

THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The most important tool for the responsible development of the future world is education. With education of new generations, we shape the future of the world. The most important part of education are pupils and in the case of higher education students. The future world belongs to them! Do we know who are they and what they really want? For this reason, the survey has been performed on the engineering faculty in Slovenia in which the students have been asked questions on the basis of which it would be possible to recognize their opinion and position which we should take in to account in the design of education in the future.

Key Words: education, teacher, future, world, humanity

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the rise of mankind it is crystal clear that the education is the strongest tool in shaping the future. In the past some kings, leaders, regimes etc. used force, some education and some both (force and education) to achieve their goals. Force is a short term tool which brings a lot of suffering for the majority of people and short term satisfaction for minority. On the other hand, the education is a long term tool with which you can free or indoctrinate (young) people to serve the leaders, decision makers, community, humanity, earth.....

The current approach in education is still mostly the product of the industrial age, focused on profits, greed, material wealth, etc. which relied on compliant factory workers and mass consumption. Because of the rapid technological changes and concomitant information that is now readily available, it is suggested that educational institutions should refocus their curriculum and strategies of teaching. The pedagogy must be more than mere assimilation of facts, figures and knowledge but rather provide a combination of skill set and concepts to anchor the critical values, which remain constant over time and which ensures the optimum balance between technology and humanism in the future [1].

It's also to be figured out what kind of world we really want: a world populated by responsible citizens and community, or a world of "customers" who feel dependent on products, services, and authority who don't take full responsibility for their actions. This will direct us to the changes needed in education. Overhauling the educational paradigm means replacing the concept of the world and its inhabitants as machine-like entities [1].

Authors believe that highly evolved and developed world needs focus on highly emotionally and socially developed human beings with high awareness who can build a better world using sustainable and holistic approach. The hypothesis authors postulate is that the most important tool for a responsible development of the society is education. With education we shape the future. Education can free and widen young people's minds and empower them with the tools for building the future.

The fundamental sense of the word “education” is to draw others out of “darkness,” into a “more magnanimous view” [2].

Einstein believes that the aim of education must be the training of independently acting and thinking individuals who, however, can see in the service to the community their highest life achievement [3].

Richard Felder points out that it is essential to view learning as a total community responsibility, and have or expect no short cuts. Young people need to be integrated, fully contributing members of the broader community, so they can feel useful and valued. Educators should focus on issues of how to nurture well-rounded, emotionally intelligent students and make educational change in more fundamental ways, understanding, acquisition of critical thinking, formation of positive attitudes and self-confidence [4].

Chomsky suggests that society simply reduces education to the requirement of the market. Students are trained to be compliant workers. The education process is reduced to knowledgeable educators who transfer information to those who don't know rather than to help students formulate higher level thinking skills on their own. Under this model, people have the idea that, from childhood, young people have to be placed into a framework where they're going to follow orders. This model of education imposes a debt which traps students, young people, into a life of conformity. That's the exact opposite of what traditionally comes out of the Enlightenment in which the highest goal in life is to inquire and create. An essential part of this kind of education is fostering the impulse to challenge authority, think critically, and create alternatives to well-worn models. The goals of education should be to encourage the development of the pupils natural capacity, to produce human beings whose values are not accumulation and domination, but instead free association on equal terms, critical thinking skills and the process of gaining useful and applicable knowledge [2] [5] [6].

Education, must be adapted and if necessary modified to be suitable for certain environment (society, time, and circumstances).

The most important part of education are pupils and in the case of higher education students. The future world belongs to them! Do we know who are they and what they really want? For this reason, the survey has been performed in which the students have been asked questions on the basis of which it would be possible to recognize their opinion and position which we should take in to account in the design of education in the future.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey among the students at the engineering faculty in Slovenia has been performed. The students have been asked four questions: “Which skills will be the most important in the future?”, “How do you see the world in the future?”, “How do you see ideal world in the future?” and “What do you need to be successful?”. The students were asked to list three associations for each question. The associations have been counted and listed. The results are presented in chapter 3.

3. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the tables from 1 to 4 results of the survey are presented. In each table the associations of the students (right column of the table) are listed according to how many times certain association has been mentioned (left column of the table).

Table 1. Students associations on the question: “Which skills will be the most important in the future?”. First column - how many times certain association has been mentioned; Second column – associations.

	Which skills will be the most important in the future?
14	creativity-ingenuity
11	self initiative-independence-proactivity-ambition
10	knowledge-readiness to learn-life time learning-versatility
9	interpersonal relations-communication-teamwork
8	use of modern digital technology
8	working habits-readiness to work
7	flexibility
2	experiences

In the table 1 students associations on the question: “Which skills will be the most important in future?” are presented. As can be seen from the table 1 most often mentioned skills are skills connected with creativity, innovativity and ingenuity. Second most often mentioned skills are skills connected with self initiative and proactivity. Third most often mentioned skills are skills connected with knowledge and readiness to learn. Skills which were mentioned more than once were skills connected with interpersonal relations, use of modern digital technology, working habits, flexibility and experiences. It can be seen that among eight groups of skills five are connected with social and personal skills. According to the results presented in the table 1 it can be concluded that beside professional and technological knowledge in the future education of engineers also social and personal competences should be developed.

Table 2. Students associations on the question: “How do you see the world in the future?”. First column - how many times certain association has been mentioned; Second column – associations.

	How do you see the world in the future?
15	weak interpersonal relationships-alienation-selfishness-competitiveness-immorality
14	technology-digitalisation
10	fastness of life-fastness of everything
9	peace-prosperity-morality-common good
6	overpopulation-polarisation reach and poor
6	pollution
2	oversaturation of products
2	long working hours-bad health system

In the table 2 students associations on the question: “How do you see the world in the future?” are presented. As can be seen from the table 2 most often mentioned characteristics of the future world are characteristics connected with weak personal relationships, alienation, competitiveness and immorality. Second most often mentioned characteristics are

characteristics connected with technology and digitalisation. Third most often mentioned characteristics are characteristics connected with fastness of life. Characteristics which were mentioned more than once were characteristics connected with peace and common good, overpopulation, pollution, oversaturation of products and unhealthy working system. According to the results presented in the table 2 it can be concluded that majority of students see the future of the world and humanity as just worsening of current trends (weak interpersonal relationships, immorality, fastness of life, overpopulation, pollution, long working hours). Still a small minority of students (cca 10 % - 15 %) believes that the humanity will be able to build the world of peace, prosperity and common good. Interestingly the creativity and ingenuity were not mentioned although this competencies were on the first place among associations connected with future skills (table 1).

In the table 3 students associations on the question: “How do you see the ideal world in the future?” are presented. As can be seen from the table 3 most often mentioned characteristics of the ideal future world are characteristics connected with peace, prosperity and respect. Second most often mentioned characteristics are characteristics connected with empowerment of people, good relationships and empathy. Third most often mentioned characteristics are characteristics connected with coexistence with nature. Characteristics which were mentioned more than once were characteristics connected with slow living, technology and digitalisation, efficiency and creativity. In the curriculums of engineering education the topics connected with associations listed in table 3 should be added. As can be seen from the table 3 students connect their ideal world with peace, good relationships and coexistence with nature. To the curriculums of engineering studies the topics connected with this associations should be added.

Table 3. Students associations on the question: “How do you see the ideal world in the future?”. First column - how many times certain association has been mentioned; Second column – associations.

	How do you see ideal world in the future?
23	peace-prosperity-respect
19	empowerment-good relationships-empathy-humanity
11	coexistence with nature
6	slow living
3	technology-digitalisation
2	efficiency
2	creativity

In the table 4 students associations on the question: “What do you need to be successful?” are presented. As can be seen from the table 4 most often mentioned need for to be successful are self-esteem, perservance and courage. Second most often mentioned need is connected with creativity and ingenuity. Third most often mentioned need is social competencies. Characteristics which were mentioned more than once were characteristics connected with knowledge, vision and purpose, that work is a hobby, working habits, family and friends, health, IQ, and experiences. As can be seen from the table 4 majority of associations are connected with social and personal competencies. To the curriculums of engineering studies the topics connected with this associations should be added.

Table 4. Students associations on the question: “What do you need to be successful?“. First column - how many times certain association has been mentioned; Second column – associations.

	What do you need to be successful?
20	self-esteem-perseverance-courage
11	creativity-ingenuity
11	social competencies
9	knowledge-readiness to learn
6	vision - purpose
4	work is a hobby
4	working habits
2	family-friends
2	psychophysical health
2	IQ
2	experiences

4. CONCLUSION

The most important tool for the responsible development of the future world is education. With education of new generations we shape the future of the world. The most important part of education are pupils and in the case of higher education students. In the frame of presented research the view of current students on the future skills and world is presented and discussed.

On the basis of the survey which has been performed among the engineering students in Slovenia it has been found out that that beside professional and technological knowledge in the future education of engineers also social and personal competences should be developed. Majority of students see the future of the world and humanity as just worsening of current trends (weak interpersonal relationships, immorality, fastness of life, overpopulation, pollution, and long working hours). Still a small minority of students (cca 10 % - 15 %) believes that the humanity will be able to build the world of peace, prosperity and common good. Students connect their ideal world with peace, good relationships and coexistence with nature and success with social and personal competencies.

Highly evolved and developed world needs highly emotionally and socially developed human beings with high awareness who can build a future world using sustainable and holistic approach. Education, particularly of young people, is the tool to reach this vision.

5. REFERENCES

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