

# Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making

## *Report of progress*

August 4, 2019

Leaders: M.T. Tatto, & I. Menter

This WERA-IRN initiated in February 2014, brought together education colleagues across different world-settings interested in pursuing context-driven collaborative historical, theoretical, and empirical work (review of the literature) seeking to answer the elusive question about the conditions that best support teacher learning throughout the life-cycle and to develop capacity to produce in-country research to back such conclusions. The character and worth of teacher preparation is fiercely debated worldwide. While most nations rely on university-based teacher education, this approach is currently challenged by other models, many of which advocate for shorter or school-based training. Indeed, a multitude of alternatives to traditional models of teacher preparation have emerged over the past decade across the world, yet without empirical support for their effectiveness. These changes are occurring rapidly and have important consequences for teacher quality and the future of the profession. Policies and initiatives that support these changes are based more on tradition, politics, ideology, and recently on business interests, than on research-based evidence. We sought to find rigorous research-based evidence on these issues.

### **Work Accomplished**

Our work was collaborative and capacity building (see Tatto, 2011). The literature review was developed in collaboration with colleagues from the participating countries including Australia, Czech Republic, England, Finland, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, and the United States of America. Data collection and analysis was done by each of the countries after discussing and agreeing on the guidelines. The participating scholars developed their own research teams and guided the study in their countries. Tatto and Menter assisted participating international scholars in carrying out a sound literature review. The intention was to work with participants to research what evidence informs teacher education programs, and whether there is evidence that programs are indeed able to prepare effective teachers.

We meet frequently virtually and face-to-face during WERA meetings where we presented the results of our work.

### **Progress and activities to date**

We:

1. Held an organizational meeting at AERA 2014 attended by more than 25 colleagues.
2. Requested sample research studies from country colleagues to develop a data-base guided by research questions pertinent to our IRN.

3. Developed a framework to analyze relevant studies.
4. Created a standard format to report relevant research studies.
5. Scheduled a meeting of IRN attendees at SERA-WERA (2014) to discuss and revise the framework and the data collection entry form.
6. Began the international data collection of the research literature in January 2015 once we had a stable number of participants, and the framework and data entry form were approved by colleagues.
7. Organized a symposium for WERA – SERA and two Symposia for WERA-AERA:

Tatto, M.T., & I (2014, November). *Learning to teach: Building research capacity for evidence based decision making. Aims, significance and work plan*. In M.T. Tatto (Chair) Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making. First report. Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the Scottish Educational Research Association and the World Education Research Association Focal Meeting, University of Edinburg, Edinburg.

Tatto, M.T. (2016, April). *Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making, Symposium I*. In M. Tatto (Chair/presenter), held at the World Education Research Association Focal Meeting at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, USA.

Tatto, M.T. (2016, April). *Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making, Symposium II*. In M. Tatto (Chair/presenter), held at the World Education Research Association Focal Meeting at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, USA.

8. Published a book with 12 country cases and comparative analysis:

Tatto, M.T., and Menter I. (Eds.). (2019). *Knowledge, Policy and Practice in Learning to Teach: A Cross-National Study*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

### **Book contents**

Foreword

*Felice J. Levine and Liesel Ebersohn*

### **Part I: Setting the Scene**

1. Understanding Teacher Education Policy and Practice Cross-Nationally

*Maria Teresa Tatto and Ian Menter*

2. The Significance of Teacher Education

*Maria Teresa Tatto and Ian Menter*

**Part II: Country Cases**

3. Knowledge, Policy and Practice in Learning Teaching in Australia

*Diane Mayer*

4. Learning to Teach in the Czech Republic - Reviewing policy and research trends

*Jarmila Novotná*

5. Learning to Teach in England - reviewing policy and research trends

*Ian Menter, Trevor Mutton and Katharine Burn*

6. Learning to Teach in Finland - Historical contingency and professional autonomy

*Janne Sääntti and Jaakko Kauko*

7. Learning to Teach in Hong Kong

*Yuefen Zhang*

8. Learning to Teach in Israel - Reviewing policy and research trends

*Ruth Zuzovsky and Smadar Donitsa-Schmidt*

9. Learning to Teach in Italy - Reviewing policy and research trends

*Monica Mincu*

10. How Teachers Learn to Teach: The Impact of Teacher Reforms in Japan

*Gerald LeTendre and Sakiko Ikoma*

11. Learning to Teach in Mexico - Reviewing policy and research trends

*Maria Teresa Tatto and Ivet Parra*

12. Learning to Teach in Russia - a review of policy and empirical research

*Roza Valeeva and Aydar Kalimullin*

13. The Trajectory of Teacher Education in South Korea - a review of policy and research

*James Pippin and Eunjung Jin*

14. Institutional Transformations, Knowledge and Research Traditions in the USA

*Maria Teresa Tatto and Christopher M. Clark*

**Part III: Emergent Themes**

15. Professional Knowledge and Theories of Teaching and Learning

*Maria Teresa Tatto*

16. The Interaction of Global and National Influences

*Ian Menter*

17. Conclusion - What Future for Teacher Education?

*Ian Menter and Maria Teresa Tatto*

We ask that this book title/ reference be included in the WERA website under publications please:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/knowledge-policy-and-practice-in-teacher-education-9781350068681/>

As we make clear in the Acknowledgements and specially in Chapter 1 of the book, this is a product of WERA and we expect that is recognized as such (as demonstrated by the foreword written by elected WERA officers). An extract of Chapter 1 follows:

‘This book is a product of a collaborative project of an International Research Network (IRN) sponsored by the World Education Research Association (WERA). The full name and focus of the IRN is *Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making*. The project brings together a group of international education researchers whose goal has been to engage in a cross-national exploratory study using an historical perspective and a review of research approach. We asked contributors to describe pivotal changes in the evolution of teacher education in their native countries, and to examine the research literature to determine how existing research evidence has been used to guide teacher education transformation and how or whether scientific knowledge has informed the theory and practice of teacher education in each nation.

We sought to identify common features that distinguish distinct approaches to learning to teach across settings and cultures and to examine whether current policies and practices are supported by research and / or empirical evidence. By engaging in this work, we aimed to create capacity to engage in new research directed at exploring methods and strategies in preparing future teachers and supporting current teachers throughout the career lifecycle with emphasis on the subjects that teachers teach and on the needs of teachers who practice in challenging contexts.

1.1.1. The WERA-IRN “Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making”

The *Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making* network was formed in 2014 to address three main objectives, all of them to be pursued through international and comparative perspectives and methods:

-Historical overview of how teacher education has developed in each context;

-Examination of the institutional, knowledge and research traditions that have influenced or been influenced by the evolution of teacher education in different national contexts; and

-Analysis of the research and other factors within each country that have influenced the form and direction of teacher education.’

Source: Tatto, M.T., and Menter I. (Eds.). (2019). *Knowledge, Policy and Practice in Learning to Teach: A Cross-National Study*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. Chapter 1, p. 3-4.

9. We have finished the first draft of a chapter we will submit to the WERA publications program (Global Perspectives on Education Research) summarizing the main results of our IRN work to the editors Lori D. Hills and Felice J. Levine:

Learning to Teach: Building Global Research Capacity for Evidence-Based Decision Making

Maria Teresa Tatto and Ian Menter

with

Katharine Burn, Christopher M. Clark, Smadar Donitsa-Schmidt, Ivet Parra- Gaete, Sakiko Ikoma, Eunjung Jin, Aydar Kalimullin, Jaakko Kauko, Gerald LeTendre, Diane Mayer, Monica E. Mincu, Trevor Mutton, Jarmila Novotná, James Pippin, Janne Sääntti, Roza Valeeva, Yuefeng Zhang, Ruth Zuzovsky

### Request for an Extension or Continuance of our work under WERA

10. Given the success of our IRN and the ongoing interest and relevance of the issues our IRN is exploring we would like to ask for an extension of our IRN (as it is now marked as ‘expired’ in the WERA Website) or a continuation of our work under WERA. We sent an e-mail to the [wera@aera.net](mailto:wera@aera.net) address Wednesday July 10, 2019, 9:19 am EDT asking for guidance as to what is required and have not received a response. We wish to continue the work and expand the range of countries that are contributing to it, leading to a second volume on this globally relevant and dynamic topic.