the bus(Gramling, Carolyn 2021). The basic pressure starts from the parents where the millennial parents always put their children on the pedestal of academic excellence which had been traditionally acquired, and this acculturation of getting ready for the academic performance ladder has evolved naturally in the Indian families and upbringing, which the Indian children do it better. Every generation sets its eye on the competitive examinations in



India, and the traditional preparedness towards achieving cognitive tasks as part of the curriculum, which includes some of the toughest competitive examinations like the CAT, JEE and the UPSC. Indian mind set on the cognitive abilities as well as on the activities of sharpening their intelligence, nevertheless rejects that intelligence as a quality that is fixed and never gets altered. The Indian parents since generations believe that cognitive capacities get improvised over better practice and hence the encouragement to competitive examinations for better grades are high, and hence the constancy in the work. Multilingualism in India supplements the Indian kids to take advantage of the enhanced memory, creativity and flexibility as well.

## Findings and conclusion

Research reports on the recent survey conducted on the Alpha children across the world found that by the age of eight, the kid's knowledge of the technology and their skill to operate the gadgets outstrips the parents. The majority of the parents feel that their children value iPad or iPhones more than anything else. Gen Alpha is moving with the technology and grows with the levels of change, as well as adapting to the demands of technology that relate to personal and social life even. They are the generation that has the exposure to technology right from the beginning, and the generation that is active in the educational system that is transformed as per the technological demands. Generation Alpha is a very tough generation to handle as they need constant changes. The approach in parenting including their basic education at all levels is to be constantly updated. The creative study programs, and intensive ones are the ones that Alphas will love to take up, and the demands of such intensive syllabus formation with educational policies are required for the HEIs to sustain the demands of Generation Alpha. The attention span is very minimum and at the same time is very intense, and hence the right way to educate the Alpha is dependent on how the problem solving and critical thinking elements are related to the subjects being taught. While it is obvious that the Gen Alpha is the smartest among the generations, the findings of various studies confound that technological developments, exposure to social media, instant consumption of messages from across the world and improvised living conditions have made the generation Alpha much superior to the previous generations.

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