



ASIA LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

HO CHI MINH CITY
March 11-13, 2012

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

Instructional Leadership in East Asia

Philip HALLINGER

Over the past decade, policymakers in East Asia have implemented new policies and programs aimed at increasing the capacity for leadership in schools (Cheng & Walker, 2008; Hallinger, 2011; Walker & Kwan, 2008). The rationale for overhauling school management systems (e.g., school based management, quality systems, accountability structures) and developing new approaches to the recruitment, selection, training, and evaluation of school leaders is based upon an increasingly substantial empirical knowledge base concerning the contributions that instructional leadership makes to school performance (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2006; Robinson et al., 2008). At the same time, scholars have noted that this knowledge base consists largely of theory and empirical research from Western cultural contexts (Cheng, 1995; Hallinger, 1995, in press; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1998; Hallinger et al., 2005; Walker & Dimmock, 2002). This limitation of the knowledge base on school leadership in East Asia represents the focus of this project.

The proposed project seeks to contribute to the development of the knowledge base on principal instructional leadership in 7 East Asian societies: Hong Kong, Mainland China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, Singapore, and Thailand. The research will be conducted in three overlapping stages using methods designed to explore how principals enact instructional leadership from 'indigenous perspectives' (Bajunid, 1996). That is, we begin with a very broad framework derived from prior research, but without a functional definition of the role or its composite practices. The stages of the research process consist of:

- Literature reviews within each of the four societies,
- A qualitative research design that employs open-ended and semi-structured interviews with a sample of 30 primary school principals in each country,
- Case studies that employ intensive observations, event sampling of leadership practices, and reflective interviews with a sample of 5 primary school principals in each country.

These methods will enable us to generate propositions about how instructional leadership is exercised within and across these societies. Thus, the project will refine the existing knowledge base concerning a key facet of school leadership and lay the foundation for contextualized, large-scale quantitative studies in the future.



The Joseph Lau Luen Hung Charitable Trust
Asia Pacific Centre
for Leadership and Change
劉鑾雄慈善基金
亞太領導與變革研究中心

IREED

Institute for Research on
Educational Development