

EDUCATION AND INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL.

In recent years, Australia has been challenged by a divisiveness in our community relating to our place and role in the region. Very recently the concerns have been about religion and the misleading claims about the social values held by some, notably the believers in Islam. Many of us had hoped that these biases were a thing of the past, a hope that our tolerance of differences between Australians had matured into an acceptance of difference.

It is a sad reflection of politic life that much of this discord was engineered for political gain with little regard or care of the personal impact that these forces might have on individual Australians living together in harmony.

Education and an understanding of the social, cultural and religious differences of others but especially our near neighbours must surely be a key factor in this acceptance. The benefit of future leaders being exposed to a wide diversity of thought and contact during their formative years of learning and independent thinking will be the basis of friendship, trust and understanding even when there is no agreement.

This is the greatest intellectual capital that education can hope to provide for the future. It is worth the investment.

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