



**ASIA LEADERSHIP
ROUNDTABLE**

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

Piloting Principal Leadership Practices and School Capacities in Hong Kong Primary Schools

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Two questionnaires developed to measure teachers' perceptions of principal leadership practices and conditions in the schools have shown strong reliability and validity in studying Hong Kong secondary schools (Ko & Walker, 2011). Based on the findings obtained by using these two scales, Walker and Ko (2011) have identified, under the new ecology of increasing educational accountability since 2003, secondary school principals' practices associated with leader and teacher growth and development have the strongest impact on aligning school policies and enforcing coherence and structure in the school. Interestingly, regarding the school's support for students, it was principals' external communication and connection that has played the strongest positive role, while the impact of quality assurance and accountability was also strong but negative.

Similarly, Ko, Hallinger and Walker (forthcoming) also found that neither principal leadership practices nor school capacities alone, but a hybrid set of both types of factors could distinguish schools that showed continuous school improvement from schools that seemingly stagnated in school improvement. The present results were based on four pilot schools of a major study on distributed leadership in Hong Kong primary schools employing the same instruments used by Walker and Ko (2011). As in Ko, Hallinger and Walker (forthcoming), these four pilot schools were better distinguishable by a hybrid set of leadership practices and school characteristics in discriminant analysis. Moreover, principals' leader and teacher growth and development and external communication and connection were the most important leadership practices, while communication within the school was the most important school capacity.



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