

Trust and the social capital necessary for pedagogical reform

James Kennedy Campbell
Deakin University, Australia

Part of the program of educational reform and the change in pedagogy from rote top down instruction to group based and more creative forms of pedagogy relies on teachers adequately engaging with accepting, and trusting the reforms and the way subjectivity is reformulated in the classroom. My essential argument is that if we want to know how Malaysian educational reform will work and what its chances of success are we must focus as much on the issue of trust as we do on pedagogy. The reasons for this are two fold. First, the success of pedagogical reform and the pick up of new forms of pedagogy in the classroom relies on forms of social interaction and aspects of social capital that are different from the types of relationships that characterize a traditional educational setting. Second, a failure to understand the important social capital that is both a precursor to pedagogical reform as well as an outcome of it is a failure to understand both how pedagogical reform can work and what its implications are. If this thesis is correct then we need to focus our research agendas on an area that is not as well researched. We need to look at the social capital preconditions for effective teaching and in particular the issue of trust in our teaching. This paper is an attempt to map out the theoretical issues that need further elaboration through research.

Key Words Trust, Social Capital, Educational Reform