EXAMPLE OF A GROUP PANEL PROPOSAL

Title of the group panel: \textit{Issues on Teacher Policy and Management Systems: a comparative perspective}

Name of Organizer: Maribel A. Sevilla  
Institution: Research Triangle Institute  
Mailing Address: 3040 Cornwallis Road  
Address: RTP, NC, 27709 USA  
E-Mail: msevilla@rti.org  
Phone: 1-919-316-3990  
Fax: 1-919-541-6621

Name of Discussant: Michel Welmond  
Institution: The World Bank  
Mailing Address: 1818 H Street, N.W.  
Address: Washington, DC 20433 U.S.A.  
E-Mail: mwelmond@worldbank.org  
Phone: 1-202-473-0900  
Fax: 1-202-477-6391

Name of Presenter: David N. Plank  
Institution: Michigan State University  
Mailing Address: Erickson Hall, 106  
Address: East Lansing, MI 48823  
E-Mail: dnplank@msu.edu  
Phone: 1-517-

Name of Presenter: Paula Razquin  
Institution: Stanford University  
Mailing Address: 485 Lasuen Mall, Office 326  
Address: Stanford, CA 94305  
E-Mail: pularaz@stanford.edu  
Phone: (650) 723-4984  
Fax: (650) 725-7412

Name of Presenter: Maria Teresa Tatto  
Institution: Michigan State University  
Mailing Address: 513D Erickson Hall,  
Address: East Lansing, MI, 48825  
E-Mail: mttatto@msu.edu  
Phone: 1-517-353-6418  
Fax:
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(a) Summary:

1. **Title.** Issues on Teacher Policy and Management Systems: A Comparative Perspective

2. **Abstract of 500 words describing:**

   (a) **Objectives.** This panel presents an opportunity to discuss and build knowledge on how to integrate all the aspects of teacher policies.

   (b) **Perspectives or theoretical framework.** One of the most difficult challenges faced by the education sector worldwide is how to develop successful teacher policies to guide management of teacher corps. The heart of any education system, skilled teachers are critical to achieving the objective of providing schooling for all children and higher student achievement.

   (c) **Educational or scientific importance.** This panel explores the idea that aside from readily visible economic and social impediments to managing successfully the education system teacher corps, several major constraints have frustrated reforms in this area. First, education researchers, who provide the data on which policy is based, and education policy makers have tended to see teacher corps problems as isolated one from another. Treating teacher management issues, such as recruitment, deployment, training, supervision, incentives and performance as distinct areas of expertise, they have focused on establishing separate mechanisms to study and carry out reforms, thus missing important connections between them. Second, there is lack of coherent education information systems that collect the necessary information to plan demand and supply of teachers, as well as, to establish mechanisms of training, supervision, accountability, accreditation, and promotion in the teaching career that reinforce and protect teaching as a profession from losing its status. As a consequence many of the training and supervision mechanisms instituted in different levels of government, even at school level, become institutionalized practices with little impact on teacher quality. These practices rather than attend and solve teacher issues and needs in the system, serve more as employment functions to be filled at education administrations. Commonly, they become employment opportunities for teachers to leave the classroom practice.

   (d) **Contribution** The theme of this conference urges us to re-imagine how to address teacher policy. In this panel we do so by asking the following questions: How do we go about elaborating consistent and sound teacher policies in different countries? What types of assessment tools are available for policy-makers? How do we measure teacher quality? How does this information contribute in designing teacher careers? How do we develop high quality teachers? How can we keep them in the profession?

   (e) **Description of how the session will be structured.** The first paper presents a framework for analyzing teacher policy vis-à-vis teachers’ needs. The second paper

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describes the Nigerian case; particularly what concerns the strengths and weaknesses of career schedule plans, and how the career plans act as part of a general teacher policy. The third brings to the table the discussion of how do we know teachers are qualified, which data do we need, how these information should be taken into consideration in a broader policy framework for the teachers and what countries have done toward improving information on teacher quality. Each presentation will take 15 minutes and we will leave 45 minutes at the end for discussion with the audience.

3. **Keywords or descriptors.** TEACHERS: SALARIES, TRAINING, ATTRACTION AND RETENTION; EDUCATION POLICY.

4. **Region and country.** African continent, Nigeria, global.

5. **Audiovisual requests.** Power point projector.

(b) **Description of each individual presentation in the panel (200-250 words each).**

1. **Title: Positioning teacher policy in African countries**

   **Maribel A. Sevilla,** Research Triangle Institute
   **David N. Plank,** Michigan State University

   **1.2 Abstract**
   This presentation explores the development of a conceptual framework of human resource development in the education sector for supporting the analysis and implementation of teacher policies and systems. The paper, written from the policy-maker’s perspective, examines key issues facing education ministries trying to design and redefine teacher policies for the development of sustainable quality systems. The characteristics of the framework, as it emerged from study of labor markets and international comparative qualitative and quantitative work on teaching as a profession in different countries will be described.

2. **Title: Linkages between career, incentives, teacher motivation and performance**

   **Paula Razquin,** Stanford University

   **2.2 Abstract**
   In the teaching field, it is particularly difficult to determine the desired aptitudes of teachers. In many countries, teacher qualifications and experience are often challenged as unrepresentative of the desired profile. However, most countries fail to identify a more satisfactory way of differentiating between teachers for the purposes of compensation or for teacher allocation. This paper examines the teaching career schedules and incentive system in Nigeria. The author undertakes an in-depth analysis
of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing incentive system in light of teacher motivation and performance.

3.1 Title: Teacher quality, how do we know? Measures of teacher quality and implications for teacher policies

Maria Teresa Tatto, Michigan State University

3.2 Abstract

Cross-national comparative studies of the influence of teacher preparation on teacher learning and practice, and its influence on pupil learning are non existent. The result is a lack of clarity regarding how teachers' opportunities to learn combine with system features to produce the kinds of teaching practices observed and how these in turn contribute to high achievement in pupils across diverse contexts. Renewed worldwide interest in improving teacher quality as a means to increase quality learning among diverse populations makes it possible to conceive of implementing such studies. The purpose of this paper is to understand how country-studies in the international literature have attempted to measure the effects of teacher development on quality teaching and pupil learning, looking particularly for the kinds and appropriateness of indicators that have been used to define and assess these dimensions. This paper will discuss how the lessons from this literature may help to inform future comparative research and policy making regarding teacher preparation and quality.

3. Conclusions and significance of the group panel

This symposium has presented a framework for conceptualizing a number of issues on teacher policy and management systems and the ways in which teachers’ needs and concerns—economic, organizational, professional, and social—in different contexts can be brought to bear on the formation and implementation of teacher policies. Such a framework can generate fresh, comprehensive solutions to persistent problems related to teacher recruitment, education, deployment and retention. Most importantly, it takes into consideration the growing recognition that teachers are not passive instruments of the state but agents who exercise choice on a wide range of issues related to the conditions of their employment.

References


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