



**ASIA LEADERSHIP  
ROUNDTABLE**

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## **Leadership and Learning in Asia Pacific: Challenges for Research and Practice**

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### **Principal Turnover and In-School Enabling Conditions for Change**

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The majority of research on educator turnover is focused on understanding the antecedents and consequences of teacher turnover. In this paper, we examine the relationship between principal turnover and school conditions related to school improvement. Results from hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) analyses from teacher and principal survey data suggest that principal turnover may impede the principal's ability to facilitate relationships and create enabling processes at the school level, such as setting goals and developing professional community, that are necessary for implementing change and improving student achievement.

We hypothesize that teachers who work in schools with principals who have changed within a two year timeframe will report lower levels of the organizational enabling conditions for change as compared to teachers in schools with a principal who did not change during the two years. In schools where principal turnover takes place, it is more difficult to implement necessary changes to improve teaching and learning. In this paper, we explore the relationship between principal turnover and enabling conditions for school change. Specifically, we ask: How do teacher ratings of school-level enabling conditions differ between schools with principals who stayed in the same school and principals who changed? The sample for this study includes 2027 teacher respondents and principals from 51 schools.

The results suggest that schools that had a principal who remained in the same school for all three years have teachers who report higher scores on all five constructs representing enabling processes and conditions that support the implementation of change in schools, namely goal clarity, teacher collaboration, efficacy, professional learning community, and academic press as compared to teachers in schools with a principal who changed.

This study suggests that the topic of principal turnover requires further investigation, especially in a reform era that has witnessed a variety of programs and approaches intended to improve teaching and learning. Research has shown that certain conditions are necessary for implementing successful change in schools, including clarity of goals and expectations, teacher collaboration, teacher efficacy, professional learning communities, and academic press. The significant relationship between these constructs and principal turnover suggests that reforms may have the potential to be more successful if principal turnover is less frequent.



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