



**ASIA LEADERSHIP  
ROUNDTABLE**

BANGKOK  
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# **Educational Reform and Change in the Asia Pacific Region**

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## **Making Education Reform Happen: Is There an “Asian” Way?**

**Philip HALLINGER**

This paper presents a descriptive analysis of education reform in selected Southeast Asian nations between 1995 and 2007. It reports the results of a purposive survey of elite informants comprised of scholars and educational leaders involved in education reform in Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. The paper addresses two main questions: What have been the main obstacles to education reform in Southeast Asia? And is there anything unique or different about the process of educational reform and change in Southeast Asia from processes reported in the Western literature? Although the paper finds more similarities than differences in the process of education reform in Southeast Asia, the author notes distinctive obstacles to reform in these societies. These differences are linked to a cultural explanation of educational change.

