

# Trust - Provocation Paper

*“Relationships matter: the currency for systemic change was trust, and trust comes through forming healthy working relationships. People, not programs, change people.”*

– Bruce. D Perry

## Introduction

Trust is a beautiful thread that enables us to move ahead progressively, build social capital and lead happy and peaceful lives. It flows through layers - interpersonal to institutional and has significant contribution towards building, running and sustaining relationships, organizations and systems. Existence of trust enables change or in other words, trust is a prerequisite for change. A person, institution or system might have the best solutions to problems in the community/society/country but if the different stakeholders in the system don't trust the initiator of that change, its acceptance, implementation and sustenance becomes a challenge. Like in the case of [Poland](#) where forced reform brought about education outcomes but left the citizens questioning the credibility of the assessments.

In education, Trust has enabled educators, institutions and changemakers to create a systemic impact. For example students in [Anseye Pou Ayiti](#) matriculate at three times the rate of the community average and double the rate of national average due to the authentic relationships the teachers cultivated with the community over years.

## Story

[Lene Rachel Andersen](#), while sharing about the [Nordic Secret](#), shares how trust has played a role in the evolution of society. 220 years ago in the 1800s, the Nordic countries were among the poorest in Europe. They were poor agricultural feudal societies which had not started industrialization. However, in the 1850s and 1860s there was a wave of a new kind of education for the rural youth. 10% of young farm hands went to a boarding school for 5-6 months. Teachers told stories that inspired the students and then allowed the students to ask questions, which was highly unusual back then. They learnt better agricultural techniques, latest advancements in science, good handwriting (which enabled them to make a good first impression on others 150 years ago) and a lot of other things. With the trust that this new education system cultivated between the participants in these schools, they went back to their communities with a stronger sense of self. The core principle was transfer of knowledge through interesting ways of teaching and asking the youth how they felt. There was no diploma one got. The exam was life. Youth went to learn and parents sent their children because they trusted that their children would learn something useful.

The main philosophy behind education was that children learn at different paces, have different personalities and it was important to support that. Children were not punished but talked to and heard. There were special/ alternate schools for anyone who found it hard to adjust. Shaming children doesn't build trust. Learning cannot happen out of fear and anxiety. Instead the Nordic countries built trust among children and the youth that if they were in trouble they would be heard and understood.

Teachers knew the personality of each child and helped grow that. This mutual trust between the school, its youth and the community formed the basis of the high levels of social trust that characterize Nordic countries today.

## Perspectives

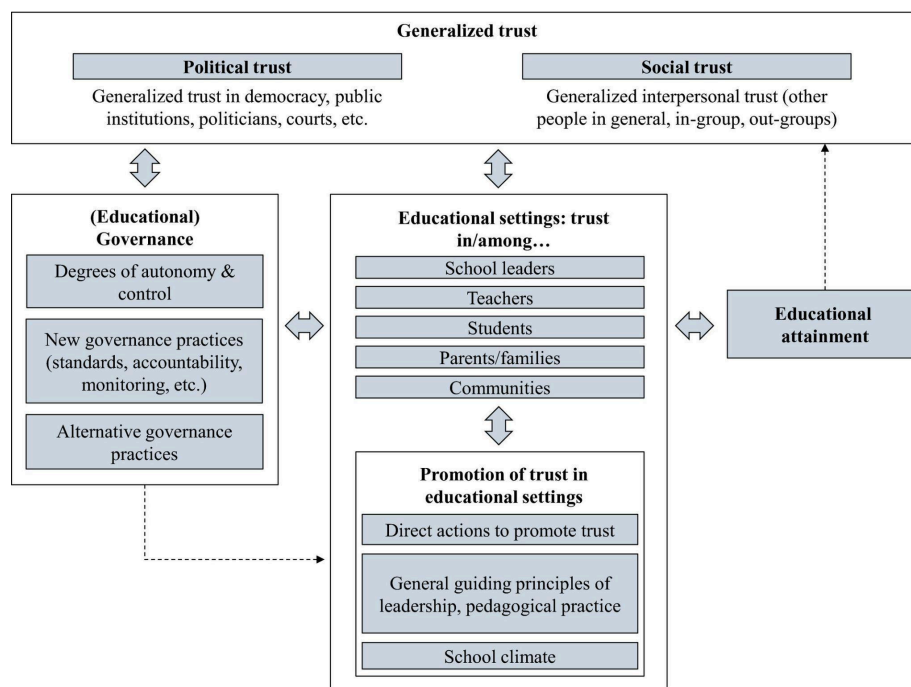
<p><a href="#"><u>Franco, Ensenar Peru</u></a></p>	<p>“Change seems to be happening in the start but it is when you have deep conversations that are based on trust is when you realize the realities on ground and can then actually work on building something that is more relevant and more sustainable “</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Rachael Botsman, Trust Researcher</u></a></p>	<p>Defining trust as a confident relationship with the unknown- how evolution of trust has seen a paradigm shift from trusting the known to trusting strangers</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Frances Frei, Harvard Business School Professor</u></a></p>	<p>“If we can learn to trust one another more, we can have unprecedented human progress”</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Anthony S. Bryk and Barbara Schneider, Trust in Schools: A Core Resource of Improvement (2002)</u></a></p>	<p>“Trust is the connective tissue that holds improving schools together.”</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Dr. LaKimbre Brown, Instructional superintendent, Teach For America '99</u></a></p>	<p>“Once trust is embedded in the school culture, you can have more powerful conversations to help everyone grow and improve”</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Sebastian Niedlich, Annika Kallfaß, Silvana Pohle, Inka Bormann</u></a></p>	<p>Studies have found that trust positively affects academic performance; improves much of the routine work of schools and is a key resource for reform</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Dr. Matthew Lynch</u></a></p>	<p>A healthy and congenial school environment~ with an enabling and flexible structure~ and student achievement helps build trust between schools &amp; families</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Alicia Burns</u></a></p>	<p>“As instructors, we must be thoughtful in our class preparation to intentionally create opportunities to build trust.;When we show our students that we sometimes struggle or that we don’t always have all the answers, it reinforces that we are all human.”“As instructors, we must be thoughtful in our class preparation to intentionally create opportunities to build trust.;When we show our students that we sometimes struggle or that we don’t always have all the answers, it reinforces that we are all human.”</p>

<a href="#">Lene Rachel Andersen</a>	“Connection between trust and responsibility is crucial. You can demand responsibility from other people but cannot demand trust.”
<a href="#">Mohamed El Idrissi - CEO - Teach for Morocco</a>	“My experience has showed me that it was the trust between the local leaders and the communities that had made the families and children advocates of change”
<a href="#">Ola, SLAC</a>	“Trust is the main thing when you have to get others to listen or hear your vision. I learnt this during my time at school. When I am trying to do something I need others to help me - One hand can't clap. I need authorities to support me during my work. You have to be kind to people , love them and that's how they start trusting you”

## Evidence

In general, trust has been recognised as important for social cohesion. It has also been found to be a pivotal factor in educational settings affecting educational attainment. Furthermore, education and social cohesion are interconnected. Most of the current research included in this study considers trust within educational settings, or focuses on conditions that affect the interconnection of education and trust.

1. [A comprehensive model of trust](#) - this research talks about how 4 elements - generalized trust, educational settings, educational governance and educational attainment are connected through a complex multilevel system.



2. [Begin with trust](#) - Frances X, Frei and Anne Morriss talk about 3 drivers of trust - authenticity, empathy and logic. People need to believe that the leader is true and transparent, they need to feel the leader is credible, competent and lastly that they care.
3. [Taiwan Government](#) - built trust in the system through transparency and deep citizen participation. Citizens could see and listen to discussions on policies in real time and also participate online. This built empathy for public servants and helped manage conflict. They also overcame challenges of disinformation by running campaigns. The trust the government built in its people enabled them to overcome coronavirus as people willingly adhered to all guidelines.
4. [Eric Uslaner, All for All: Equality and Social Trust](#) - This research shows a positive correlation between social trust and economic growth- e.g. Nordic countries, Netherlands and Canada score high on social trust as well as in economic growth; These are also the countries with high education scores.
5. [Building Trust: Exceptional Leadership in an Uncertain World, Darryl Stickle](#) - One of the greatest experts on trust, Darryl Stickle has come up with a Trust Unlimited Blueprint which enables leaders to build sustainable trust in their organization.
6. [Trust, Accountability and Capacity in Education System Reform ~ global perspectives in comparative education](#) - this book shows from research across 5 continents how students learning is related to trust, accountability and capacity and how policy makers can leverage these 3 building blocks to create systemic education reforms.

## Examples

[Wesley Community Action](#) in New Zealand - Director Davis Hanna approached systemic change through building relational trust among community members. She was part of social gatherings, informal group activities, camping expeditions etc over months where she and community members got to know each other. They experienced the power of lived experiences.

In case of [Totteridge Academy](#), Chris Fairbairn understood that he is younger than the median age of the other school employees and needed to build the culture of trust by being vulnerable and empathetic, but he also kept the expectations high so as to improve the outcomes for the students and make the community proud of the school in the community. He had a plan to make this happen reaffirming the three pillars of building trust - accountability, logic and empathy.

[Dream a dream](#) - this research by dream a dream on the secret sauce of education reform talks about how Portuguese, Finnish and Canadian policy makers built trust through building local agency via teachers and educators. The system believed in the knowledge and leadership of the teachers to create, adapt and implement policies. This also enabled less resistance in bringing about change.

## Insights

- *Courage*: How leaders deal with conflict plays a crucial role in building trust. When leaders did not fear having conversation with their people and community, deep dived into issues and came up with solutions it has led to building long term sustainable trust.
- *Dignity*: Respecting a person, child, school and the community's culture, backgrounds and inherent worth makes them connect with you as one and initiate the process of building trust.
- *Competence*: People and communities develop trust when the leader or system shows them they can deliver and consistently. They have the knowledge, skills, network and agency to stay true to their work. Competence over time builds credibility which further builds trust.

- *Presence*: Trust builds when the leader is available and present in the lives of the community and its people. Deeply and regularly engages with them and is an integral part of their lives.
- *Time*: Trust takes time to build and is an ongoing process. It is difficult to fast track but once achieved can sustain and lead to systemic results both in society and education.
- *Listening + action*: When people feel heard and see leaders acting on what they have heard it enables building of trust. It makes the community believe that they matter, their choices matter and they are more willing to participate.
- *Agency*: When leaders build agency in their people and community it leads to a strong sense of self. This makes them believe in their potential as a community and drives them to listen and be part of change.
- *Authentic relationships*: Trust is built with time and patience by investing in authentic relationships. Relationships which are beyond transactional, where the system or leader really cares for the needs and problems of the community, its people and children.

## Useful Links

- [How Good is Trust? Measuring Trust and its Role for the Progress of Societies - Eric Uslaner Trust, Inequality and Civic Engagement](#)
- [David Brooks, How to build trust: a practical guide \(links to some interesting studies\)](#)
- [Bla Bla Cabs -](#)
- [Ensina Brasil community engagement to build trust](#)
- [Change moves at the speed of trust](#)
- [The Nordic secret to battling coronavirus: Trust](#)
- [Teach For Zimbabwe parent partnerships to grow trust](#)
- [How Teacher Educators Develop Trust in Educational Systems](#)
- [A case study of Enseña Perú's work in Ancash and an interview with Franco Mosso](#)
- [A case study of Teach For Morocco's approach and an interview with Mohammed El-Idrissi](#)
- [Case study on how APA has build trust with community over the years](#)
- [10 reflections on how to approach authentic community partnership](#)
- [Video: Building authentic relationships with community members](#)
- [3 elements of trust](#)