Kindness as the social bond and the education for the future[#]

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ABSTRACT

Kindness studies have been brought to attention and highlighted in new studies in the field of humanities as the central social bond of humanity and much needed for future generations. Being so, an education that reinforces this skill should be prioritized across disciplines and curriculums. In the Imaginable Futures survey conducted worldwide with 313 responders, kindness was mentioned as one of the three most important abilities for the future. Together with the importance of peace education and mental health, kindness needs to be prioritized in education for the future. As the core aspect of social bonds, this skill acquisition requires a new approach to education, rather than the past content acquisition that led school education for so many years. Kindness is also deeply connected to happiness, well-being, empathy, and sociability, and it can generate physical benefits, like low blood pressure, among other physical and mental health bonds. This research concludes that kindness should be implemented as a key educational figure at this critical time of the Anthropocene.

Keywords: Kindness, social bond, skill acquisition, education, future, peace, mental health.

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INTRODUCTION

Kindness is a genuine concern, care, and consideration for another person's wellness and well-being. As kindness encompasses acts of compassion, empathy, generosity, and respect, it also strengthens social bonds, triggering positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, and happiness. The future will certainly be brighter and more welcoming within this cycle of kindness, social connections, and a sense of belonging (Curry, 2020).

The cultivation of kindness and empathy has become imperative for building better resilient societies in our interconnected and digital world. Kindness has been taken for granted across many generations, potentially because it was passed from generation to generation. With so many challenges and ruptures, this essential skill is now at bay for various reasons, from an extremely egocentric social-media-based society to the period of lockdown that strengthened isolation. Therefore,

Kindness Studies are highly relevant in today's world due to an increasingly interconnected and complex global society (Post, 2018).

The exploration and understanding of kindness have become crucial for promoting positive social interactions, well-being, and community development. Here are some key reasons why Kindness Studies are pertinent nowadays. Kindness has been shown to have significant positive effects on mental health, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. In the face of rising mental health challenges worldwide, research on the psychological benefits of kindness is essential to develop effective interventions and support systems (Post, 2018). Also, acts of kindness foster a sense of social connection, trust, and cooperation among individuals and communities. In a diverse and often polarized world, understanding the role of kindness in promoting social

cohesion and harmony is critical for addressing societal challenges and building inclusive societies (Seppälä et al., 2018).

Kindness education has gained prominence as an important aspect of character development in schools and educational institutions. Research in this field helps identify effective approaches to teach and cultivate kindness in young people, shaping them into compassionate and empathetic citizens (Nelson and Shouse, 2019), and leading to less bullying and prejudice actions (Nel et al., 2017).

Workplace and Organizational Culture show that kindness in the workplace has been linked to higher job satisfaction, improved employee well-being, and increased organizational productivity. As organizations recognize the significance of positive work environments, Kindness Studies offer insights into fostering kindness and compassion in the workplace. Moreover, understanding the role of kindness in addressing social issues, such as prejudice, discrimination, and conflict, can lead to more effective interventions and initiatives. Kindness can be a powerful tool for promoting understanding and empathy across diverse groups (Keltner et al., 2010). As technology continues to shape human interactions, the study of kindness in virtual spaces, social media, and online communities becomes increasingly relevant. Understanding the role of kindness in promoting pro-social behaviours and collective action is vital for achieving sustainable development goals.

The field of Kindness Studies for the future is new and has an interdisciplinary nature allowing researchers to explore kindness from various angles, making it a valuable area of study for creating positive societal change that is requested to foresee the new generations humanity aims. Rooted in compassion, empathy, and goodwill, acts of kindness contribute to positive social interactions, well-being, and the creation of harmonious communities. The study of kindness, known as "Kindness Studies," is an emerging interdisciplinary field that seeks to explore, understand, and promote acts of kindness, their psychological and physiological effects, and their impact on individual and societal well-being.

Kindness Studies draws on various disciplines, including psychology, sociology, neuroscience, anthropology, philosophy, and education, to examine the multifaceted nature of kindness and its significance in different contexts. The field delves into the cognitive processes, emotions, and motivations that underlie acts of kindness, investigating how individuals perceive kindness, how they choose to be kind, and the factors that influence these decisions.

Researchers in this field utilize a variety of methodologies, including laboratory experiments, field studies, surveys, and qualitative analyses, to explore the intricate nature of kindness and its far-reaching effects.

What are the psychological and physiological benefits of receiving or performing acts of kindness? Can kindness be cultivated and taught? If so, what are the most effective methods for promoting kindness in educational settings and beyond? What role do culture and social norms play in shaping kindness behaviours and attitudes? How can acts of kindness be utilized to address social issues, such as prejudice, discrimination, and conflict?

The cultivation of kindness and empathy has become imperative for building better resilient societies and human relations in an interconnected world (Noddings, 2013). Kindness has been taken for granted across many generations throughout history, potentially because it is passed from generation to generation. With so many changes and ruptures going on, this essential skill for the future of humanity seems to be now at bay.

As a social bond, kindness has the potential to bridge worlds, include communities, and promote well-being (Mathers, 2016). Recognized as having an immense transformative power to well-being, the fact is that a smile can brighten anyone's day. Kindness, from a scientific perspective, can be defined as pro-social behaviour characterized by acts of compassion, empathy, generosity, and concern for the well-being of others. It involves intentional actions or gestures aimed at promoting the welfare and happiness of individuals or communities (Lyubomirsky et al., 2011; Lyubomirsky and Layous, 2013).

The scientific definition of kindness encompasses intentional acts of compassion, empathy, and generosity toward others, with research indicating positive effects on well-being, relationships, physical health, and overall happiness (Piff et al., 2015).

Numerous scientific studies have explored the effects of kindness on both the giver and the recipient, shedding light on its psychological, physiological, and social benefits. These studies provide empirical evidence supporting the notion that kindness contributes to positive outcomes in various domains of life (Otake, et al., 2006).

One notable reference is a study published in the journal Psychological Bulletin in 2018, titled "The Science of Kindness." The researchers conducted a meta-analysis of over 200 studies, examining the effects of kindness on well-being, relationships, and physical health. They found consistent and significant associations between acts of kindness and enhanced subjective well-being, improved relationship satisfaction, and even improvements in markers of physical health, such as lower blood pressure (Curry, 2020; Hui, 2020).

The profound impact of kindness on overall well-being and mental health as acts of kindness do stimulate the release of hormones, such as oxytocin and endorphins, which can contribute to feelings of happiness, reduced stress, and improved immune function. Moreover,

engaging in kind acts increases one's self-esteem, self-worth, and life satisfaction. These positive effects do not only benefit individuals but also affect communities and societies.

Additionally, research in the field of social neuroscience has revealed that engaging in acts of kindness activates brain regions associated with reward, empathy, and positive emotions. These neural responses indicate that kindness is not only beneficial for the recipients but also rewarding and fulfilling for the individuals performing the kind acts (Post, 2005).

This way, kindness plays a vital role in fostering social cohesion, which is essential for the functioning of any society. Humans are social beings, and it is this that encourages individuals to recognize and appreciate the humanity in others, leading to trust and cooperation. Krettenauer et al. (2014) suggest that moral emotions serve as an important link between moral towards decision-making processes and everyday moral behavior. This way kindness can also be involved in moral development.

Thus, the education of the future citizen should go far beyond the transmission of knowledge and skills; and aim to cultivate empathy, and compassion, and create positive change (Malti, et al., 2009).

At the same time, the future may also bring many challenges and difficulties, like the rise in anxiety levels, the emergence of questioning, existential concerns, and feelings of hopelessness. Resilience, kindness, and new forms of being become important for mentally healthy individuals (Weissberg and Cascarino, 2013). Future orientation and sustainable practices are think-tank core skills for a new education that puts mankind and its survival at the centre of the world (Dovidio et al., 2006).

This means educating for the future needs to be at the centre of our projects and planning. Together with it, training for teachers and related professionals is imperative, with a whole new role for schools worldwide. To boost sociability, hope, and empathy by providing individuals with a sense of Anthropocene purpose and SDG's meaning to construct an equal and bright future for all requires a new sociability, a sociability that takes kindness as school syllabus (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1989; Knafo and Plomin, 2006).

However, excessive worry about the future can lead to anxiety, uncertainties, and stress. All of this can deeply affect mental wellness. For instance, anticipatory anxiety, characterized by excessive worry about future events, can significantly impact mental health (Durlak et al., 2011). This way, providing the new generations with the ability to deal with these sorts of challenges is not only important to avoid mental occurrences, but it should be highlighted and pursued in the promotion of healthy living.

Moreover, the field of positive psychology, pioneered by psychologists such as Martin Seligman (https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/people/martin-ep-seligman), Director of the Positive Centre at Penn University, who has extensively studied the concept of kindness and its impact on overall happiness, and many other scientific data worldwide have already proved the benefits of engaging in positiveness. Apart from its critics as too much positivity can be toxic, or unbeneficial, positive reinforcement does promote self-confidence and self-worth. As Positive Psychology became the area of Psychology that emphasizes the cultivation of virtues, kindness, well-being, and social relations, it should be wise to promote these, rather later having to treat the symptoms of these.

Nevertheless, the skills needed to educate the citizens for the future are not static, and keep changing all the time, even more, in a globalized-techno society. Therefore, there is new demand and new challenges in at the actual context. Now, new skills and needs are challenging us on how we are all preparing the new generations in a world that is under constant change and threat. The Imaginable Future Survey intended to cover this gap on what people were expecting the future to be and if they felt they were prepared for it.

This article aims to present kindness as the one core skill for the future of human cohesion and social bond and to promote its education for the new generation in all school curriculums across the globe. The answers from the Imaginable Future Survey applied worldwide will be presented and discussed below. This survey highlighted a series of crucial aspects of the future humanity wishes to accomplish and how imperative it is that it starts with core human skills such as kindness.

Imaginable Futures Survey

The Imaginable Futures Survey had 40 questions with multiple-choice and open questions. It was designed and applied to anonymous people in all different parts of the globe through the internet. It had 313 participants. As the goal of this study was to focus on the Globalized Future rather than on its local aspects, cultural variations, or pinch personal and specific demographic details of the responders, other personal data was not even inquired. The main goal was to capture this multi-faceted and imbricated Future thinking and Future imagining and how comfortable or anxious people felt towards the future and what they were expecting it to be like.

Imaginable Futures were understood as a composition of foresight, expectations, scenarios, and visions, which cross one's thinking and relations when dealing with the future both internally and externally. This relation with the future is not only cognitive, but emotional, social, historical, and sensorial. For all of the above, the survey

had a variety of questions, which inquired about how someone feels about the future, the impact of the future on health and wellness, and inquiries about what each person would do about the future, or how they thought they could get ready for it.

The answers to the questions were either multiple-choice or open. This article will focus on the open answers and tabulate them according to quantitative and qualitative textual analysis. The survey was developed in Google Forms and shared worldwide through a call and a link. All collected data was anonymous. The Survey was shared through social media (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), plus WhatsApp, and shared by some groups and individuals. The spontaneous method of gathering responders was effective as it provided wide participation from all continents and age groups. The possibility to access the results of the survey and receive a follow-up of its application also generated positive feedback.

The Imaginable Future Survey was fully developed in English, and responders filled it in English. Afterwards, results were automatically generated by Excel Table for figures and quantitative results, with the respective percentages. The open questions were also tabulated using Textual Analyzer Webto (https://www.webtools. services/text-analyzer), which extracted meaning from the open responses.

The whole procedure and research choices met its objectives and goals and followed the standards of Open Science, together with the anonymous treatment of personal data. There were responders from all continents and all age groups as stated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows that there were 32.2% of responders between 15-25, followed by 19.5% who were 56-65, and 15.6% who were from the age group 36-45. Figure 2 shows the continent of each participant. The data shows that there were 29% of responders from Asia, followed by 26.4% from Europe, 16.6% from the Middle East, and 10.7% were from North America. As can be seen in the

Figure, all continents were represented. The diversity in the age groups and continents was important as the objective was not to address a particular country or age group in specific but to understand the globalized idea of the future that is disseminated through media and interactions. Despite cultural differences, there is an enormous conversion of experiences that promote the unification of narratives and answers towards the future.

Figure 3 shows the topics that were involved in future thinking, which occupies their thinking from very often to always. It showed that these topics, 1) a better tomorrow, 2) improvement, 3) climate change, 4) accomplishments, and 5) war, are the most prevalent topics when thinking about the future. By looking at Figure 3, climate change is the topic that appears the most frequently throughout the answer data. Natural disasters are also mentioned in several responses, often in conjunction with climate change.

Another very important cited topic is war, frequently about climate change or as a crisis in itself. The crisis is mentioned multiple times, both related to a global crisis or an individual one, where the pandemic crisis is also mentioned.
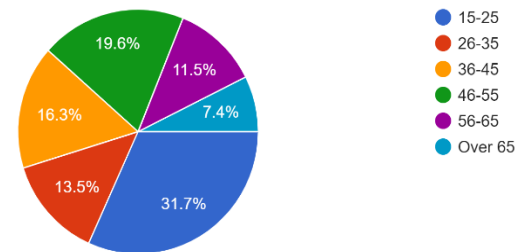
37) Your age group
312 responses

Figure 1. Age group of the 312 participants.
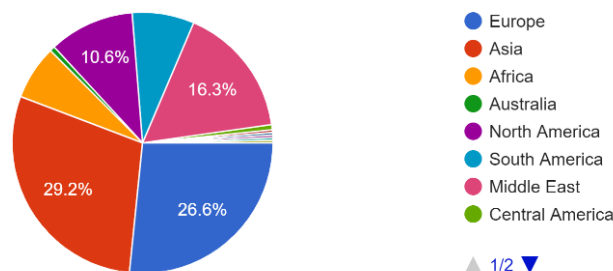
38) Your continent
312 responses

Figure 2. Continent of the 312 participant.

7) When you think about the future, which of these topics are involved. You can tick more than one.
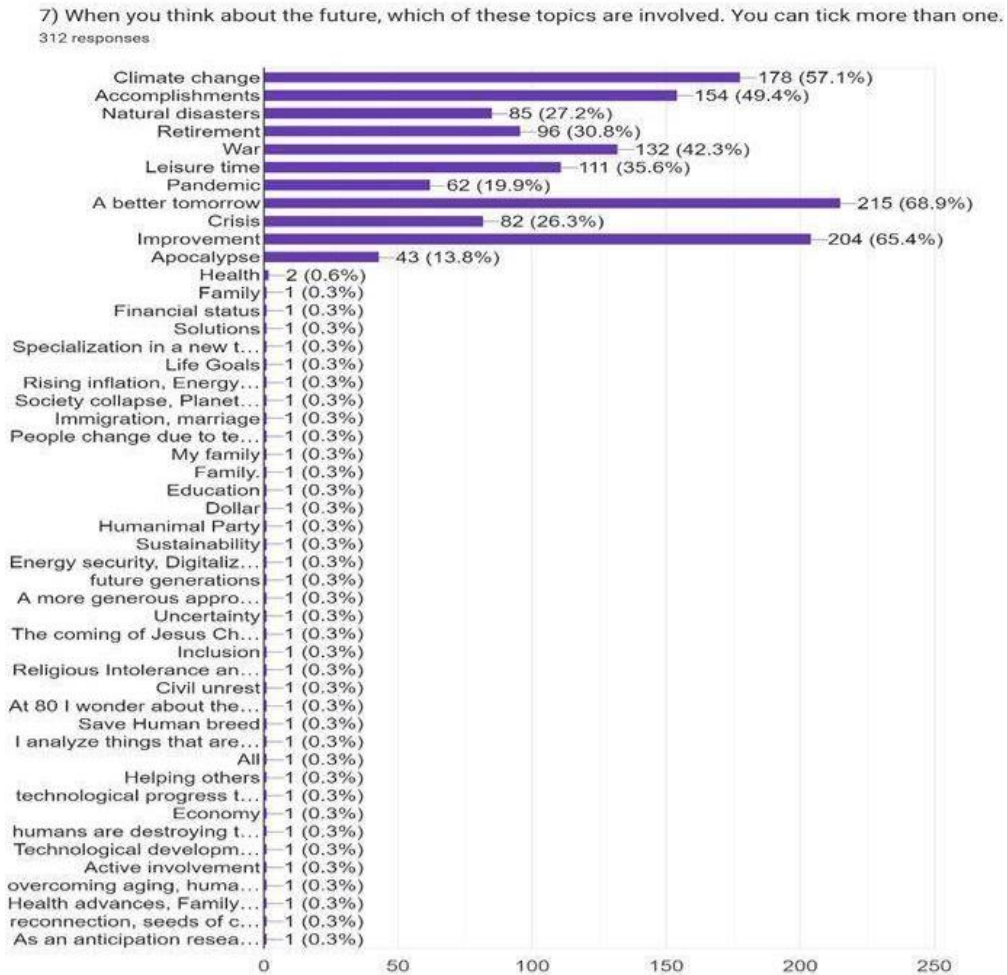312 responses

Figure 3. Topics involved in future thinking.

The next related theme is retirement and leisure time. This shows responders are looking forward to a time out of work. Retirement is mentioned in several responses, often alongside topics like leisure time and a better tomorrow. Furthermore, accomplishments appear in several responses, often associated with a better tomorrow and improvement.

Apocalypse and collapse are also mentioned in a few responses. From planet overconsumption to a lack of physical reality sense, together with uncertainty, chaos, and civil unrest. All in all, there are more challenging aspects than soothing ones.

Figure 4 inquiries about the emotions related to the future. This way, the emotions related to the future are interesting with 181 mentions, followed by happiness with 173 mentions. Then, tension is mentioned with 127 answers, apprehension with 89 answers, sadness with 88 responses, calmness with 85 answers, controlled with 61

mentions, and control and uncontrol with 71 responders each. Other options received 1 answer only.

This data suggests a range of emotions associated with thinking about the future, including positive emotions like happiness, calmness, relaxation, and interest, as well as negative ones like sadness, tension, and apprehension. Some individuals also mentioned feelings of control or lack of control. Although there is attribution of positive and negative factors, it is possible that this attribution on what they relate to. For instance, negative aspects can be related to the climate crisis, meanwhile, calmness and other positive factors are related to a desire rather than a condition of the future. Each response is unique, but at the same time, imbricated in a series of factors relating both to the individual and the social.

Figure 5 corresponds to question 24, where it was inquiring about what the future could bring. Based on the given options, it seems that the future can bring a variety
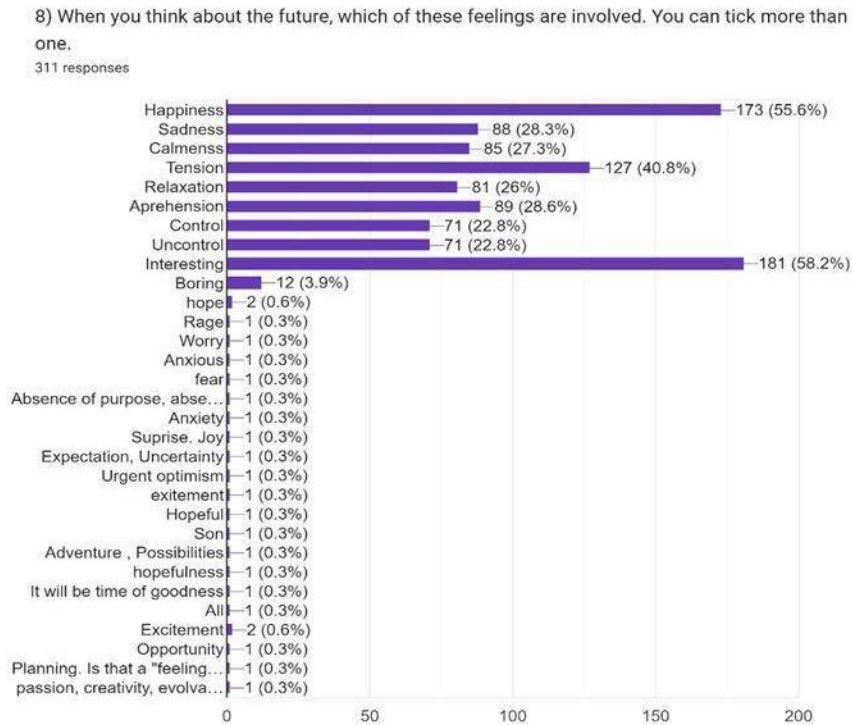
8) When you think about the future, which of these feelings are involved. You can tick more than one.

311 responses

Happiness	173 (55.6%)
Sadness	88 (28.3%)
Calmenss	85 (27.3%)
Tension	127 (40.8%)
Relaxation	81 (26%)
Aprehension	89 (28.6%)
Control	71 (22.8%)
Uncontrol	71 (22.8%)
Interesting	181 (58.2%)
Boring	12 (3.9%)
hope	2 (0.6%)
Rage	1 (0.3%)
Worry	1 (0.3%)
Anxious	1 (0.3%)
fear	1 (0.3%)
Absence of purpose, abse...	1 (0.3%)
Anxiety	1 (0.3%)
Suprise. Joy	1 (0.3%)
Expectation, Uncertainty	1 (0.3%)
Urgent optimism	1 (0.3%)
exitement	1 (0.3%)
Hopeful	1 (0.3%)
Son	1 (0.3%)
Adventure , Possibilities	1 (0.3%)
hopefulness	1 (0.3%)
It will be time of goodness	1 (0.3%)
All	1 (0.3%)
Excitement	2 (0.6%)
Opportunity	1 (0.3%)
Planning. Is that a "feeling...	1 (0.3%)
passion, creativity, evolva...	1 (0.3%)

Figure 4. Feelings involved in future thinking.

24) The future can bring...(You can choose more than one option).

308 responses

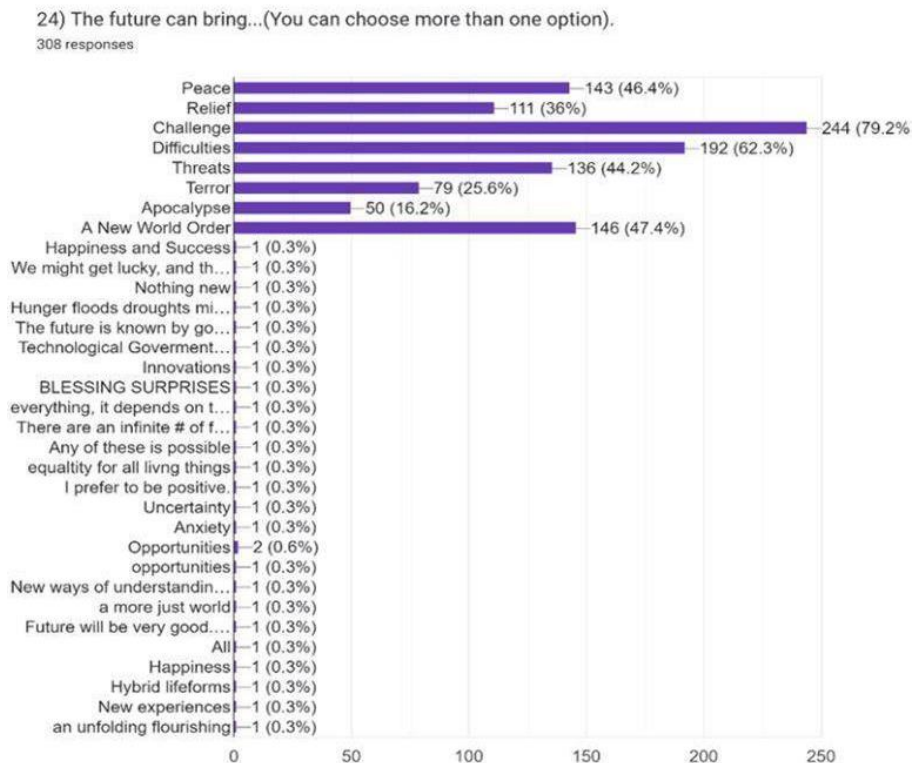|	
Peace	143 (46.4%)
Relief	111 (36%)
Challenge	244 (79.2%)
Difficulties	192 (62.3%)
Threats	136 (44.2%)
Terror	79 (25.6%)
Apocalypse	50 (16.2%)
A New World Order	146 (47.4%)
Happiness and Success	1 (0.3%)
We might get lucky, and th...	1 (0.3%)
Nothing new	1 (0.3%)
Hunger floods droughts mi...	1 (0.3%)
The future is known by go...	1 (0.3%)
Technological Goverment...	1 (0.3%)
Innovations	1 (0.3%)
BLESSING SURPRISES	1 (0.3%)
everything, it depends on t...	1 (0.3%)
There are an infinite # of f...	1 (0.3%)
Any of these is possible	1 (0.3%)
equaltity for all livng things	1 (0.3%)
I prefer to be positive.	1 (0.3%)
Uncertainty	1 (0.3%)
Anxiety	1 (0.3%)
Opportunities	2 (0.6%)
opportunities	1 (0.3%)
New ways of understandin...	1 (0.3%)
a more just world	1 (0.3%)
Future will be very good....	1 (0.3%)
All	1 (0.3%)
Happiness	1 (0.3%)
Hybrid lifeforms	1 (0.3%)
New experiences	1 (0.3%)
an unfolding flourishing	1 (0.3%)

Figure 5. Aspects that the future can bring.

of possibilities and outcomes. These aspects range from challenge (244 answers), difficulties (192), a new world order (146), peace with 143, and relief with 111 answers, followed by terror and apocalypse.

Again, it is possible that the desired outcome does not correspond to the realistic reality in which challenges and conflicts are present. A new world order can also lead to different interpretations, and it may refer to a significant shift in global power structures and governance. For sure challenges, obstacles, and hardships are included in the future, but are people ready and skilled to overcome them? Aspects such as social, economic, or environmental issues can have a great impact and influence on what people desire for their future.

Threats imply potential dangers or risks that can emerge in the future. These threats might be related to security, climate change, pandemics, or other factors that pose significant and demand solutions. There are threats also related to terror, which is noted as extreme fear and violence. This indicates the possibility of increased security threats acts of terrorism, and war crises.

Hunger, floods, droughts, migration, despair... these words highlight some of the potential negative consequences that could happen in the future, such as food shortages, natural disasters, mass migration, and emotional distress. On the other hand, relief indicates a sense of comfort or alleviation from difficulties, suggesting that the future could bring relief from current problems. Happiness and success suggest positive outcomes and achievements in the future, indicating a sense of fulfilment and well-being.

The answers mention the potential impact of advanced technologies on governance and the possibility of new forms of government or governance structures as well as future uncertainty, which implies a lack of predictability or clarity about the future, indicating that there may be unexpected developments or outcomes.

Figure 6 presents the courses and training necessary for being future-ready. By analyzing Figure 6, we can observe several recurring themes such as mental health with 216 responders, sustainable practices with 201 answers, and kindness with 194 responders. Survival skills, future forecasting, and first aid knowledge came next with over a hundred responses. The term positive futurism is particularly interesting to designate a positive approach towards the future, and potentially, it can be very much well-aligned with Positive Psychology.
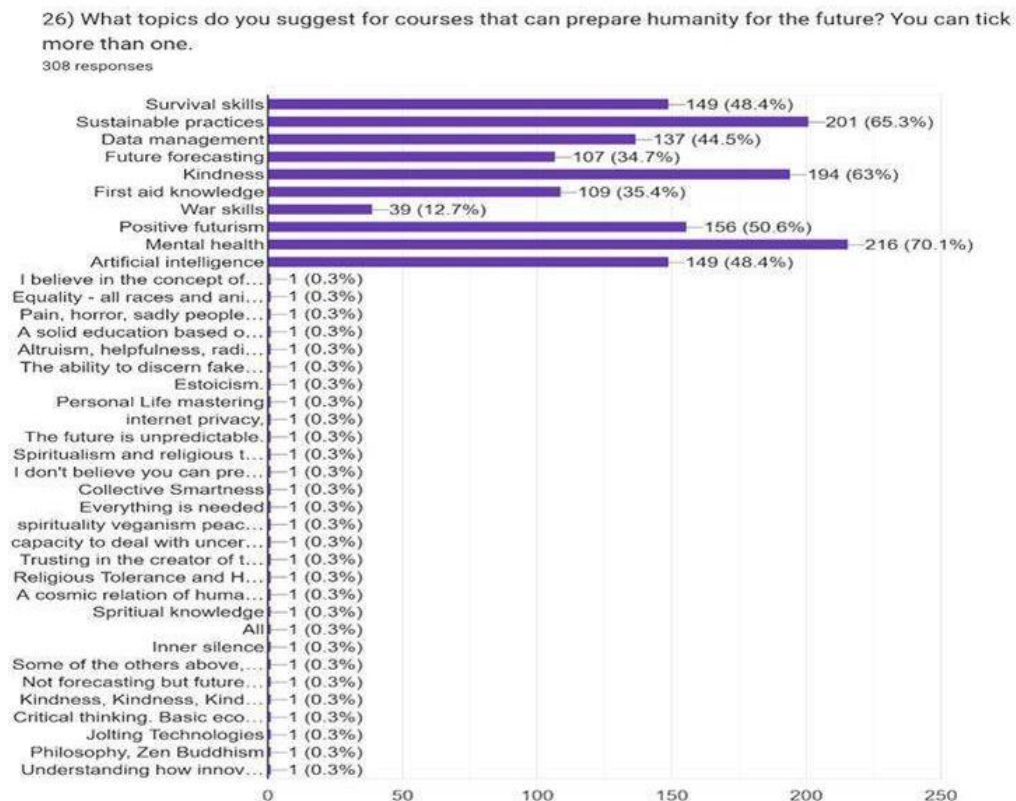

Figure 6. Courses and Training for the Future.

The interesting mention of kindness as a top response shows the gap that there is in the education process nowadays and where it should be directed. Kindness is indeed a popular topic, highlighting a desire for personal and interpersonal growth. This may involve cultivating empathy, compassion, and sociability, leading to the construction of a harmonious and empathetic society.

Some of the other least mentioned topics were mental health, indicating a growing recognition of the importance of psychological well-being and the desire to build resilience and promote mental wellness. The acquisition of training in first aid skill practice to help in emergencies can be explored through artificial intelligence, promoting basic training, and leveraging social cohesion. Future forecasting indicates a desire to understand and anticipate future developments and trends, which if, translated to Future Literacy can be so much more explored.

War skills are also mentioned, suggesting an interest in historical or military knowledge, together with equality and social justice, internet privacy, and, safeguarding personal information in the digital era. Altruism is also mentioned as the cultivation of collective responsibility together with spirituality and religious thinking. The diversity of interests highlights the multifaceted nature of individual learning, needs, and aspirations.

Figure 7 shows the completion of the sentence as what humans will be like in the next ten years. The answers are completely free. Looking at Figure 7, the results show the same with the most responses at 36.20%, followed by manipulated at 35.50%, then happier at 30.10% and controlled at 29.80%, sadder at 23.70%, and no idea had 15.40% of the choices, followed by obsolete with 7.40% and unsure with 0.60%.

27) In the next 10 years, humans will be... (Complete freely, you can check more than one option).
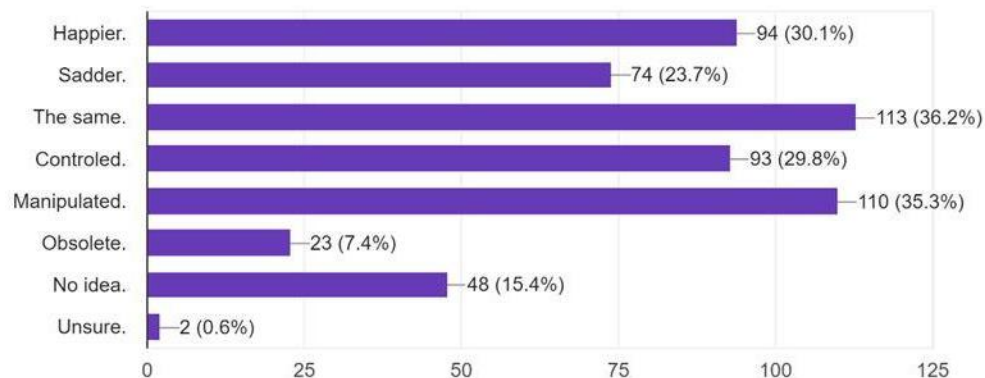312 responses

Figure 7. How humans will be in the future.

By comparing the results above, it is possible to notice a greater presence of answers that foresee a sadder, controlled, and manipulated human being in the future. This can impact other aspects of one's life, from mental health to hope for the future. Also, aspects that relate to emotional and social intelligence are not mentioned, but the consequences of a rather controlled society.

Tables 1, 2 and Figure 8 refer to the imagination (image) of the future for the participants. So, they described in a few sentences what the year 2050 would look like. Table 1 shows the word density for this question, it was generated by the Data Analyzer Tool.

Word Cloud is a powerful data visualization tool, made by a collection of words and symbols depicted in different sizes and colors. The bigger and bolder a word appears, the more often it is mentioned within a given text and the more relevant it is. This format is useful for forming a summary by quickly identifying the prominent ideas (Figure 8).

From Tables 1, 2 and Figure 8, it is possible to understand that the future is a lot based on our own will, it involves thinking – climate – change, people, thinking, and life; otherwise, the world will continue the same. It is interesting to see how the visualization of the data from responders can be summed up in a picture that uncovers the meaning of the global future, which demands actions from everyone. Even further, it is possible to connect and make sense of these words listed in Figure 8. The future

Table 1. Word density for the image of the future.

Word	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Will	271	8.15
Technology	51	1.53
People	50	1.50
World	44	1.32
Life	41	1.23
Future	33	0.99
Think	32	0.96
Change	24	0.72
Climate	19	0.57
Same	18	0.54

Table 2. Phrase density for the image of the future.

Phrase	Frequency
will be	128
we will	35
it will	30
be more	29
will be more	25
I think	22
the future	21
it will be	21
the world	21
of the	20

Figure 8. Data Visualization of what the future will be like.

can change according to our will, which involves people, climate, and change; if nothing is done, the world will remain the same.

Figure 9 shows who is involved in constructing the future and it is important to point out how clear the responders 78.20% were on mentioning that everyone is responsible for the future, followed by the government with 49.40%, and big corporations with 41%. This is very explicit in showing what shares hold the highest responsibilities. It is crucial to note that everyone is responsible for constructing the positive futures that are aimed at. Therefore, every single human being is implicated to promote the necessary changes so everyone can have better futures.

The selected answers to the survey to compose this article do show that many skills need to be urgently addressed by educators worldwide. Humanity seems not to be prepared for the future and the view of it, although bearing many possibilities, is still encapsulated in controlled by uneven relationships. New educational systems, curricula, and methods are necessary to tackle the challenges mentioned in Figure 9.

Kindness is directly linked to positive social interactions and the development of healthy relationships, leading to a deeper understanding of diverse viewpoints and a sense of social responsibility. By engaging in acts of kindness, children learn to recognize and manage their emotions effectively, leading to improved self-control,
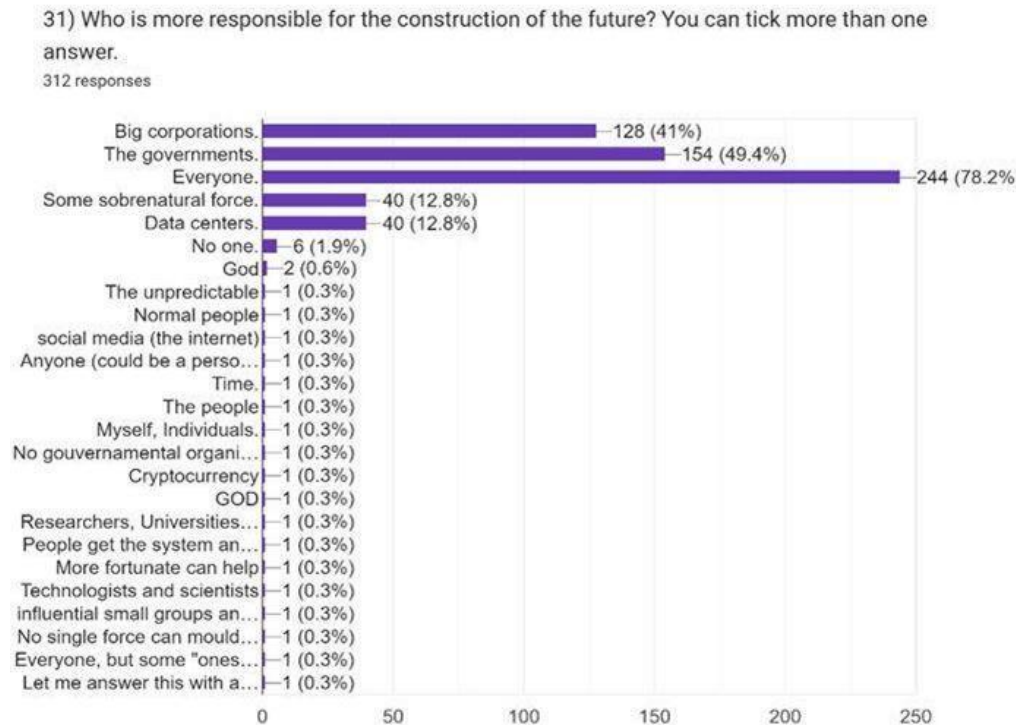
31) Who is more responsible for the construction of the future? You can tick more than one answer.

312 responses

Figure 9. Responsibility to construct the future.

conflict resolution, and overall emotional well-being as stated in the cited references.

The results of this research foresee that it is urgent to reimagine education and pursue new skills and activities that are going to be needed in the future. It is, thus, urgent to review school curriculums and explore new demands and connections to the education of future citizens. By using research data from the Imaginable Futures survey, some issues become central in preparing the new generations for the future, and by all means, kindness is one of them. There will continue to be war and hopelessness if kindness and connections are not reinforced and praised from a young age, and competitions continue to rape human bonds.

However, many questions arise. How do we prepare to integrate kindness into the school curriculum? What is required to build approaches that go beyond occasional random acts of kindness? How do we promote kindness within the school educational system? How do we create pathways to kindness measure? How do we train teachers for all of these?

To effectively promote kindness among students, educators, and policymakers, a set of changes is required and that is part of the discussion and importance of pursuing kindness as the core skill that brings humans together.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Kindness, as a social bond, has the power to transform individuals and societies by fostering social cohesion, enhancing well-being, and promoting inclusive communities. By recognizing its significance, educational institutions can reimagine their role in nurturing the citizens of the future in a novel way. To integrate kindness into the school curriculum and prioritize social and emotional learning, educators can equip students - with the necessary tools - to navigate an interconnected world based on ethical and wellness principles.

Empathy, compassion, and the commitment to create positivity can be a change to promote hope and social justice. Embracing kindness as a fundamental value in education can contribute to the development of a more just, equitable, and harmonious society. Nevertheless, a lot more is needed to implement that.

Educators play a vital role in fostering kindness and empathy in students. They can employ various strategies such as modeling kind behaviour, facilitating discussions on kindness and its impact, and incorporating storytelling and literature that emphasize kindness. Cultivating empathy requires exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences, promoting dialogue, and encouraging active listening. By creating a safe and supportive learning

environment, educators can nurture students' emotional intelligence and social competence, empowering them to become compassionate, kind, and responsible citizens.

Thus, to educate the citizens for the future means to integrate kindness from the beginning of the school curriculum system – at the age of six and beyond. Incorporating kindness into other contents such as core subjects, like literature, or mathematics, will help students to better understand the real-world implications of a future that needs being kind more than ever. Additionally, opportunities for service-learning projects, community engagement, and inclusive classroom environments can contribute to the development of more empathetic and emotionally intelligent individuals. All of that can surely be exploited through AI in a variety of ways. After all, to imagine a future where human relationships are kind-based is also to create a brave new world.

All of this can be achieved by a set of resources. For instance, by incorporating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs that explicitly teach empathy, compassion, and kindness. These programs can be integrated into daily classroom activities and focus on developing students' emotional intelligence, conflict resolution skills, and pro-social behaviours. Research has shown that SEL interventions can lead to improvements in social behaviour and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011).

Creating a school environment that values and celebrates kindness can be achieved through the recognition of kind acts, establishing peer support networks, and fostering a sense of community and belonging. Schools can organize kindness-themed events, assemblies, or campaigns to raise awareness and promote a culture of kindness. It shall also be necessary to infuse kindness-related themes and activities into the various subjects, such as literature, history, and science. This interdisciplinary approach can help students understand the historical and cultural significance of kindness and its relevance in a diversity of contexts.

Students can also be incentivized to engage in volunteering activities within their communities that directly involve acts of kindness. These experiences can help students develop empathy and a sense of responsibility toward others (Schreier and Schonert-Reichl, 2019).

Teachers and instructors may deeply benefit from professional development that emphasizes the importance of modeling kindness in their interactions with students and colleagues. Teachers can serve as powerful role models for students, demonstrating the value of empathy and compassion in daily interactions.

Technology cannot be left out, and for example, digital platforms can be used to highlight and share stories of kindness, encourage online discussions on empathy, and facilitate peer support networks. New assessment tools to measure students' kindness and pro-social behaviours need to be developed and can work out as trackers for the effectiveness of kindness initiatives and help to identify areas for improvement.

Some of the topics that can be introduced and integrated into this new educational system are:

• Futuristic Thinking: to encourage children to imagine and explore different future scenarios.
• Emerging Technologies: to introduce children to emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, and virtual reality and discuss their impact on future society.
• Sustainability: to highlight the significance of sustainable practices and environmental stewardship for a better future.
• Global Awareness: to discuss global issues, cultural diversity, and the importance of collaboration in a globalized world.

On top of all that, kindness and these co-related topics will require new methods of teaching like, curriculum integration, Project-Based Learning, Future-Oriented Skills Development, engaging resources, and new syllabi from books to games, and online platforms.

For all of the above, some of the benefits of adding kindness in children's education can be 1) enhanced preparedness, 2) increased motivation, 3) sense of belonging, 4) emotional intelligence, 5) diversity of career paths and opportunities, and 6) cohesion in humanity.

CONCLUSION

It is now crucial that parents, educators, and policymakers join forces to create a supportive environment for children's education in the very near future. Encouraging partnerships with local businesses, governments, and organizations is the first step in creating needed real-world experiences. It is the answers to this survey that bring insights, answers, and suggestions. Naturally, these are challenging times, but together with it, lies great opportunities. Creating healthy bonds among human beings may be by far one of the greatest ones that humanity has ever achieved. It is high time that it should be part of everyone's education as well as happiness (Salzberg, 1995), and even mindfulness (Nelson and Shouse, 2019).

This would also mean achieving something we have never achieved as humanity, an education for happiness (Froh and Bono, 2019).

"Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.

Kindness in giving creates love." - Lao Tzu.

This quote is attributed to Lao Tzu, an ancient Chinese philosopher and the reputed author of the Tao TeChing, a foundational text of Taoism. While specific references to Lao Tzu's original writings can be challenging due to the historical nature of the texts, this quote has been widely attributed to him and is celebrated for its timeless wisdom on the transformative power of kindness.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Kindness: Kindness is the quality of being considerate, compassionate, and altruistic, demonstrating genuine care and empathy towards others, often resulting in positive actions and behaviours that promote well-being and harmony. It is a fundamental aspect of human interaction that fosters a sense of connection and support in diverse social contexts.

Social Bond: A social bond refers to the emotional and interpersonal connection between individuals or groups, characterized by feelings of trust, mutual support, and shared identity, leading to the formation of cohesive social relationships and communities. It plays a vital role in maintaining social stability and fostering cooperation among members of society.

Social Psychology: Social Psychology is the scientific study of how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are influenced by the presence and actions of others, exploring topics such as attitudes, group dynamics, and social cognition. It examines the impact of social interactions and societal factors on human behaviour and mental processes.

Education for the Future: Education for the Future is a dynamic and forward-looking approach that equips students with adaptable skills, critical thinking, and creativity, preparing them to thrive in an ever-changing and technologically advanced world. It emphasizes collaboration, problem-solving, and a deep understanding of global challenges to foster responsible global citizenship and sustainable development.

School child: A child aged from 6-7 to 18 years old who is studying in a general education institution (secondary school).