Perceived Barriers to Upper Level Career Ladder Status by Eligible Tennessee Educators

Julia J. Price
East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.etsu.edu/etd

Part of the Educational Administration and Supervision Commons

Recommended Citation

This Dissertation - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
Perceived barriers to upper level career ladder status by eligible Tennessee educators

Price, Julia Jones, Ed.D.

East Tennessee State University, 1994
PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO UPPER LEVEL CAREER LADDER STATUS BY
ELIGIBLE TENNESSEE EDUCATORS

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Educational Leadership and
Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

by
Julia J. Price
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education
May 1994
APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Graduate Committee of
Julia J. Price
met on the

25th day of March, 1994.

The committee read and examined her dissertation, supervised her defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that her study be submitted to the Graduate Council Associate Vice-President for Research and Dean, School of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis.

Chairman, Graduate Committee

Signed on behalf of the Graduate Council

Associate Vice-President for Research and Dean, School for Graduate Studies
ABSTRACT

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO UPPER LEVEL CAREER LADDER STATUS BY
ELIGIBLE TENNESSEE EDUCATORS

by

Julia J. Price

This study examines the phenomenon that although 8,900
educators have obtained Career Ladder Levels II and III,
there are 27,620 in Tennessee who are eligible for the upper
levels of the Career Ladder, but have not obtained these
levels. The purpose of the study was to identify the
barriers, as perceived by eligible educators in Tennessee,
which discourage them from attempting to gain upper level
Career Ladder status.

The research design was descriptive and utilized data
from a survey instrument constructed by the researcher. A
pilot test of the instrument was conducted, reliability
coefficients calculated, and survey items retained,
modified, or deleted based on the results. The final survey
contained 62 statements (grouped into 11 subscales) and a
demographic section. A total of 575 surveys were sent to
eligible educators in the public schools of the seven
districts of Tennessee; of those, 426 were returned, and 404
responses were used. Other variables studied were age,
gender, race, job classification, years of teaching
experience, educational attainment, future plans to attempt
upper levels, previous attempts at the upper levels,
information sources concerning the program, and overall
opinions of the Career Ladder program.

Findings include: The most problematic barriers in
rank order from greatest to least were Personal Obstacles,
Teaching Professionalism, Evaluation Procedures, Political
Facet, Participation Process, System Improvement, Financial
Considerations, and Individual Role Professionalism; three
of the barriers were found to be non-problematic, these are
Teacher Morale, TEA Support, and Administrative Support;
significant differences regarding the barriers exist in all
demographic areas included in the study except for job
classification; the majority of respondents had a negative
overall opinion of the Career Ladder, however, the opinion
varied with the source of information about the program.
Educators who received their information from official
sources had a more positive opinion of the program than
those who got their information from informal sources. It
appears that the barriers identified in this study may be
factors in keeping eligible educators from participating in
the upper levels of the Career Ladder.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

This is to certify that the following study has been filed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of East Tennessee State University.

Title of Grant or Project  Perceived Barriers to Upper Level Career Ladder Status by Eligible Tennessee Educators

Principal Investigator  Julia J. Price

Department  Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

Date Submitted  August 22, 1993

Institutional Review Board, Chairman  [Signature]

iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study is dedicated to the following persons:
...to Dr. Robert L. McElrath, the Father of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program, who provided wisdom, direction, and encouragement throughout the study
...to Dr. Cecil Blankenship, Dr. Charles Burkett, Dr. W. Hal Knight, and Dr. Russ West who each provided special guidance and expertise
...to Lloyd, Kelly, and Casey Price, who displayed the courage of support
...to my parents, John H. and Evelyn M. Jones, who taught me the art of life-long learning
...to my brothers, Dr. J. Chris Jones and Dr. Joe H. Jones who have patiently waited for me to "catch up"
...to the members of Cohort III who exemplified excellence and who taught me the meaning of true friendship
CONTENTS

APPROVAL ................................................. ii
ABSTRACT ................................................ iii
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ....................... iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..................................... v
LIST OF TABLES .......................................... ix

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION ....................................... 1
   Statement of the Problem ........................... 5
   Purpose of the Study ............................... 6
   Research Questions ............................... 6
   Hypotheses ....................................... 8
   Significance of the Problem ..................... 10
   Assumptions .................................... 10
   Limitations .................................... 11
   Definitions .................................... 11
   Procedures .................................... 12
   Overview of the Study ........................... 13

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE ............... 14
   Introduction ................................... 14
   Perceptions and Barriers ....................... 15
   Merit Pay
      Precedents .................................... 19
      Historical Implementation .................... 21
      Conceptual Variations ....................... 25
      Perceptions of Merit Pay .................... 29

vi
5. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary .......................................... 117
Discussion of Findings ........................... 118
Conclusions ........................................ 128
Recommendations ................................. 138

REFERENCES ...................................... 140

APPENDIX A - Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III Survey ................................. 152
APPENDIX B - Cover Letter for Statewide Survey ........................................ 157
APPENDIX C - Formula for Determining Sample Size ..................................... 159
APPENDIX D - Pilot Cover Letter and Study Instrument .................................. 161
APPENDIX E - Reversed Coded Statements and Table 4 ................................. 167

VITA .................................................... 175
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. TOTAL RESPONSE RATES BY REGION</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. USEABLE RESPONSE RATES BY REGION</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. DEMOGRAPHIC AND INFORMATIONAL FREQUENCY DATA</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. MEAN SCORES FOR SURVEY STATEMENTS 1-62</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS ONE: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED CAREER LADDER UPPER LEVELS AND THOSE WHO DID NOT</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ANOVA RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS TWO: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN THOSE WHO PLAN TO ATTEMPT CAREER LADDER UPPER LEVELS (GROUP 1), THOSE WHO DO NOT (GROUP 2), AND THOSE WHO ARE UNSURE (GROUP 3)</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ANOVA RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS THREE: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE UNDER 40 YEARS IN AGE (GROUP 1), THOSE 40-54 YEARS OLD (GROUP 2), AND THOSE WHO ARE 55 AND OLDER (GROUP 3)</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS FOUR: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. ANOVA RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS FIVE: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN THOSE OF DIFFERENT JOB CLASSIFICATIONS</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS SIX: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN EDUCATORS WITH LESS THAN 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE AND THOSE WITH 20 YEARS OR MORE</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. ANOVA RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS SEVEN: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN THOSE OF DIFFERENT EDUCATION LEVELS</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS EIGHT: DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN EDUCATORS WHO AGREED THAT THE PRINCIPAL ENCOURAGED PARTICIPATION IN CAREER LADDER AND THOSE THAT DISAGreed</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. RESULTS OF T-TEST FOR HYPOTHESIS NINE:
DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED BARRIERS BETWEEN
WHITES AND NON-WHITES . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 109

14. RESULTS FOR HYPOTHESIS TEN: SUMMARY OF
CHI-SQUARE TEST OF INDEPENDENCE FOR OPINIONS
OF THE TENNESSEE CAREER LADDER PROGRAM BY
SOURCE OF INFORMATION REGARDING IT . . . . . . 111

15. RESULTS TO RESEARCH QUESTION ELEVEN: SUMMARY
OF OVERALL OPINIONS OF THE TENNESSEE CAREER
LADDER PROGRAM . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 112

16. RESULTS FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 12:
HIERARCHICAL SUMMARY OF MEAN BARRIER
SUBSCALE SCORES . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 114
Chapter One

Introduction

From the very inception of democracy in the United States, the vital link between government and education has been recognized. According to Chesterson, "Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another." (cited in "The Observer", 1991).

While Americans agree that an effective education for its people ensures a firm democracy, a consensus has not been reached concerning the means to accomplish this end. Various reform movements have proven national concern for the state of America's educational system. Many of these movements have been manifested in government statutes such as The National Defense Education Act of 1958, The Civil Rights Act of 1965, and The Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965. Published reports have also focused the nation's attention on its schools (AASA, 1983a). The effective school's movement gained impetus from the Coleman Report of 1966 (Coleman et al., 1966). A combination of economic pressures and publicity concerning the relatively poor worldwide standing of American students has precipitated a public mandate for more accountability from the educational establishment.

In the 1980s an initiative for change had its beginning in A Nation at Risk in which the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) presented the necessity of
major reconstruction of school programs. They emphasized that America had lost its competitive edge in the marketplace due to the poor educational policies in place. One major thrust in this call for reform was a call for teachers' pay to be market-sensitive with better teachers receiving higher rank and pay. The report documented the need for reform, but did not offer federal funding (NCEE, 1983). Another report, issued in 1983 by the Education Commission of the States, also drew attention to merit pay. Members of the ECS Task force on Education for Economic Growth recommended that the states, with full participation by teachers themselves, drastically overhaul and improve their methods for recruiting, training, and compensating teachers. This improvement, the task force agreed, should include expanded pay potential for teachers as they reach the upper levels of seniority and effectiveness (AASA, 1983). President Reagan further emphasized the concept of merit pay with pronouncements in support of merit and master teacher programs. For example, in a speech to a meeting of state teachers of the year, he said, "If we want to achieve excellence, we must reward it...It's a simple American philosophy that dominates many other professions, so why not this one?" (Wayson, 1988). Consequently, the 1980s brought about a national concern for educational improvement which was implemented by individual states, each with its own unique version of reform. As a result, in 1992 it was
estimated that 93% of educational funding came from the state and local governments (Scott, 1992, p.2).

The Comprehensive Education Reform Act of 1984 was Tennessee's watershed reform legislation. The cornerstone of the act was the Career Ladder Program for teachers. The first of its kind in the nation, it was a plan which included state-wide evaluation of teachers by evaluators other than building principals (R. McElrath, personal communication, September 21, 1992). Introduced by Governor Lamar Alexander in 1983, this act was intended to bring sweeping reform to Tennessee's schools. This reform package included intense training and evaluation procedures for teachers. Teacher and principal certification procedures were revised. Other provisions of the act included university centers of excellence, summer programs for the intellectually gifted, teacher aides for grades 1-3, an increase from a 175 to 180 day school year, alternative schools for disruptive students, and increased funds for computer purchases (Tennessee State Department of Education, 1988).

One critical aspect of this reform initiative was the introduction of the Career Ladder program for teachers and administrators. The intent of this program was to recognize and reward outstanding educators so that they could receive more pay, as well as the opportunity to work an extended contract year for additional pay. Pay incentives for levels
II and III ranged from $2,000 to $7,000 per year depending on extended contract participation. By attaining higher levels on the Career Ladder, teachers were to be rewarded by extra pay, as well as merit recognition. This program was also seen as an affordable way to reward and attract bright young students into teaching (AASA, 1983a). The Career Ladder evaluation system had as its primary goal the identification and reward of outstanding performance (Tennessee State Department of Education, 1988).

Highly publicized, the Career Ladder aspect of the Comprehensive Education Reform Act, became the most pervasive section of the law. It affected every employed teacher and was viewed as an attraction for future teachers. It involved the general public who regarded it as an incentive program linked with accountability. Surveys have shown that (by a four-to-one margin) the general public favors the development of career ladder plans with extra pay for additional duties (Parker, 1985).

There have been various reactions to the Tennessee Career Ladder program. The most immediate reaction came from the Tennessee Education Association whose leaders believed that teacher merit could not be fairly evaluated, tenure should not be overridden, and a raise in base pay was a more immediate need. In 1987, Cornett found that only 20% of teachers who were eligible to be evaluated were on the top two levels of the Career Ladder (Cornett, 1987). This
left a substantial number of teachers, 80% of all who are eligible, who did not choose to pursue upper level Career Ladder status. As of February 1993, out of the total Tennessee teacher population 8,900 teachers and administrators were on the upper levels. Approximately 95 percent of all those eligible are on Level I. However, only 28 percent of those eligible are on the top two levels (Cornett & Gaines, 1993). Seven times more teachers do not attempt upper level status than those who do. From the viewpoint of the Career Ladder goal of increasing career attraction and rewarding the "best" teachers, the program is cost ineffective (Crouch, 1989). This is due to the fact that there is relatively minimal participation by the eligible teacher population. A disproportionate number of those teachers have not attempted nor attained Career Ladder II or III levels and therefore do not receive the recognition and monetary rewards that such status precipitates.

Statement of the Problem

Educational reform in the state of Tennessee has its basis in the Comprehensive Education Reform Act of 1984. A majority of eligible teachers have not attempted, nor gained, Level II or III status. There has been no systematic attempt to determine the reasons why a majority of eligible teachers in Tennessee do not attempt to gain upper level Career Ladder status.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study will be to identify the barriers, as perceived by eligible teachers in Tennessee, which discourage this population from attempting to gain upper level Career Ladder status. The study will address the relationships between various demographic data and these perceived barriers.

Research Questions

The research questions to be answered in this study are:

1. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to whether or not the respondent has attempted Career Ladder Level II or III status?
2. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to whether or not the respondent plans to attempt Career Ladder Level II or III status?
3. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to the age of the respondents?
4. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to gender of the respondents?
5. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and
III differ according to the job classification of the respondents?

6. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ with number of years teaching experience?

7. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to the educational level of the respondents?

8. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to the perceived level of principal support?

9. Does identification of the barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III differ according to race of the respondents?

10. Do teachers' overall opinions regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder program differ according to their source of information about the program?

11. Do the respondents have an overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder program that is negative or positive?

12. Which barriers are most problematic to respondents?
Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested at the .05 level of significance.

$H_01$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who have attempted Career Ladder Level II or III status and those who have not.

$H_02$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who plan to attempt Career Ladder Level II or III status, those who do not, and those who are unsure.

$H_03$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different ages.

$H_04$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between males and females.

$H_05$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents in different job classifications.

$H_06$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder
Levels II and III between respondents with different numbers of years of teaching experience.

$H_07$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents with different educational levels.

$H_08$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents who indicate different levels of administrative support.

$H_09$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different races.

$H_010$: There will be no difference in the overall opinions regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder Program between respondents indicating various sources of information regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder program.
Significance of the Problem

The rationale for merit pay has been that it rewards exemplary performance, encourages efforts for professional improvement, attracts individuals to the teaching profession, and provides incentives to stay in the field (English, 1985). The advantages and disadvantages of merit pay systems have been presented on a consistent basis in contemporary literature (Brown, 1992a). Merit pay systems have come under particular scrutiny because of the public demand for more diligent standards correlated to cost effectiveness (Crouch, 1989, p. 74). It will be very important to determine the factors which prevent teachers from pursuing professional growth through upper-level Career Ladder status in order to encourage such growth. Additionally, a more thorough comprehension of these factors may encourage a higher level of attempted participation in the Tennessee Career Ladder program. Educational administrators and state department officials can provide more vigorous encouragement to eligible teachers through a better understanding of these identified barriers.

Assumptions

1. There are identifiable barriers to upper-level Career Ladder status as perceived by eligible Tennessee educators.
2. A consensus concerning these barriers may be reached and they can be categorized in a hierarchy.
3. The participants chosen by random sampling are representative of the total population of eligible Tennessee educators.

4. The time allotted for the study is adequate.

Limitations

1. The participants in this study were limited to randomly selected eligible K-12 educators in the Tennessee public schools.

2. The identification of barriers to upper-level Career Ladder status was limited to surveys validated and developed by the researcher.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this study:

**Career Ladder I Teacher**

A Career Ladder I teacher is one who has met the criteria of the Tennessee State Department of Education for recognition at that rank. These criteria include: three years of teaching experience and successful local evaluation (Crouch, 1989).

**Career Ladder II Teacher**

A Career Ladder II teacher is one who has met the criteria of the Tennessee State Board of Education for the recognition at that rank. These criteria include: Level I status and eight years of teaching experience; a successful state and regional evaluation with total
revaluation schedule on a ten year cycle (Crouch, 1989).

**Career Ladder III Teacher**

A Career Ladder III teacher is one who has met the criteria of the Tennessee State Board of Education for the recognition at that rank. These criteria include: Level I status and twelve years of teaching experience; a successful state and regional evaluation with total revaluation schedule on a ten year cycle (Crouch, 1989).

**Eligible Teacher**

An eligible teacher is a K-12 teacher who has met the eligibility requirements of the Tennessee Department of Education to attempt Career Ladder II or III status (Tennessee State Department of Education, 1988).

**Perceived Barriers**

Perceived barriers are conditions which are thought to hinder or prevent an action from taking place (American College Dictionary, 1963).

**Procedures**

The following procedures were followed:

1. Experts on the subject of the Tennessee Career Ladder were contacted and interviewed concerning their knowledge of history of the Career Ladder program in Tennessee and their views on the limited participation of the teachers in the upper-levels of the Career
Ladder program.

2. The population to be studied was identified through the Tennessee Department of Education.

3. A random sample of 90 Career Ladder teachers was drawn and a survey was developed and administered to them. The pilot test survey was used for validating the primary survey concerning barrier factors.

4. A survey was developed and administered to the random sample of the population to be studied.

5. A list of perceived barriers was identified and common factors emerged.

6. Based on the common factors subscales scores were compared between demographic subgroups and conclusions and recommendations were made.

Overview of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters:

Chapter I contains the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the problem, assumptions, limitations, definitions, procedures, and an overview of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a review of selected literature.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology by which the study will be conducted. Chapter 4 contains the statistical treatment and analysis of the data. Chapter 5 includes the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.
Chapter 2
Review of the Related Literature

Introduction

Merit pay has steadfastly held the nation's interest for the last decade due to comprehensive educational reform movements. Enthusiasm for merit pay was generated by such publications as *A Nation at Risk* and the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report, both of which advocated incentive pay for teachers (Calhoun & Protheroe, 1983). In *A Nation at Risk* the following recommendation was made concerning merit pay:

Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated. (Johnson, 1985, p. 25).

The concept of merit pay in the United States is not new and has been debated in almost every state in the union for over eighty-five years (Robinson, 1964). Cycles of regression and resurgence in its popularity and implementation have occurred throughout its existence (ASCD Report, 1985). Since Tennessee's implementation of a merit pay system in 1984, five other states have emulated the program. An
additional eighteen states have some form of teacher-incentive plan, including California which has "mentor teachers" who receive extra pay for working with other teachers to upgrade the profession and improve education (May, 1990). Educational reform has specified performance based pay for educators as a cornerstone of most plans. Thus, merit pay has become the center of a swirl of controversy, debate, and discussion regarding educational reform and restructuring (Baker, 1989; Cooper, 1990; Cramer, 1983; Dodd, 1984; Hawley, 1985; Herndon, 1985; May, 1990).

This review of literature will investigate the following aspects of the merit pay concept: the concepts of perceptions and barriers; the precedents, historic implementation, and conceptual variations of merit pay; the positive and negative perceptions of merit pay; the history, criteria, perceptions, and the current viability of the Tennessee Career Ladder program.

**Perceptions and Barriers**

Merit pay is a concept which emphasizes increased pay for excellence and outstanding performance. In the case of merit pay in education, those for whom it is instituted may actually reject it. Minimal participation in the upper levels of the Tennessee Career Ladder is an example of this. A large percentage of teachers who are eligible do not choose to pursue career ladder upper levels (Cornett, 1987). Teachers perceive barriers which they feel make
accomplishment of upper level certification unachievable. Their perception may not reflect reality, but the effect is that they do not participate in the merit system due to what they perceive as impossible barriers to attainment. Merit pay is therefore linked with an understanding of the concepts of perception and barriers.

The world around us consists of various types and degrees of physical energies. Our knowledge of the world comes through sensory stimulation which reacts to these energies. Through the psychological process of perception, one is able to interpret objects, events, people and other aspects of the world. Perception is a dynamic process of developing sensory data involving many physical, physiological, and psychological factors (Encyclopedia World Book, 1982, p. 251). Perceptions are mental images which are interpreted to be real or existent, but may not exist in reality (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1990, p. 872). Perceptions may indicate reactions, points of view, and subjective responses rather than accuracy (Smith, 1990). Perceptions also reflect emotions, needs, and expectations which may affect interpretation of data. Motivation is important in what and how we perceive (Encyclopedia World Book, 1992, p. 251). One may be very selective about what is allowed to be perceived. This is the concept of finitude. Expectations are then formed and acted upon. Such expectations, as derived from perceptions, are affected
by moods, responses, and the general ability to function creatively (Arnold, 1984). After a perception is formed and chosen, it may remain substantially unchallenged and, in effect, become an assumption which is unlikely to be changed (Smith, 1990). The term perception is far more than just "seeing". It carries the connotation of delving far beneath the surface to find "what is" and "what can be". Because perceptions guide choices, it carries the power of responsibility. Perceptions concern given information which is processed into a pattern or whole. As William Arnold states in his book, The Power of Your Perception:

Perception, insight, discovery, discernment, realization, knowing - all of these words refer to the agony and the ecstasy of our special characteristics as human beings. We have the ability to see into things, to examine and study and turn things over in our minds. As a result, we can accomplish a great deal. By the same token, we can create a lot of trouble (1984, p. 101).

A barrier may be defined as something immaterial that impedes or separates; a factor that tends to restrict (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, p. 132, 1990). Synonyms for barrier include stumbling block, snag, impediment, impasse, hurdle, encumbrance, difficulty, deadlock, dead end, obstacle, and obstruction. Barriers inhibit change in both structural change and changes of
personal motivation necessary to sustain reform. Often, the success of a change depends on the constituency which supports it (Gordon, 1973). Barriers are linked to such factors as jumping to conclusions, having a closed mind, and the misinterpretations of words. (Lee, 1968). Many times barriers to reform may be exhibited in the pluralist political process which safeguards all existing professional and organizational interests (Alford, 1975). Eliminating barriers is connected to a clear understanding of the goals. Barriers exist when there is projection (a discrepancy between what is thought to be true and what is actual reality) and power inequalities (Stouffer, 1949). Often, basic concepts are barriers to acquiring easy insight and satisfying understanding. Recognition of these barriers is critical to the process of growth (Ault, 1984). Often barriers are identified as cognitive and perceptual.

Decision makers tend to attach greater weight to prospective losses than to prospective gains. This "loss aversion" makes concessions harder to achieve because they are subject to differences in subjective interpretation. Barriers to goal attainment may also include reactive devaluation. This concept describes the belief that concessions proposed by adversaries must be advantageous only to the opponents. Other barriers include cognitive dissonance about the past and unrealistic hopes for the future (Ross, 1991).

If barriers are perceived to be real and then are
interpreted to be insurmountable, the goal is not met. In the Tennessee Career Ladder program, this concept holds true. The majority of teachers who are eligible for the upper levels of the career ladder program perceive the barriers to be insurmountable. The effect of this is that in reality, for these teachers, unsuccessful upper level attainment becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Merit Pay: Precedents

Performance-based pay is the term from which the concept of merit pay and consequently, career ladder plans evolved. Performance-based renumeration was linked to recruitment of exemplary teachers, retention of highly-skilled veteran teachers, and the improvement of teaching skills (Hart, 1986). Differentiated staffing occurred chronologically after the merit pay plans of the early 1900s. However, its development preceded the present-day concept of merit pay (Rand & English, 1972). Developed in the late 1960s, differentiated staffing has many variations and is difficult to define. Fiorino's identification of the shared characteristics of differentiated staffing clarifies the concept:

Differentiated staffing is a concept which proposed to improve the effectiveness of the instructional staff by capitalizing on their strengths. Its four characteristics include: (1) differentiation by function and responsibilities; (2) a hierarchy of
several salary levels; (3) type and/or degree of responsibility determining placement in the hierarchy; (4) involvement of all positions in the instructional process (1972, p.13).

Differentiated staffing was designed to separate teachers into several roles and/or positions, and pay the teachers of the different positions at different rates. An early article favoring differentiated staffing attempted to distinguish it from merit pay plans that had failed, but the authors admitted that both merit pay and differentiated staffing repudiated the single salary scale (Rand & English, 1968). One California school district differentiated its teaching staff into levels of Associated Teacher, Staff Teacher, Senior Teacher, and Master Teacher. Since teachers advanced through the ranks in a process by which their work was judged as worthy of promotion, many teachers and teacher organizations were suspicious of these plans as merit pay in disguise (Oleveio, 1970).

Differentiated staffing, as first implemented in the 1960s, no longer exists. The reasons for the inability of this concept to succeed as first conceived have included: non-acceptance by teachers who were unprepared for such innovation; parental concern that student achievement was not linked to the concept; and the unwillingness of administrators to participate in shared decision-making (Freiberg, 1984).
Merit Pay: Historical Implementation

Merit pay for educators has been an issue since its introduction in the early part of the twentieth century. The 1908 Newton Plan of Newton, Massachusetts, was the first formal merit pay plan for teachers recorded in America. This program was designed to pay teachers using the principal of merit. Implemented for a brief time only, the program was dropped as ineffective (ERS, 1983; Mitchell, 1961; NEA, 1984). The merit pay concept, however, was not discontinued and was attempted in many school systems until well into the 1920s (ERS, 1983).

During this decade, merit pay became the compensation method of choice. School systems were able to legally pay males and Caucasians higher salaries and thus perpetuated a system of inequality (Davis, 1939; McGaughy, 1929). In the 1930s a movement began to institute single salary schedules. This movement was brought about by several factors. The Great Depression initiated poor economic conditions which led school systems away from merit pay. The financial crisis precipitated by this era affected every American locality. In this climate, merit pay receded as an issue and was replaced by the struggle by all educators to simply maintain existing levels of school support, or at least minimize the budget cuts which were often proposed and implemented (Johnson, 1985). The popularity of the single salary scale was enhanced because pay was based on the
measurable traits of experience and training. The single salary schedules eliminated disparity between elementary and secondary teacher salaries, stopped gender discrimination, and removed the necessity of annual negotiations since step increments were included. Additionally, this type pay was thought to reduce the risk of favoritism, both personally and politically (ASCD Report, 1985). This type of compensation continued almost exclusively until after World War II (Weissman, 1969).

The 1950s and 1960s brought another revival of merit pay programs. This was due to a general demand for educational reform in the "space age". Pressure for improvement of American schools was intense resulting in legislative action throughout the United States. Merit pay was seen as an integral part of this reform (ERS, 1983).

Merit pay began another period of regression in the 1970s (NEA, 1984). There were twice as many viable merit pay plans in existence in 1969 as there were in 1979 (Porwall, 1979). This decline in merit pay interest was reflective of the changing conditions in which American schools and teachers found themselves. A decline in the number of school age children in combination with a general funding crisis that affected all public institutions because of a reduction in the American economy, resulted in conditions which were not conducive to merit pay (Johnson, 1985). In the early 1980s interest in merit pay was revived
due to various educational reports which received widespread publicity. Recommendations dealing with the quality of teaching were addressed in such prominent reports as *A Nation at Risk* and the *Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report* (Calhoun & Protheroe, 1983).

Others included *Action for Excellence* (the report of the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Education Commission of the States), *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* (the report of the National Science Board), *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America* (the report of the Carnegie Foundation), and Goodlad's study, *A Place Called School*. These all pointed out the importance of exemplary teachers in creating an effective learning environment and called for a system to compensate excellent teachers (Mickler, 1987). Other eminent organizations endorsed merit systems and incentive reward for use in public education. These included the National Science Board, the National Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Public endorsement of basing teacher salaries on merit is evident based on a number of Gallop polls (Parker, 1985). The 1990s have brought the collapse of centralized economies based on worker's security rather than on performance. This situation has emphasized more acutely than ever the need for an education system that rewards performance rather than seniority, excellence rather
than level of education, and responsiveness to student and parent needs rather than abstract professional standards. The decline of America's standing in the international educational community further emphasizes the need for accountability linked to performance based remuneration (Farnsworth, Debenham, & Smith, 1991). According to a 1990 study by the National Center on Education and the Economy, America's imperative for this decade is to commit now to high performance in the products of our schools and industries (Bonstinge, 1992). As new and far reaching plans for improvement of America's educational system emerge, controversy remains a constant in the area of merit pay. President Bush's America 2000, An Education Strategy has been touted as a plan for reaching national education goals, making schools more accountable, creating New American Schools for tomorrow's students, encouraging all Americans to make learning a lifelong pursuit, and supporting America 2000 Communities where learning is paramount (Lamar Alexander, personal communication, March 27, 1992). The America 2000 program promotes the idea of merit pay through differential pay for teachers. This idea is listed in the Track I Accountability package of the plan and states that "Differential pay will be encouraged for those who teach well, who teach core subjects, who teach in dangerous and challenging settings or who serve as mentors for new teachers." (U.S. Department of Education, 1991, p. 15-16).
On the other hand, current arguments against merit pay are impressive. In recent years, educators have been pressured, often by people outside the educational system, to use quantitative goals, highly structured teacher evaluation systems, and merit pay. W. Edwards Deming supported those who oppose merit pay. He pointed out that it is difficult for a team to work together toward a common goal when individual rewards will be received at the end of the year. Unclear accountability leads to divisiveness (Deming, 1988). Today's schools are functionally oriented leading to mutually exclusive goals. This type reward system reinforces excellence within a divisive system, but does not necessarily improve the system (Blacksteen, 1992). The extensive history of merit pay exemplifies its divergent nature and it remains in the forefront of controversy in the 1990s.

Merit Pay: Conceptual Variations

The concept of merit pay encompasses Puritan work values and ethics. It is the embodiment of the notion of Jeffersonian democracy that individual accomplishment should be based on ability rather than status. The idea of merit pay is relatively simple. If teachers are paid on a performance basis, they will work harder and become more effective. Since the system rewards those who put forth extra effort and exerts pressure to leave on those unwilling or unable to do so, the schools will improve (Mickler,
Numerous variations of merit pay and other teacher incentive plans have appeared throughout its history. This has led to some confusion regarding the relationship among these plans. The Merit Pay Task Force Report of the 98th U.S. Congress, 1st Session, defined merit pay and career ladder programs:

Merit Pay is a system that rewards exemplary teaching by either a bonus or an increased annual salary. The career ladder system creates levels of teachers from apprentice teacher through several intermediate steps to the highest level of master teacher. Different salaries and responsibilities are associated with each step. Examples of a career ladder are apprentice teacher, professional teacher, senior teacher, master teacher (1983, p. 4-5).

A majority of alternative compensation plans create different levels of professional status for teachers and administrators by establishing a ladder that can be climbed during one's career (Burkett & McElrath, 1992).

Career ladder plans constitute one of the most generally accepted merit pay concepts. A number of prominent educators have endorsed the concept of the career ladder. Woodring suggested a plan containing three career stages with teachers at the top earning as much as administrators (1983). Gideonse (1982) proposed a plan with hierarchically structured teams of teachers including staff
and lead teachers. A mentoring approach to career ladders was designed by Schlechty and Vance. This plan included a redesign of the career structure of public school teaching to include high status roles for teachers who had sufficient performance, commitment, and training responsibility for training other teachers and conducting research and development (Schlechty & Vance, 1983). A number of organizations and state education departments have also proposed various career ladder plans or have endorsed such plans. Some include: Tennessee Master Teacher Plan, Utah Commission on Excellence Report, Wisconsin Task Force on Teaching and Teacher Education Report, Florida Education Association/(NC) Career Development Plan, and Schawnee (OK) Master Teacher Plan. Others involved are the Connecticut Board of Education, National Commission of Excellence in Education, Education Commission of the States, National Association of School Boards, Forum of Educational Leaders, America 2000-An Education Strategy (Johnson, 1985; Calhoun & Protheroe, 1983; U.S. Department of Education, 1992).

Career ladder plans fall under the general category of career options. Besides career ladders, other career options include teaching as a short-term career, part-time and joint appointments, and early retirement. All career options are various modifications of the teaching career. Other general categories of merit pay include compensation plans, enhanced professional responsibilities, monetary
recognition, and improved working conditions. Compensation plans, which include merit pay and bonuses, are various modifications in salary schedules, benefits, and prerequisites to reward teachers and to attract and retain particular types of teachers (Cresap, McCormick, & Paget, 1984). Enhanced professional responsibilities include master teacher plans. These are ways of increasing teachers' compensation by extending and varying teachers' responsibilities. However, there are no multi-step levels with longer term incentives. Master teacher plans are geared to retain superior teachers and to motivate effort and improvement through increased pay, higher status, and more responsibility (Parker, 1985). Another form of merit pay is performance contracting. This is a concept of bonuses based on results (Vogel, 1971). It is similar to Calvin's (1969) plan which proposes payment based on achievement of specific objective goals. Non monetary recognition rewards teachers' accomplishments and recognizes superior effort and performance. Items in this category could include Teacher of the Year awards, PTA-sponsored award programs, televised and written presentations, and other incentives. Improved working conditions are ways of making teaching more enjoyable by improving the physical and social conditions under which teachers work (Cresap, McCormick & Paget, 1984).

Since merit pay can have so many connotations and
variations, confusion often results. The majority of conceptual variations may be classified under four general categories. These are merit pay, differential staffing, incentive pay, or master teaching plans. Differential staffing compensates teachers according to the different jobs they perform and the varying responsibilities within the jobs. Incentive pay programs reward teachers for helping to meet specific goals or for solving certain problems. Master teaching plans are types of differential staffing because they give teachers several levels of advancement on a "career ladder" and tie each level to increased skills and responsibilities. Merit pay generically encompasses all kinds of financial reward plans tied to performance.

Perceptions of Merit Pay

Positive and negative perceptions of merit pay began with its inception in 1908 and have continued to the present day. Proponents and opponents have debated their positions for years, perpetuating controversy and stress within the educational community (Porwoll, 1979). Ellwood P. Cubberly, a prominent, and influential educator in 1916, felt he had the answer in his merit pay proposal. Cubberly promised that his plan would provide a much better distribution of rewards; would offer more encouragement for study and personal advancement; would provide more opportunities for the
efficient to rise; would tend to retain the best
teachers in the service; and would give the school
directors better returns in efficiency to the money
spent than does the present salary schedule (Michler,
1987, p. 137).

Critics of merit pay label it as complicated
unrealistic, and time consuming (May, 1990). W. Edward
Deming opposed merit pay because he felt that management's
job is to improve everyone's performance through training
and education and improvement of the entire system. He
feels that merit pay nourishes fear and stifles innovation
or improvement of the system. Fear, Deming states, creates
an insurmountable obstacle to any improvement (Blankstein,
1992, p. 74).

Positive Perceptions

Merit pay advocates cite many advantages. Burden lists
advantages for both individual teachers and for the school
districts. Advantages for individual teachers include:

(1) More intrinsic rewards which result in personal and
professional satisfaction and a desire to invest
further effort by providing: (a) recognition and status
for excellent teachers, (b) options for diverse work
responsibilities without leaving the classroom, (c)
opportunities for career advancement, (d) career
options within teaching and control over these options,
(e) opportunities for professional growth; (2) More
extrinsic rewards: (a) higher pay as teachers advance into new levels on the career ladder, (b) other improved aspects of the work environment such as working conditions, effects on personal and professional life, interpersonal relationships, training assistance, and others; (3) The career ladder provides a longitudinal framework within which teachers can form their own career decisions.

Advantages for school districts include the concepts that merit pay enables the district to use the full potential of the teachers; provides exemplary models for beginning teachers in a systematic way; provides a method to reward outstanding teachers; encourages teachers, through the incentive of higher pay, to meet the high criteria for teaching and other duties at higher levels on the career ladder; results in more resource people to deal with staff development, curriculum development, and a variety of other professional responsibilities; provides a framework to assist individual teachers in goal-setting for professional growth; provides the profession and the school district with an avenue to improve its image and gain in prestige; provides a framework to aid in organizational decisions dealing with facilitating continued development (concerning issues such as supervision, travel money, and released time) (Johnson,
The San Diego (California) City Schools outlined the following arguments in favor of merit salary programs in 1953:

Teachers should be paid what they are worth and at the same time known to be worth it; The principle of merit schemes is not only sound, but also logical; it should become the basis for teacher pay; There should be added incentive for better work through merit salary increments; such increments produce better teaching;

Merit ratings will improve the quality of work which, in turn, will raise the general level of education in our schools; the public is interested in receiving dividends for money spent, so merit programs will make the public more willing to support higher salaries; merit programs will tend to draw and hold superior teachers in the profession, since they will have an opportunity to gain even better salaries if they are able; teachers are already rated daily by pupils, supervisors, parents, and fellow teachers, so there is no reason why there cannot be rating for pay; merit programs develop a demand for high quality work which will produce higher quality teaching; a worker approaches his capacity as he is made to feel he is adequately rewarded; pay according to his worth will offer this reward; payment, among other things, should
be made for quality, ability, service, efficiency, and effort; there is no greater inequality than the equal treatment of unequals, and the present basis of pay perpetuates this inequality; our present system gives security to teachers on the lower side of the efficiency scale; whereas, we should give security to those at the other end of the scale; the merit principle offers an opportunity for democratic working relationships; competent administration can make ratings with few inequalities; this should be a regular part of the administrator's assignment; if rating is interpreted as evaluation, it should enhance the supervisory relationships; rating can be done even though it is subjective; and industry has used this merit or bonus incentive with good results, so we should be able to adapt this businesslike quality to our schools (Porwoll, 1979, pp. 4-5).

One of the most frequently cited reasons for supporting merit pay is to declare the inadequacies of the single salary schedule. Such a pay schedule is thought to cut off initiative by a failure to reward creativity and innovation (Stewart, 1980). In addition, it is felt that single schedule pay plans provide no motivation to excel since they are based on academic credits and seniority. This in turn encourages mediocrity and is an attempt to discourage poor performances, rather than to strive for more productivity.
(Lawton, 1984; Parent, 1983; Brinks, 1983). Many teachers contend that the single salary schedule discourages initiative, professional growth, and intellectual ability. They question the premise that a teacher who performs his or her responsibilities minimally receives exactly the same annual pay increase as one whose performance is exemplary (Mickler, 1987). Wilson (1980) characterized his argument for merit pay when he stated,

To continue to reward mediocrity is to undermine the profession whose responsibility it is to recognize and reward excellence among its clients and to train experts for the other professions. To continue the practice of across the board raises is to perpetuate mediocrity and is an abdication of the intellectual responsibility that educators have (p. 26).

Merit pay is also thought to retain good teachers in the classroom (Alexander, 1983). Stirling McDowell (1971) offered the following observations in support of merit rating system:

Merit pay is an attempt to make teachers accountable to society; teacher salaries should be related to the differences in their ability and efficiency; merit pay increments offer incentives and rewards for superior service; merit pay is feasible because salary rating is presently done for promotion and tenure; merit pay is successfully accomplished in industry and can therefore
be done in education; professional status for teachers can be obtained through merit rating; instruction will improve via merit rating; merit rating rewards those who deserve recognition; administrators become more concerned with teacher efficiency; merit rating is cost effective since funds are wisely spent (McDowell, 1971, p. 16).

In 1969 the Merit Pay Study Committee of the Iowa Education Association listed the following advantages of merit pay programs:

The amount of pay a teacher receives should vary in proportion to the excellence of teaching performance; the school administrators and the teachers can work out a merit pay program; the fact that any merit plan will not be totally correct should not stop the use and improvement of such programs; teachers should at least be willing to study merit or to experiment with it; payment on the basis of amounts of college preparation and teaching experience preserves mediocrity; the mediocre teacher is opposed to merit; merit pay has proven successful in some school districts; salary on the basis of efficiency in production, sales, personnel relations, invention, etc., has worked in business and industry; merit pay creates conditions more like those prevailing in other professions, such as law, medicine, and dentistry, where status and income depend upon
ability, industry, and competence; the public is more willing to support higher salary schedules and pay when they know the good teachers are paid commensurate with their ability; more money will provide a strong incentive for improvement of teaching and getting better qualified people to enter the profession; teachers are employed, retained, or dismissed on the basis of judgment of their effectiveness as teachers, they should be compensated on this basis; teachers are constantly evaluating the achievements of their pupils so they should be evaluated by others; the salary schedules presently used in most school districts tend to give security to incompetent and poor teachers; tenure protects the poor teacher; merit pay programs would reward the good teachers; and merit pay would keep the better teachers in the classroom; it would not be necessary for them to seek administrative positions in order to obtain greater remuneration (Porwoll, 1971, p; 5-6).

One conceptual framework used to justify merit systems and to endorse their usefulness is expectancy theory. In this theory, the anticipation of the reward is thought to be the drive which motivates behavior toward either intrinsic or extrinsic rewards. Then the rewards are valued and perceived as attainable. In this context, merit pay plans which attach specific monetary rewards to certain behavioral
expectations should be a motivation toward higher productivity. The equity theory is another conceptual framework used to promote merit systems. "Equity theory can be defined as an employee's perception of his or her inputs and outputs in relation to another's inputs and outputs while performing basically the same type of work" (Gabris & Mitchell, 1988, p. 372-373).

The case for merit pay has continued to be asserted by Frymer (1981), Scherer (1983), Lieberman 1985), and Shanker (1985), Burgess (1984), and Alexander (1985). Assertions include: merit pay guarantees that the best teachers receive recognition and reward; merit pay results in the improvement of the profession; merit plans may result in professional recognition of teachers as board-certified teachers who deserve salary increments based on that status; merit pay participation is voluntary so that attaining it is by personal preference which promotes professional achievement; teachers unwilling or unable to grow will be purged from the system; the main purpose of a merit system is to promote teacher competence (Mickler, 1987, p. 138-139).

Merit systems which are implemented properly reward high performers and give low performers the proper feedback. This has the effect of allowing low performers the choice of improving their performance or exiting the system (Hills,
Merit pay, as part of educational reform, has many advocates. The public has reacted favorably to any educational reform which demands a link between accountability and reward. David T. Kerns, the chairman of the Xerox Corporation has called public education "the only industry where if you do a good job, nothing good happens to you, and if you do a bad job, nothing bad happens to you." (Fisk, 1989). Proponents of merit pay agree and feel that an incentive pay system can correct this fault.

Negative Perceptions

Opponents of merit pay systems have been outspoken throughout its history. More merit pay plans have failed than have succeeded (Mickler, 1987). According to Burkett and McElrath (1992), school reforms of the 1980s, which included additional compensation plans for educators, were planned at the top and passed down as edicts to the locals. Because of the lack of ownership, many local educators saw these edicts as threats. The major reason for failure of these plans was that schools found it difficult to create defensible criteria for meritorious teaching (Cohen & Murname, 1985). In the early years of merit pay, L.P. Young (1933) listed reasons for the failure of such plans. These included lack of agreement on what constitutes efficient teaching, no reliable instruments for assessing teaching efficiency, destruction of teacher esprit de corps,
prevention of the expression of teacher individuality, hindrance of the relationship between teachers and supervisors, unionization, and ostracism of teachers who receive merit pay. In 1978, forty-five years later, G.E. Robinson completed a study which virtually replicated Young's earlier work. Robinson also found that merit pay did not seem to motivate teachers (Robinson, 1984). In fact, in some environments, the installation of merit programs may not only fail to produce an increase in motivation, but might actually produce dysfunctional organizational consequences. If an organization's employees are predominately professionals, as in education, theories from the fields of economics and motivation suggest a greater risk for merit programs compared to organizations employing other types of workers. The argument that merit pay can be successfully implemented in education, since it works so well in business, is frequently used by advocates of merit pay plans for education. Barber and Kline (1983) point out that in reality merit pay is not used extensively in business and industry. In addition they refute the idea that such plans are an inexpensive way to motivate teachers. They conclude that merit pay systems have not been used widely in either private business or the federal government because of extensive costs and practical difficulties (Barber & Klein, 1983). Opponents of merit pay cite numerous studies which refute the view that monetary rewards
are high motivators for teachers. Young (1933) and Robinson (1984) both noted that merit pay bonuses did not provide incentives to teachers. Lortie reported that only about 14% of teachers reported that salary was the most important of the extrinsic rewards. He found that their most satisfying rewards were respect, opportunity to influence others, and the satisfaction of knowing that a student had learned (Lortie, 1975). Although the composition of the teaching force has changed significantly since Lortie's study (in the areas of levels of certification, the racial make-up, experience, and age) a more recent study by Kottkamp, Provenzo, and Cohn (1986) found that only about 14% of teachers continue to believe that salary is the most important extrinsic reward.

Sergiovanni (1976) substantiated the application of Herzberg's theory which holds that two separate sets of factors account for job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. The motivation factors include achievement, recognition, intrinsic interest in work and growth and advancement. The hygienic factors that cause dissatisfaction are extrinsic to work content and include working conditions, salary, status, company policy, administration, supervision, and interpersonal relations. Sergiovanni found that the most potent motivators for teachers were achievement and recognition. Opponents feel that merit pay plans will not necessarily bring good people
into teaching nor will they motivate talented people to remain in teaching. Merit pay plans have been criticized as tokenism. Further, because they do not change ineffective education, they are not a viable solution to any serious problem facing the schools. Finally, they are unworkable in education because the desire for wealth is not what brings people into education in the first place (Mickler, 1987).

Arguments against merit pay include the documentation of potential problem areas. Areas considered to pose particular difficulties in performance based pay systems are: role definition for teachers, redefinition of administrator's roles, school management and decision-making, funding, evaluation of teachers, continued training for teachers, union support, legal issues, tenure and certification, released time for teachers, performance accountability, proper planning, and evaluation of the career ladder (Johnson, 1985). Some critics of such plans note that they create unhealthy competition and hostility among teachers. It is thought that merit pay can be demeaning and paternalistic thereby producing low morale and low self-esteem. One effect of merit pay may be to decrease communication and cooperation among teachers (Barber & Klein, 1983). McDowell has listed the following arguments against merit pay:

Differences in teaching efficiency cannot, at present, be measured with sufficient accuracy for determining
salaries; merit rating destroys cooperative staff teamwork; our rating methods are too crude to distinguish among fine gradations of teaching efficiency; industry and education are not analogous; teaching is an art; the public will reject a plan in which only a fraction of its children are taught by superior teachers; we should seek to improve all teachers, not merely to reward those who appear to excel; merit rating may improve the efficiency of some teachers, but will have an adverse effect on many others; merit rating will cause bitterness and disillusionment; merit rating will hinder effective supervision; and the additional cost of merit rating can be more profitably used in improving the efficiency of the entire staff (McDowell, 1971, p. 3).

In general, teachers' organizations have opposed merit pay. Their arguments have been focused on the position that there is not a valid, fair way to evaluate teachers. The National Education Association has been categorically opposed to any plan that bases teacher compensation on favoritism, subjective evaluation, indefinite performance criteria, student achievement, or any arbitrary standards (Ficklen, 1983). Thomas Shannon, the executive director of the National School Boards Association has criticized merit pay for teachers by denouncing it as a proposal that "panders to the lower instincts" (Fisk, 1989).
The San Diego (California) City Schools pointed out the following arguments against merit salary programs in 1953:

Over a period of time, all programs tried have proven unsuccessful; thus far, it has not been possible to measure teacher competence accurately; likewise, it is difficult to judge equal or significant merit; morale, working relationships, and other psychological problems are too complex for single answers; merit programs develop attitudes that are negative and competitive; rating and gathering evidence for rating take a lot more time that the benefits derived warrant; it takes time that administration and supervision staffs would use to help teachers; working conditions need improving before emphasis is placed on performance, and improvements will attract better teachers; young teachers are often denied competence ratings because of "full quotas" on merit levels, which discourages candidates from entering the field; merit regulations too frequently stereotype the teacher to standards and discourage creative teaching; it is more important to recruit and train desirable people than to penalize those not so desirable; besides interfering with supervisory relationships, merit ratings increase teachers' work loads, and they are heavy enough already; it is more important that the general level of teaching be raised than that a few be rewarded; in-
service education programs get far better results than merit or bonus programs; industry usually makes "merit" or "bonus" awards on the basis of quantity and not quality; industry, except in sales work, has largely given up bonus and merit incentives and is adopting in-service training and providing better working conditions to get better production.

Experience has shown that communities soon reject merit plans after they get them; public interest is influenced more by lack of information on what the school is doing or by population and socioeconomic conditions than by genuine concern about improving teacher quality; teachers, like other groups of people, represent a normal cross section of ability; merit programs too frequently presuppose that all improvement comes through changing the teachers; and the development of professional standards, increasingly better opportunities for professional training, more intensive teacher recruiting, and more efficient use of component research develop better teaching more rapidly and at less cost than any punishment or reward system (Porwoll, 1979, p. 5).

The Merit Pay Study Committee of the Iowa Education Association offered the following areas of disagreement concerning the use of merit pay plans:

No consistent, reliable, valid method of evaluating
teacher performance has been discovered; merit pay is self-perpetuating; it is not easy to criticize a plan when one's salary is dependent upon it; evidences of excellent teaching often are not immediately apparent nor measurable; the correlation between good teaching and college preparation or experience is as great or greater than that between good teaching and the ratings used in most merit systems; the majority of teachers do not want merit pay under present conditions; many teachers in districts having merit pay programs state they do not like it because some staff members will exhibit the kinds of behavior which appear to be important to the rater; there is greater opportunity for accurate measurement of efficiency in industry or business; even so, there has been a steady decrease in the use of merit rating for salary purposes along with more in-service training; the public has demonstrated a willingness to pay more for teachers with greater amounts of college education and experience; excellence of teaching cannot be purchased with extra money increments and may obscure importance educational objectives; through proper preservice elimination and proper supervision of beginning teachers, the incompetents can be weeded out; many systems that have tried merit rating have abandoned it after a few years because greater negative results develop than positive
ones; emphasis should be on helping all teachers to become better rather than rewarding or punishing a few; merit pay reduces staff morale and increases worry, nervous tension, and insecurity, especially at rating periods. It may also isolate administrators from teachers; merit rating discourages creative or experimental teaching and thereby tends to standardize teachers rather than promote excellence. Teachers will not feel free to question administrative judgment and decisions under such a program and public relations will be poor and class scheduling made difficult since many parents will not want their children taught by a non-merit teacher (Porwoll, 1979, p. 5).

While a few studies indicate some evidence that merit pay increases productivity, these findings are far outweighed by research challenging this proposition. There seems to be no consistent evidence which clearly correlates such a concept. Also, there is virtually no research which examines the impact of merit pay on organizational culture. Besides employee disenchantment, rater error leads to the failure of merit pay systems' success. Common rater errors include the halo effect, recency error, contrast error, and similar-to-me error. The sheer complexity and difficulty of performance appraisal implementation in a systematic and thorough manner is another weakness of pay for performance plans. The implementation of merit systems is often
mismanaged. They frequently appear to have no effect or a negative effect on individual productivity and/or morale. These plans also amplify differences between employees, highlighting the achievers from the non-achievers, and widening the salary status between them on the basis of arbitrary scores. Merit pay systems tend to pull employees further apart rather than serving as instruments for bringing them closer together for the overall health of the organization (Gabris & Mitchell, 1988).

Questions of the feasibility of merit pay plans have emerged in more recent times because of economic conditions. In 1986 Governor Mario Cuomo of New York helped to enact a merit plan, Excellence in Teaching. In 1991 he began pressing to eliminate the plan, citing budget problems (Barbanel, 1991). The Fairfax (Virginia) County teachers merit pay plan is a nationally recognized program that links teachers salaries to performance. In 1992, for the first time since its inception, school board members considered ending or reducing the program because the school system was facing a "fiscal nightmare." Several board members expressed the thought that they could not justify leaving the program untouched when several instructional programs might be cut (Brown, 1992b). The Fairfax merit plan was finally suspended in 1992 (People, 1992). In some instances, teachers themselves are rejecting merit pay plans. In what was considered a surprising defeat, teachers
in Rochester, New York voted to defeat a contract tying pay to performance (Barbanel, 1990). Tennessee teachers complain that their merit pay program's negative aspects offset its financial benefit (May, 1990). Merit pay plans continue to have many of the problems they had at their inception. In an exhaustive study of merit pay, Johnson concluded that

Reviews of past failures suggest that there are fundamental problems with merit pay that cannot be surmounted by sheer administrative resolve and persistence. Seemingly well-designed systems sit atop a number of unresolved philosophical, technological, and organizational problems that eventually cause them to topple (1984, p. 25).

The Tennessee Career Ladder: History

When the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued the report, A Nation at Risk, in 1983, Tennessee was already involved in the development of its education reform plan. In 1978 the General Assembly of Tennessee requested the State Department of Education to prepare a report concerning the status of teacher education in Tennessee (Drew & Hearn, 1986). A comprehensive study, initiated from within the Tennessee legislature, was begun in 1981. This report was completed in 1982 and in conjunction with the 1978 study, contained many of the basic components of the 1983 Better Schools Program proposed by Governor Lamar
Alexander (Bellon, 1988). The 1982 report generated much concern in the education community. Debate raged between and among teachers, lay persons, principals' groups, and the Tennessee Education Association (TEA) as to the advantages, disadvantages, necessity of, and forseen impact of such a program. A political battle ensued involving TEA and Governor Alexander. TEA, according to Carol Furtwengler, began a public campaign to release negative information about the program (Furtwengler, 1987a). The position of TEA in April of 1983 was that: "The Master Teacher Program will create class warfare and afford opportunity for arbitrary discrimination among teachers. The fact that it is impossible to implement, that it will pit teacher against teacher, create suspicion in the profession, and drive college students away from the classroom does not seem to bother those who designed the plan" (Furtwengler, 1987b).

Terry Herndon, president of the National Education Association, came to Tennessee in May, 1983 and pledged to provide staff and money to defeat the Master Teacher Program. TEA and NEA escalated their efforts to see the concept of Master Teacher defeated in Tennessee (Furtwengler 1987a, p. 6). The Governor responded by attempting to gather support from teachers and the general public. Speaking in 1994, Alexander stated that TEA was his main lobbying nemesis as governor. "It took me a year and a half of mustering all the forces I could muster to accomplish
what I thought was a very simple idea," stated Alexander, recalling his battle with TEA over teacher merit pay. Cavit Cheshier, TEA Executive Secretary and TEA staff member for 38 years stated that TEA "stood up to Alexander when he tried to bulldoze us and everybody else" (Humphrey, 1994, p. A1). The resistance by TEA was strong enough to defer the passage of the bill for one year (Handler & Carlson, 1984). The vote on April 14, 1983 in the Senate Education Committee was 5-4 to defer the Master Teacher Bill for further study. Money was appropriated for further development of an evaluation system and study of the program itself. After the National Commission of Excellence in Education report, A Nation at Risk, was published in 1983, Governor Alexander reconvened the Tennessee legislature. This special session concluded after three months with the signing of the Comprehensive Education Reform Act (CERA) of 1984. Accompanying CERA was a one cent sales tax as a basis for funding. The Tennessee Better Schools Program was best known for the Career Ladder section of CERA. Originally the program was called the Master Teacher Program. It was then changed to the Career Ladder Program (Chance, Malo, & Pickett, 1988). This career ladder program has been described as the most comprehensive that has been passed by any state (Hartshorn & Prather, 1988).

The Tennessee Career Ladder: Program Criteria

Tennessee's Career Ladder Program identifies five
career stages: Probationary, Apprentice, and Career Levels I, II, III. A teacher must have at least twelve years of experience to apply for a Career Level III position. Supplemental, or merit pay, begins with Level I (Johns, 1988). Originally, incentives were to begin at the eight year level, but the final bill allowed for "fast tracking" into Level I at the end of the third year for a one thousand dollar yearly bonus. This was accomplished by either passing a State Teacher Test, the NTE, using a local evaluation model, or by completing forty hours of instruction in the Tennessee Instructional Model (TIM). Because funding costs were vague, a limit was set for the number of teachers attempting to reach Levels II and III. The final bill changed the original proposal, but raised the standards for the top levels. The original bill also contained a clause requiring an extended teaching year, but this was dropped in favor of options for each individual teacher. The original aspects of the bill dealing with teacher evaluation were vague. In the final version, detailed evaluation criteria were established. These are continually being up-dated. Salary supplements range from one thousand dollars for Level I teachers, two to four thousand dollar for Level II teachers, and three, five and seven thousand dollar options for Level III teachers (Change, Malo, & Pickett, 1988). These depend on whether a teacher accepts an extended contract for more pay. Since
this requires working after school or during summer vacation, some educators perceive this as extra work, not merit pay. Qualifying for any of the three levels originally took an entire semester, but can now be finished in thirty days (May, 1990). Assessment for levels II and III is conducted by a three member team of peers from outside the candidate's school system. The performance indicators used to evaluate teachers were obtained from effective teaching research and from teacher input. There are six areas of competence domains which have been identified for use: the teacher prepares for instruction effectively; uses teaching strategies and procedures appropriate to content, objectives, and learners; uses evaluation to improve instruction and assess students; manages classroom activities effectively; establishes and maintains a professional leadership role; and communicates effectively. Within each domain of competence, several indicators of performance with corresponding measurement statements were developed (Malo & French, 1987). Various sources contribute to the data collected. These include the teacher, the principal, the students, and the evaluators. This helps control bias, support objectivity, and contribute adequate measurement in all domains. Because of such complexity, however, there can be management difficulties in the areas of evaluator scheduling, instrument scoring, record keeping, and analysis.
In 1988 instruments used to collect data included: six classroom observations; three dialogues between evaluators and the teacher focusing on planning, teaching strategies, and evaluation of students and instruction; a summary of professional growth and leadership activities; written tests of communication skills and professional knowledge in the domains of planning, teaching strategies, classroom management, and student evaluation; principal and student questionnaires; and a consensus rating of competence in each domain except leadership and communication by the evaluation team. Primarily a summative evaluation system geared to identify and reward the best teachers, the system also provides formative evaluation through post-observation feedbacks and an extensive evaluation cycle (Chance, Malo, & Pickett, 1988).

Program reevaluation criteria for the upper levels have been streamlined for the 1993-94 school year. Requirements presently being field-tested and slated for implementation in the fall of 1993 include a one day visit by a state evaluator who conducts two observations and a dialogue. The dialogue is a discussion by the teacher of a topic presented by the evaluator. Several sub-questions may be included in the topic. The teacher is expected to address all facets without being prompted to do so (Don Jordon, personal communication, April 12, 1993).

The cost of such an extensive evaluation system has
been discussed at length. The University of Tennessee at Martin has developed an efficient, centralized videotape-jury review process for teacher evaluation. Teachers using such a system in the pilot study were found to be very supportive of the idea. The participating teachers received feedback after taping themselves and submitting the tapes to a jury of three exemplary teachers. This idea is an example of the attempt to continually up-date the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (Hartshorn & Prather, 1988). Brad Hurley, assistant to the state education commissioner, has stated that the state officials have taken "a long, hard look at the program and have made some changes. We've tried to simplify the process (May, 1990, A4)." The changes made, however, may not be sweeping enough to bolster negative perception of the program by many Tennessee teachers (May, 1990).

**The Tennessee Career Ladder: Perceptions of the Program**

Opinions of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program range from highly enthusiastic to totally negative perceptions. Those who believe in merit pay feel it is one of the dynamic reforms needed to lead education into the Twenty-First Century. Those persons are willing to risk their professional careers in pursuit of that goal, which at times seems unattainable. They feel that success builds upon success and therefore teachers who are recognized for their meritorious work will challenge other teachers for even
greater accomplishments. With equal determination, others say that merit pay will generate unhealthy competition and destroy collegiality. Teachers, they say, lose their individuality. Furthermore, it is argued, teachers are not highly motivated by monetary rewards, but by pride in their work and the importance of the job they do. Many feel that even if teachers were motivated by money, most merit pay systems are so small that they have little influence on the financial status of the person receiving them (Mickler, 1987).

The Tennessee Career Ladder Plan has many of the same praises and criticisms. Advocates of the plan are highly vocal and generally include state department officials, teacher participants, and researchers. Mickler (1987) feels that the Tennessee plan may succeed where others have failed because it relies heavily on peer evaluation at all levels. The program has been hailed as giving Tennessee teachers the appropriate incentives to become better and more accountable at their jobs (Johns, 1988). The career ladder training that teachers receive through the Tennessee Instruction Model (TIM) and the Tennessee Career Development Program (CDP) modules are thought to strengthen teachers' knowledge and/or teaching skills in such areas as teacher time-on-task, creative thinking, problem solving, questioning techniques, and avoiding conflict situations (Chance, Malo, & Pickett, 1988). Marty Connors, executive director of the
Southern Republican Exchange, a Birmingham, Alabama based research organization that has held numerous forums on education issues, has stated that the Tennessee plan must be good because the teacher unions oppose it. He feels that the role of unions is to protect the lower-ability teachers. In Washington, Emily Feistritzer, president of the National Center for Education Information, has said that her sense of the Tennessee program is that the really good teachers like the program. She asserts that they don't like the fact that bad teachers get paid the same as they do. Within the state, those involved with the program feel it was a small step in helping teachers get more money (May, 1990).

A diligent search of the literature reveals a much larger portion of expressed negative opinions of the Tennessee Career Ladder Plan than of positive perceptions. It has been assailed as being a morass of bureaucratic paperwork which does little to motivate teachers or improve the quality of education. An exhaustive, scholarly study was conducted by Horace Johns (1988). This study examined career ladders in depth by looking at such aspects as managerial effects of teacher motivation, financial incentives, and job skill encouragement. Teachers, in impressive numbers, considered the Tennessee Career Ladder Program to be ineffective in the following areas: improving the quality of teaching and administration, retaining teachers in the teaching field, providing teachers with
strong incentives to become better teachers, enhancing teacher morale, setting out specific and fair criteria for evaluation, and increasing enthusiasm for teaching. Furthermore, it was found that teachers in impressive numbers considered the Tennessee Career Ladder Program to: detract from their instructional efforts, to be a burden in terms of excessive paperwork and evaluations, hinder harmonious relationships with their fellow teachers, depend too much on "politics" and not enough on merit, and limit their professional judgment. Almost nine of every ten teachers believed that there were better ways than the Career Ladder to motivate teachers and one-third of the teachers were considering leaving teaching in the near future because of the program. From these findings it appears that the Tennessee Career Ladder Program suffers from a severe perception problem with Tennessee teachers (Johns, 1988, p. 478, 486). Opinion surveys by the Tennessee Education Association constantly show that huge majorities of the state's teachers think the program is neither effective nor fair. Most teachers feel that the financial gain is far outweighed by the negative aspects of the program. Teachers feel that the three levels (I, II, III) have the effect of separating staffs into "good" and "bad" groups which has the effect of straining relations and lowering morale. Also, teachers argue that it is not possible to objectively evaluate teaching performances using
a minimal number of classroom visits. Inner-city teachers in Tennessee complain that their teaching styles are often judged by people with suburban perceptions and sensibilities. The program is also criticized because enough emphasis is not placed on developing skills. Educators who fail to qualify for the increases have the right to challenge the system. This has in effect created a log jam of unresolved cases, some of which are years old. One official calls it a "mess", referring to the bureaucratic nightmare. To detractors, the program is a bureaucratic disaster that destroys teacher morale and retards system-wide pay raises. Tennessee teachers call the plan too complicated, too time consuming, divisive, unfair, and unrealistic. Some state officials admit that the program needs extensive overhauling to be a minimally acceptable incentive tool. Gary Calfee, Chattanooga assistant superintendent and formally Tennessee's state director of certification in 1985 was heavily involved in implementation of the program. In 1990, he effectively summarized many persons thoughts about the Tennessee Career Ladder when he said, "Sometimes I think the program wasn't worth it...It wasn't what I would have liked it to be, but little in life is" (May, 1990, p. A4).

Tennessee Career Ladder: Current Viability

The viability, and therefore the future, of the Tennessee Career Ladder could be in jeopardy. The current
literature, which is negative to an extensive degree, does not predict its survival in its present form. After eight years of existence, according to the state department of education, more than 43,000 of the state's approximately 50,000 teachers participate in the Career Ladder Program. However, only about 8,900 of those are in the upper two levels. Most participants are in the Level I category. Only about one-fourth of all eligible educators have actually attained the upper levels (May, 1990). Findings which indicate that Tennessee teachers have astonishingly negative perceptions of the program do not bode well for future participation in the program. Other indications are that the Career Ladder is probably doing little to motivate teachers and, in fact, is at least one possible significant cause of their alienation (Johns, 1988). One Tennessee Education Department official has expressed an uncertain future for the Career Ladder Program. In response to a question concerning the future of the Career Ladder Program in Tennessee, Dean Holland stated:

I can't say if the Career Ladder is here to stay.
Reevaluations of Career Ladder II and III teachers due for the 1993-94 school year have not been set. Because of this I am hesitant to say anything about the future of the Career Ladder. The field testing for the process has been completed, but nothing is in place for recertification at this time. As far as I know,
consideration is being given to four options. One option is to extend the current ten year certificate for two years to a twelve year certificate; recertification could then take place in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth year. The second option is a fifteen year certificate; there would be no recertification of this certificate; to be recertified a teacher would go through the entire certification process again every 15 years. The third option is to make the entire certification process a local one with local evaluators. The last option is to do away with the entire program. Everything will depend on what the legislature does (Dean Holland, personal communication, October 28, 1993).

On a more positive note, Tennessee's plan may succeed where others have failed because of the high degree to which peers are involved in the evaluation procedures (Mickler, 1987). In addition, the program has shown the capacity to change as the needs arise. Tennessee's Career Ladder Program has evolved from a mandatory, quota bound, totally state-controlled evaluation program to a voluntary enrollment, joint local and state evaluation process, bound by no quotas. The Career Ladder Project Report (1988) presented to Governor McWherter called for a second wave of reform which continued to reflect consideration for the growth and support of the Tennessee Career Ladder. The
sense of permanency concerning the Tennessee Career Ladder Program seems firmly in place at the present time. In 1987 mandatory enrollment in the program for Level I status was replaced by volunteer enrollment. The exact numbers of all Tennessee teachers participating in all levels of the Career Ladder Program were not available because state officials suspected a drop in enrollment and "really didn't want to know" (Ginny Kidwell, personal communication, April 23, 1993). However, a new study is presently being undertaken to determine exact enrollment figures of all Career Ladder levels and will be completed in 1994. Such a study is indicative of the interest being shone by state officials in the viability and future of the program.

The Tennessee Business Roundtable, which was highly supportive of the original Career Ladder Program, remains as a positive reinforcer of the Career Ladder and of all educational reform in Tennessee. Tennessee business leaders are in the process of auditing the state's public schools to determine whether increased funding and other reforms are improving education. Roundtable members are reviewing testing procedures, staff involvement in curriculum decisions, technology, social services, and other issues using a model developed by the National Business Roundtable that has been used in thirteen other states. As Christopher Cross, director of education for the National Business Roundtable, has stated, "We are impressed with reforms
adopted in Tennessee...and we hope to keep the public eye on education to make sure the momentum will not be lost" (Business Briefs, C7, 1993). Also, state legislators are aware of, and continue to support, the Career Ladder Program. Representative Gary Johnson of Hamblen County stated that the Career Ladder is "in place and working well as a measure of teacher performance" (Gary Johnson, personal communication, April 21, 1993). In response to a question about Career Ladder permanency, Nelson Andrews, chairman of the State board of Education, stated, "The Career Ladder is here to stay" (Nelson Andrews, personal communication, April 20, 1993). Annual refinements and improvements to the program and process suggest further growth opportunities and a bright future for Tennessee's Career Ladder (Chance, Malo, & Pickett, 1988).

Summary

Education could be called the nation's largest endeavor because it involves sixty-nine million students and employees, more than one-fourth of the population. The annual cost for the "education business" is in the four-hundred and fifty billion dollar range, nine percent of the gross domestic product. With the election of Bill Clinton for President, change in the focus of educational initiatives is almost certain. Nevertheless, the problems that afflict United States education are so complex that no matter what a President does, the results will be well into
Reforms are an inextricable part of educational change and merit pay systems, such as the Tennessee Career Ladder, are elements of those reforms. The staying power of merit pay in education will be tested. To survive in this context Tennessee's Career Ladder will have to change negative perceptions of its usefulness and be willing to remain flexible as it faces the needs of the future. Reform has been the sentinel of educational reform in America, but has not always delivered the promised results.

For more than a hundred years much complaint has been made of the unmethodical way in which schools are conducted, but it is only the last thirty that any serious attempt has been made to find a remedy for this state of things. And with what results? Schools remain exactly as they were (Comenius cited in Perry, 1992, p.36).

This quote from Comenius in 1632 may well advise us to tread carefully upon the path to reform. It is with such programs as the Tennessee Career Ladder that we construct the future.
Chapter 3
Methodology and Procedures

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. It includes the following: research design, procedures, population, sample, sampling method, and measurement of variables.

Research Design

This study used descriptive research methods. The descriptive research methods involved the collection of data through a survey of the chosen sample. There were no perceived internal or external threats to the validity of the study.

Procedures

The procedures used in this study were as follows:
1. In the absence of a relevant instrument to identify perceived barriers to upper level Career Ladder status by the teachers in K-12 in Tennessee, instrumentation was developed by the researcher. This instrumentation is in the form of a survey and was used to collect data to determine the perceived barriers to participation in career ladder levels II and III. The literature was searched for barriers which have been identified on a national basis in the field of merit pay and on the Tennessee Career Ladder Program.
2. An item pool of statements regarding Tennessee
Career Ladder levels II and III was developed using input from the literature and from experts in the field (state education department officials, professors of higher education, level II and III Career Ladder teachers). A survey instrument containing 73 items was then developed from the item pool attained. These statements were subgrouped into 11 barrier subscales (e.g., political barriers, personal barriers, etc.) according to shared themes identified by the researcher and experts in the field.

3. A pilot test of the survey instrument was conducted with 90 respondents. The respondents for the pilot test came from a population of teachers enrolled in education graduate programs and from educators in Hamblen, Knox, Jefferson, and Washington counties. All educators were eligible for upper level Career Ladder status, but had not attained that status.

4. The data from the pilot test were used to calculate measures of reliability including Cronbach's alpha. Calculations were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Personal Computer version (SPSS/PC+) (Norusis, 1992).

5. Survey items and barriers were then retained, modified, or deleted based on the results of the reliability, factor, and item analyses. The survey was then revised into a finalized form for approval by the
necessary officials at East Tennessee State University.  
6. Using the stratified sampling technique, the researcher randomly selected the sample (using a sample of random numbers generated by SPSS/PC+) from a list of eligible teachers provided by the Tennessee State Department of Education. The sample was geographically stratified by these districts: northwest, southwest, south central, upper Cumberland, southeast, east, and First Tennessee Development District.  
7. After approval from the East Tennessee State University Internal Review Board, an explanatory letter and survey forms were mailed to the sample members along with stamped, self-addressed, return envelopes (copies of the survey and letter are included in the Appendices A and B, respectively).  
8. After two weeks follow up letters, survey forms, and stamped, preaddressed return envelopes were sent to nonrespondents.  
9. Data were entered into SPSS/PC+ (Norusis, 1992) by hand. SPSS/PC+ was used for statistical calculations. The hypotheses were then tested and findings analyzed.  

Population

The population to which the researcher intends to generalize is the approximately 27,620 educators in the state of Tennessee who are eligible, but who have not attained Career Ladder II or III status (Tennessee
Department of Education, 1992a). These teachers encompass all certified and eligible teachers in grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) in the Tennessee public schools. This population includes both males and females, various ethnic groups, ages, levels of education, years of teaching experience, and job classifications.

Sample

The population in this study is comprised of educators in the state of Tennessee who are eligible to apply for, but have not been identified as attaining, Career Ladder Levels II and III in the seven educational districts of Tennessee. Inclusive of all counties in the state of Tennessee, the educational districts, as identified by the Tennessee Department of Education (1992b) are: northwest, southwest, south central, upper Cumberland, southeast, east, and the First Tennessee District. These districts are shown in Figure 1.
Figure 1. State of Tennessee School Systems and Districts 1991-1992.
The target population consists of 27,620 educators who are eligible to apply for the upper levels of the Career Ladder. The population described is identified as educators who have eight or more years of experience and have proper professional licensure (Tennessee Department of Education, 1992). The seven educational districts of Tennessee were identified as the population from which the selection would be made. These seven districts include the entire geographical area of Tennessee. Figure 1 provides a view of these seven districts and the school systems found in each district. The sampling procedure which was chosen is stratified random sampling. Eligible educators were stratified by district.

The sample size for this study was determined by using the formula provided by Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott (1986). A copy of the formula is provided in the Appendix. The formula was used to provide for a 95% level of confidence and for an error on the estimate of ± 5%. Using the formula, the calculated sample size would be 400. In order to account for nonresponse, over sampling was decided upon, thus 575 surveys were sent out. Factors which were examined in the choice of the sample size were: efficient sample size, implications of the design for efficient sample size, adjustments for ineligibles and nonresponses, expense of the design given the sample size, and credibility (Henry, 1991). It is recommended that the sample size be as large
as possible in order to reduce the likelihood of failing to reject the null hypotheses when they are actually false (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1987).

A stratified random sample of 575 teachers was chosen in order to adequately generalize findings to the rather large and heterogeneous population. This included 132 from the southwest district, 92 from the eastern district, 115 from the south central district, 63 from the upper Cumberland district, 29 from the northwestern district, 69 from the first Tennessee district, and 75 from the Southwestern district. The sample was chosen in order to provide the necessary characteristics of representativeness and independence of units.

**Sampling Method**

Using random sampling is appropriate for generalizations of results to a larger population within margins of error which can be determined statistically. Random sampling permits the researcher to utilize inferential statistics with the data. Certain inferences may be made about population values, such as means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients on the basis of obtaining values (Borg & Gall, 1989). In random sampling every member of the population has an equal probability of selection (Henry, 1991).

For the purposes of this study the researcher chose stratified random sampling. According to Borg and Gall
(1989), stratification assures that subgroups in the population will be represented in the sample in proportion to their numbers in the population itself. This is useful in cases when the researcher wishes to compare various subgroups and to ensure adequate numbers for subgroup analysis (Borg and Gall, 1989). Proportional representation for each stratum is assured and there is a sufficient number of a subpopulation in the sample for a reliable analysis (Henry, 1991). Improving precision of estimates and ensuring proportional representation of stratifying groups are the advantages of proportional stratification (Henry, 1991).

In order to achieve stratification, every member must be listed and categorized by the variables used for stratification. The list for this study was obtained from the Tennessee Department of Education (1992a). The list contained all educators who are eligible for levels II and III of the Tennessee Career Ladder.

**Measurement of Variables**

The survey consisted of a written survey form constructed by the researcher and completed by the respondents. The survey consisted of 62 statements with a modified version of a Likert 1-5 response scale. The scale provides a choice regarding the respondent's strength of agreement with the statement. The choice range is strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree (DeVillis,
There is an opportunity for written comments by the respondents. The survey contains a demographic section as well as the section of statements regarding the identification of barriers to participation in the upper levels of the Career Ladder. A copy of the survey is included in the Appendix A.

Validity for the instrument was established via a review of the instrument by Carol Myers, Tennessee Department of Education; Lynn Cornett, Southern Regional Education Board; and Robert McElrath, East Tennessee State University.

Reliability was established by using the pilot test data set. The overall scale Cronbach's alpha was calculated as .9420. The pilot test data set was also used to conduct a factor analysis to validate the factors identified by the researcher and experts as barrier subgroups. A copy of the instrument used in the pilot study is in the Appendix D. As a check, the entire response set from the statewide survey was also used to test reliability.

For the pilot test, the survey was divided into subscales by the researcher according to the identification of similar factors. Ten subscales were identified for the purposes of the pilot study. The following indicates these subscales:

1. Administrative Support Barrier - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception
among educators that a lack of administrative support for TCLP/II, III keeps them from participating. Statements 3, 12, 28, 32, and 58 make up this subscale.

2. **Teacher Morale Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to teacher morale. Statements 1, 24, 27, 33, 41, and 54 make up this subscale.

3. **Participation Process Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that the processes required to participate in TCLP/II, III are prohibitive. Statements 4, 5, 17, 18, 23, 65, and 70 make up this subscale.

4. **Evaluation Process Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that the processes used for evaluation in TCLP/II, III prohibit their participation. Statements 2, 13, 15, 16, 42, and 59 make up this subscale.

5. **Financial Consideration Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that the financial reward aspects of TCLP/II, III keep them from participating. Statements 9, 11, 20, 21, 34, 40, 60, 61, and 62 make up this subscale.
6. **Personal Obstacle Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements wherein educators indicated factors of a physiological or psychological nature (time, attitude) which contributed to their not participating in TCLP/II, III. Statements 7, 8, 25, 67, and 73 make up this subscale.

7. **Political Facet Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that TCLP/II, III is permeated by politics which prohibits their participation. Statements 6, 10, 35, 48, 55, 66, and 72 make up this subscale.

8. **Teaching Professionalism Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to the professionalism of the field of teaching and thus prohibits their participation. Statements 19, 26, 29, 30, 31, 37, 38, 47, 53, 63, 68, 69, and 71 make up this subscale.

9. **System Improvement Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among educators that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to improving schools and systems and thus they do not participate. Statements 22, 39, 43, 44, 57, and 64 make up this subscale.

10. **Individual Role Professionalism Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a
perception among educators that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to the professionalism of individual teachers or to their roles as professionals and as such they do not participate. Statements 14, 36, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, and 56 make up this subscale.

Below is a list of the Cronbach alpha coefficients for the total instrument and the ten subscales after Questions 6, 10, 11, 18, 19, 20, 25, 36, 44, 47, and 61 were dropped from the original 73 item survey in an effort to improve reliability. The Cronbach alpha coefficients which were calculated using the statewide study sample are provided also.

1. Administrative Support Barriers alpha = .5223;
   Standardized item alpha = .5498 (Statewide = .6557)
2. Teacher Morale Barrier alpha = .8229;
   Standardized item alpha = .6216 (Statewide = .8560)
3. Participation Process Barrier alpha = .6634;
   Standardized item alpha = .6756 (Statewide = .6973)
4. Evaluation Process Barrier alpha = .7555;
   Standardized item alpha = .7541 (Statewide = .7479)
5. Financial Considerations Barrier alpha = .5707;
   standardized item alpha = .5684 (Statewide = .5839)
6. Personal Reasons Barrier alpha = .7047;
   Standardized item alpha = .7231 (Statewide = .7517)
7. Political Barrier alpha = .5782;
   Standardized item alpha = .5823 (Statewide = .6283)
8. Professionalism of Teaching Barrier alpha = .8952; 
   Standardized item alpha = .9010 (Statewide = .9129)
9. School System Barrier alpha = .6426; 
   Standardized item alpha = .6452 (Statewide = .7164)
10. Individual Role Professionalism Barrier alpha = 
    .8724; Standardized item alpha = .8745 
    (Statewide = .8475)
11. Total score: alpha = .9420; 
    Standardized item alpha = .9450 (Statewide = .9564)

Based on the pilot test data it was decided that the two questions dealing with the TEA would be treated separately in the final survey analysis. It was also decided that the total score would not be used since it is not a logical barrier. Reliability analysis was run using just the two TEA questions. This resulted in an alpha of .7243 with a standardized item alpha of .7252 (Statewide = .5371).

Once the eleven statements denoted above were deleted the survey statements were renumbered. Thus on the final survey form the eleven barrier subscales were composed as follows.

1. **Administrative Support Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that a lack of administrative support for TCLP/II, III keeps them from participating. 
   Statements 3, 9, 21, 25, and 48 make up this subscale.
2. **Teacher Morale Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to teacher morale. Statements 1, 18, 20, 26, 33, and 44 make up this subscale.

3. **Participation Process Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that the processes required to participate in TCLP/II, III are prohibitive. Statements 4, 5, 14, 17, 54, and 59 make up this subscale.

4. **Evaluation Process Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that the processes used for evaluation in TCLP/II, III prohibit their participation. Statements 2, 10, 12, 13, 34, and 49 make up this subscale.

5. **Financial Consideration Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that the financial reward aspects of TCLP/II, III keep them from participating. Statements 8, 15, 27, 32, 50, and 51 make up this subscale.

6. **Personal Obstacle Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements wherein teachers indicated factors of a physiological or psychological nature (time, attitude) which contributed to their not
participating in TCLP/II, III. Statements 6, 7, 56, and 62 make up this subscale.

7. Political Facet Barrier - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that TCLP/II, III is permeated by politics which prohibits their participation. Statements 45, 55, and 61 make up this subscale.

8. Teaching Professionalism Barrier - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to the professionalism of the field of teaching and thus prohibits their participation. Statements 19, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 43, 52, 57, 58, and 60 make up this subscale.

9. System Improvement Barrier - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to improving schools and systems and thus they do not participate. Statements 16, 31, 35, 47, and 53 make up this subscale.

10. Individual Role Professionalism Barrier - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that TCLP/II, III is detrimental to the professionalism of individual teachers or to their roles as professionals and as such they do not participate. Statements 11, 36, 37, 39,
40, 41, 42, and 46 make up this subscale.

11. **TEA Support Barrier** - This subscale is composed of statements which indicate a perception among teachers that the TEA has not supported the Tennessee Career Ladder Program and thus teachers may not participate. Statements 28 and 38 make up this subscale.

**Data Analysis**

Frequencies, percentages, and means of the barrier subscales were calculated using SPSS/PC+ (Norusis, 1992). The level of measurement was treated as interval, and the means for each barrier subscale were compared between demographic subgroups by using either a t-test or an analysis of variance (for those demographic groups with more than two subgroups). This was done to determine whether a given group's mean barrier scores differed significantly from the others.

A t-test for independent samples was selected to test for significant differences in the mean barrier subscale scores of demographic groups identified in hypotheses 1, 4, 6, 8, and 9. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for significant differences in the mean barrier subscale scores of demographic groups identified in hypotheses 2, 3, 5, and 7. A chi-square test was used to test for independence in the respondents' overall opinions from their source of information (hypothesis 10). For each
hypothesis the alpha level was set at .05. For hypotheses 1-9 testing was done to determine if significant differences existed in the mean scores on these 11 barrier subscales: Administrative Support Barriers, Teacher Morale Barriers, Participation Process Barriers, Evaluation Process Barriers, Financial Consideration Barriers, Personal Obstacle Barriers, Political Facet Barriers, Teaching Professionalism Barriers, System Improvement Barriers, Individual Role Professionalism Barriers, and Tennessee Education Association Support Barriers. A full explanation of each of these barrier subscales and which questions constitute them can be found in chapter three.
Chapter 4
Presentation and Analysis of Data

Introduction

Chapter four includes the results and findings obtained from the data gathered in this study. Chapter one states the hypotheses and research questions which were tested to determine the perceived barriers to upper level career ladder status by eligible educators in Tennessee. A proportional number of educators was chosen from each of the seven educational districts in Tennessee.

Statistical treatment procedures were related in Chapter three. These processes will be additionally clarified in this chapter.

The data collected for this study were obtained from 426 surveys received (with 404 used) out of the 575 sent to educators in the Tennessee public schools. The survey, which was developed by the researcher, consisted of sixty-two statements. The statements dealt with educator attitudes toward the Tennessee Career Ladder levels II and III. The survey also contained a demographic section which gathered data on respondents' present career ladder status, age, gender, race, job classification, total years of teaching experience, highest educational level attained, past attempts at upper level Tennessee Career Ladder status, future plans to attempt upper levels of the Tennessee Career Ladder, informational sources concerning the Tennessee
Career Ladder, and overall opinion concerning the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. In addition, a space was provided for additional comments.

Respondents

Four hundred and twenty six (426) of the 575 educators who were sent surveys returned them, resulting in a return rate of 75.87%. Two survey mailings were necessary to accomplish this return rate. The first mailing resulted in a return of 270 surveys. The follow-up mailing resulted in 156 returns for a total of 426. Twenty-two (22) surveys were unusable due to survey defacement, untraceable address change, and deaths. This resulted in a total of 404 usable responses or 70%. Table 1 displays the seven districts, the surveys sent in each district, the total surveys returned in each district, and the percent of total returns from each district. Table 2 displays the seven districts, the surveys sent in each district, the total usable returns in each district, and the percent of useable returns from each district. Response bias was not believed to have occurred since there were no significant differences in the observed rate of returns by region compared to the expected rate when tested with chi-square ($\chi = 2.17$, $p > .05$) and there were no significant differences in the observed rate of number of years teaching experience in the returned sample and the rate found in the population ($\chi = 1.09$, $p > .05$).
Table 1

**Total Response Rates by Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Surveys</th>
<th>Percent Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sent</td>
<td>returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Cumberland</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First (Upper East)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>575</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 = 2.17$, $p > .05$, no significant differences in proportions by region of those returned compared to those sent out.

Table 2

**Useable Response Rates by Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Surveys</th>
<th>Usable Returns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sent</td>
<td>usable returns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Cumberland</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First (Upper East)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>575</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Descriptive Data

The Survey Instrument

A description of the initial construction of the survey instrument including its validation through the pilot study can be found in chapter three. The survey in its final form and the cover letter sent with it can be found in the Appendices A and B, respectively. As mailed to respondents, the survey was on one sheet of 11 inch x 17 inch paper folded into a pamphlet format. Demographic data as well as questions concerning past and future attempts at the Tennessee Career Ladder upper levels, informational sources, overall opinion, and additional comments were placed on the first page. The following pages contained instructions for completion of the survey and a description of the key. The Likert-type scale was SA = strongly agree, A = agree, U = unsure, D = disagree, and SD = strongly disagree. The demographic data revealed that the largest group of respondents were Career Ladder I educators (371 or 91.8%); most respondents were in the 40 through 54 age group (259 or 64.1%); females represented 77.7% of the respondents (314); a majority were white (345 or 85.4%); job classification revealed a more even distribution with the largest group being elementary teachers (159 or 39.4%) and the smallest group being principals (17 or 4.2%); Teaching experience was divided into approximately even groups of those with less than 20 years of experience (192 or 47.5%) and those with 20
or more years of experience (206 or 51%); the highest educational level attained revealed that the largest group had bachelor degrees (161 or 39.9%) and the smallest group had doctoral degrees (5 or 1.2%). Additional data from the survey included: In the past 90.2% of respondents (366) had not attempted to gain upper level Tennessee Career Ladder status. Fifty-five percent (55%) stated that they would not attempt to do so in the future while 31.7% were unsure and 9.9% said they would make this attempt. Educators in the study indicated their information came mostly from peers (30%) while TEA provided information the least (4.5%). A question was asked regarding the respondents' overall opinion of the Career Ladder Program. Just over two-thirds (72.8%) of the respondents had a negative overall opinion of the program, while almost a third (27.2%) had a positive overall opinion. Table 3 illustrates specific frequency data concerning the above demographic and informational data.
### Table 3

**Demographic and Informational Frequency Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First (Upper East)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>404</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Ladder Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not career ladder</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>403</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 40</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-54</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and Above</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>395</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>403</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates respondents who attained Levels II and III during the course of the study.

**Note:** Totals may be slightly above or below 100 percent due to rounding.
Table 3 - continued

Demographic and Informational Frequency Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Classification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Subject</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters plus</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Totals may be slightly above or below 100 percent due to rounding
### Demographic and Informational Frequency Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attempted TCLP II/III in Past</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>92.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan to Attempt TCLP II/III</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information on TCLP</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Department and Reading</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Administration</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined sources</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>100.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Opinion of TCLP</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Totals may be slightly above or below 100 percent due to rounding.
Survey Statement Responses

The survey contained 62 statements concerning the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. A sample of the survey is provided in Appendix A. There were 32 negative statements about the program and 30 positive statements. Respondents circled SA for strongly agree; A for agree; U for unsure; D for disagree; and SD for strongly disagree to indicate their level of agreement with the statement. For the purposes of data analysis all statements which contained a positive connotation regarding the Career Ladder were reverse coded. This resulted in a five point scale for each statement with a higher score indicating stronger agreement (and a lower score indicating less agreement) with each statement as a negative statement regarding the Career Ladder Program. A list of statements which were reverse coded is included in Appendix E. Table 4 summarizes the mean scores of statements 1-62 after reverse coding occurred. The higher the mean score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier. Table 4 is in Appendix E.

Hypothesis Testing

A t-test for independent samples was used to test for significant differences in the mean barrier subscale scores of demographic groups identified in hypotheses 1, 4, 6, 8,
and 9. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for significant differences in the mean barrier subscale scores of demographic groups identified in hypotheses 2, 3, 5, and 7. A chi-square test was used to test for independence of the respondents' overall opinions from their source of information (hypothesis 10). For each hypothesis the alpha level was set at .05. For hypotheses 1-9 testing was done to determine if significant differences existed in the mean scores on these 11 barrier subscales: Administrative Support Barriers, Teacher Morale Barriers, Participation Process Barriers, Evaluation Process Barriers, Financial Consideration Barriers, Personal Obstacle Barriers, Political Facet Barriers, Teaching Professionalism Barriers, System Improvement Barriers, Individual Role Professionalism Barriers, and Tennessee Education Association Support Barriers. A full explanation of each of these barrier subscales and which questions constitute them can be found in chapter three. If a significant difference was found on any of the subscales, the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Hypothesis Testing Results**

$H_01$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennesse Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who have attempted Career Ladder Level II or III status and those who have not.
Respondents were categorized into two groups, group 1 was comprised of educators who, in the past, have tried to reach Levels II or III, but failed to do so. Group 2 included educators who have never attempted to reach the upper levels. Group 1 included 29 respondents and Group 2 included 366 respondents. A t-test for two independent means was used to determine if significant differences existed between the two groups. Significant differences were found to exist between the groups on two barriers subscales: Administrative Support and Teacher Morale. The null hypothesis was rejected. Results are shown in Table 5. In both cases where significant differences existed, those who had attempted the Career Ladder upper levels (Group 1) perceived these two subscale barriers to be greater than those who had never attempted the upper levels.
Table 5

Results of t-test for Hypothesis One: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Those Who Attempted Career Ladder Upper Levels and Those Who Did Not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores by Past Attempts at TCLP II/III</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attempted</td>
<td>Did not attempt</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Prob.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>&lt;.0005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>.731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>.652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>.473</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups were significantly different at alpha = .05

H₀₂: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who plan to attempt
Career Ladder Level II or III status, those who do not, and those who are unsure.

For hypothesis testing the respondents were divided into three groups: Group 1 included 40 individuals who plan to gain Career Ladder II or III status in the future; Group 2 included 223 educators who do not plan to gain these levels; and, Group 3 included 128 educators who were unsure if they would attempt the upper levels. One-way ANOVA was used to determine if significant differences existed between the groups; if they did, the Scheffe's post hoc multiple comparison test was then used to determine which groups were different from each other. If the Scheffe's test did not find differences even though the ANOVA had, a less strenuous post hoc test, the Least Significant Differences (LSD) test was used.

Significant differences were found for the barriers of Evaluation Procedures, Financial Considerations, Teaching Professionalism, System Improvement, and Individual Role Professionalism. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Results are shown in Table 6.
Table 6
ANOVA Results for Hypothesis Two: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Those Who Plan to Attempt Career Ladder Upper Levels (Group 1), Those Who Do Not (Group 2), and Those Who Are Unsure (Group 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores by Plans to Attempt TCLP II/III</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Prob</th>
<th>Post hoc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1 (Plan to Attempt)</td>
<td>Group 2 (Do Not Plan to Attempt)</td>
<td>Group 3 (Unsure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>9.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>6.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>5.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups that are significantly different at alpha = .05
Those who do not plan to try for the upper levels (Group 2) scored significantly higher on the Evaluation Procedures, Financial Considerations, and the Teaching Professionalism barriers than did those who planned to try for the upper levels (Group 1). In the case of the Teaching Professionalism barrier a significant difference was also found between those who do not plan to try for the upper levels (Group 2) and those who were unsure (Group 3), with those who do not plan to try, indicating this as more of a barrier.

Those who do not plan to try for the upper levels (Group 2) scored significantly higher on the System Improvement and Individual Role Professionalism barriers than did those who were unsure if they would try for the upper levels (Group 3).

H$_{03}$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different ages.

Respondents were categorized into three groups for analysis. The frequency data were used to determine group composition. Group 1 contained 101 individuals under 40 years, Group 2 contained 228 persons in the 40-54 years range, and Group 3 contained 66 educators in the 55 years and above category. One-way ANOVA was used to determine if differences existed in the mean barrier scores between the
three groups. A Scheffe's post hoc multiple comparison test was used to determine which groups were significantly different from each other when the ANOVA identified that significant differences existed. Significant differences were found for Teaching Professionalism and Individual Role Professionalism. The null hypothesis was rejected. Table 7 show the results of this analysis. Those in the older group (aged 55 and above) scored significantly higher on the Teaching Professionalism barrier than did those in either of the other two age groups. The older group also scored significantly higher on the Individual Role Professionalism barrier than did those in the 40 - 54 age group. No other significant differences were found based on age.
Table 7

ANOVA Results for Hypothesis Three: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Those Who Are Under 40 Years in Age (Group 1), Those 40-54 Years Old (Group 2), and Those Who Are 55 and Older (Group 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores by Age</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob</th>
<th>Post hoc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1 &lt; 40</td>
<td>Group 2 40-54</td>
<td>Group 3 ≥ 55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.596</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.734</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>0.002*</td>
<td>1,2*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.011*</td>
<td>1,2*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.907</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups that are significantly different at alpha = .05
$H_04$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and II between males and females.

Respondents were divided into two categories: males (n=83) and females (n=314). A t-test for independent means was used to determine if significant differences existed in the mean barrier scores between males and females. Significant differences were found in the Administrative Support and Personal Obstacle barriers. The null hypothesis was rejected. Males had a higher score on the Administrative Support barrier and females a higher score on the Personal Obstacles barrier. Results are presented in Table 8.
Table 8

Results of t-test for Hypothesis Four: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Males and Females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores by Gender</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>-1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>-1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>-3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>-1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>-1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups were significantly different at alpha = .05

Hₐ₅: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents in different job classifications.

Respondents were placed into the following categories:
Group 1 - elementary teachers (n=159), Group 2 - middle
school teachers (n=50), Group 3 - high school teachers (n=81), Group 4 - special education teachers (n=29), Group 5 - special subject teachers (n=64), and Group 6 - administrators (n=17). One-way ANOVA was used to determine if groups differed in their scores on the 11 barrier subscales. No significant differences were found. The null hypothesis was retained. Results are presented in Table 9.
Table 9

ANOVA Results for Hypothesis Five: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Those of Different Job Classifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Elementary School Teacher</th>
<th>Middle School Teacher</th>
<th>High School Teacher</th>
<th>Special Education Teacher</th>
<th>Special Subject Teacher</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob</th>
<th>Post hoc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>.902</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>.583</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>.754</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.968</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H₀₆: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents with different numbers of years of teaching experience.

Respondents were divided into two categories: Group 1 (n=192) included educators who have taught less than 20 years and Group 2 (n=206) included educators who have taught 20 years or more. A t-test for independent means was used to determine if significant differences existed in the mean barrier scores for the two groups. Significant differences were found in several areas. Teacher Morale barriers, Participation Procedures barriers, Evaluation Process barriers, Financial Considerations barriers, Political Facet barriers, Teaching Professionalism barriers, System Improvement barriers, and Individual Role Professionalism barriers were all significantly greater for educators with 20 or more years experience. The null hypothesis was rejected. Table 10 provides the data analysis results.
Table 10

Results of t-test for Hypothesis Six: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Educators with Less than 20 Years Experience and Those with 20 Years or More

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores by Years Teaching Experience</th>
<th></th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; 20 years</td>
<td>≥ 20 years</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>-2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>-2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>-2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>-3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>-1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>-2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>-3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>-2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>-3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups were significantly different at alpha = .05
** Indicates groups that were significantly different at p < .0005

H₀.7: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder
Levels II and III between respondents with different educational levels.

Five groups were used for this analysis with each group divided according to the highest level of education attained by the respondent. These groups are: Group 1 = Bachelor's degree (n=161); Group 2 = Master's degree (n=135); Group 3 = Master's degree plus hours (n=89); Group 4 = Specialist degree (n=13); Group 4 = Doctorate degree (n=5). One-way ANOVA was used to determine if significant differences existed between groups in the mean barrier scores. A significant difference was found only on the Tennessee Education Association Support barrier. A Scheffe's post hoc multiple comparison test identified the differences as significant between Group 1 (bachelor's degree) and Group 2 (master's degree). The TEA support barrier was more problematic for those with a master's degree. Those with a doctorate had a higher mean TEA Support score, however, the small sample size (n=5) may have had the effect of keeping the difference from being significant. The null hypothesis was rejected. Table 11 provides the results of the analysis.
Table 11

**ANOVA Results for Hypothesis Seven: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Those of Different Education Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Group 1: Bachelor Degree</th>
<th>Group 2: Master's Degree</th>
<th>Group 3: Master's Degree Plus</th>
<th>Group 4: Specialist Degree</th>
<th>Group 5: Doctorate Degree</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob</th>
<th>Post hoc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>.920</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>1.2*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups that are significantly different at alpha = .05
$H_08$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents who indicate different levels of administrative support.

Respondents were divided into two categories based on their responses to survey statement number nine "There is encouragement by the principal for staff participation in the TCLP/II, III." Group 1 ($n=168$) were those who indicated agreement with this statement and Group 2 ($n=160$) were those who disagreed with this statement. A t-test for independent means was used to determine if significant differences existed between the two groups on the barrier subscales. Significant differences were found on the mean scores for all eleven barrier subscales. The null hypothesis was rejected. In each case, Group 2, those who disagreed that the principal encourages participation in the Tennessee Career Ladder Program Levels II/III found the barriers more problematic than did those who thought the principal encouraged participation in the upper levels. Data are presented in Table 12.
Table 12

Results of t-test for Hypothesis Eight: Differences in
Perceived Barriers Between Educators Who Agreed that the
Principal Encouraged Participation in Career Ladder (Group
1) and Those That Disagreed (Group 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Prob.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>-12.29</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>-2.87</td>
<td>.004*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>-6.02</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>-4.99</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>-4.21</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>-3.12</td>
<td>.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>-3.52</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>-6.27</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>-4.71</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>-4.71</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>-3.91</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups were significantly different at alpha = .05
** Indicates groups that were significantly different at p < .0005

$H_0 9$: There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different
races.

Respondents were divided into two groups, white (n=345) and non-white (n=56). The non-white category included those who responded that they were Black (n=52), Hispanic (n=2), or other (n=2). A t-test for independent means was used to test for significant differences in the mean barrier subscale scores between the two groups. Significant differences were found in several areas. Non-whites found the Administrative Support barrier to be more problematic. Whites had significantly higher scores on the barriers of Participation Process, Evaluation Process, Financial Considerations, Personal Obstacles, Teaching Professionalism, System Improvement, and Individual Role Professionalism. The null hypothesis was rejected. Data are presented in Table 13.
Table 13

Results of t-test for Hypothesis Nine: Differences in Perceived Barriers Between Whites (Group 1) and Non-Whites (Group 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>Non-Whites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>-2.04</td>
<td>.042*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Morale</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Process</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>.002*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.012*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Facet</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Improvement</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.042*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEA Support</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
<td>.346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates groups were significantly different at alpha = .05
** Indicates groups that were significantly different at p < .0005

H$_{10}$: There will be no difference in the overall opinions regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder Program between respondents indicating various sources of
information regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder program.

Respondents were asked to respond to this question "I have obtained most of my information about the Tennessee Career Ladder levels II and III, from...". Individual responses of those who also answered the opinion question (N=319) were grouped into the following categories: peers (n=92), reading/state department of education (n=67), local administration (n=62), Tennessee Education Association (n=14), and a combination of sources (n=84). Respondents were also asked to answer this question: "My overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program is Positive____ Negative____". Of those who provided an answer to the question regarding their source of information there were 90 (28.2%) respondents who checked "positive" and 229 (71.8%) who checked "negative". A chi-square test was used to determine if overall opinion was independent of the source of information. If opinions were independent of source one would expect the percentage of positive responses by each category to be the same as the overall percentage of positive responses (28.2%). Two categories had a greater than expected percentage of respondents who had a positive opinion of the program. For those who received their information from local administrators, 51.6% indicated a positive overall opinion of the program and for those who received their information from reading and state department
of education sources 34.3% indicated a positive opinion. For those who received their information from peers or from a combination of sources both had a greater percentage of negative opinions than expected (expected was 71.8% while for peers it was 79.3% and for combination it was 81.0% positive). None of the group (0.0%) which received their information primarily from the TEA had a positive opinion. The null hypothesis was rejected. Results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Results for Hypothesis Ten: Summary of Chi-square Test of Independence for Opinions of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program by Source of Information Regarding It

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Peers</th>
<th>Read/State Dept.</th>
<th>Local Admin.</th>
<th>TEA</th>
<th>Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>ef=26</td>
<td>ef=18.9</td>
<td>ef=17.5</td>
<td>ef=3.9</td>
<td>ef=23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of=19</td>
<td>of=23</td>
<td>of=32</td>
<td>of=0</td>
<td>of=16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>ef=66</td>
<td>ef=48.1</td>
<td>ef=44.5</td>
<td>ef=60.3</td>
<td>ef=10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of=73</td>
<td>of=44</td>
<td>of=30</td>
<td>of=68</td>
<td>of=14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Chi-square = 29.58; p=.00001

Research Questions

The first ten research questions were answered through
hypothesis testing. Research questions 11 and 12 will be answered in this section.

RQ11: Do the respondents have an overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder program that is negative or positive?

A majority of respondents (n=275 or 72.8%) indicated a negative opinion of the Tennessee Career. Only 27.2% (n=103) had a positive opinion. Of the total 404 respondents a small percentage (n=26, or 6.4%) did not answer the question. Some of these wrote in "undecided or unsure" beside the question. Results were presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Results to Research Question Eleven: Summary of Overall Opinions of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ12: Which barriers are most problematic to respondents?

The Personal Obstacles Barrier subscale had the highest mean score and the Administrative Support Barrier subscale had the lowest. Thus respondents indicated Personal Obstacles as the greatest barrier to gaining Levels II and
III of the Tennessee Career Ladder program. Least problematic was Administrative Support. The mean scores were compared using a t-test for non-independent means to see if the mean subscale scores were significantly different from each other. Each mean scale score was significantly different from the majority of others. Some mean scales scores were significantly from all others, but some were significantly different from only a few others. Those with exceptions are noted in Table 16 which provides the results.
Table 16

Results for Research Question 12: Hierarchial Summary of Mean Barrier Subscale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier Rankings</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Significantly Different From *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personal Obstacle</td>
<td>4.046</td>
<td>all others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching Professionalism</td>
<td>3.907</td>
<td>all others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Evaluation Procedures</td>
<td>3.811</td>
<td>all others except 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Political Facet</td>
<td>3.763</td>
<td>all others except 3, 5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Participation Process</td>
<td>3.747</td>
<td>all others except 4, 6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. System Improvement</td>
<td>3.738</td>
<td>all others except 4-5, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Financial Considerations</td>
<td>3.669</td>
<td>all others except 4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Individual Role Professionalism</td>
<td>3.453</td>
<td>all others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teacher Morale</td>
<td>3.009</td>
<td>all others except 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. TEA Support</td>
<td>2.953</td>
<td>all others except 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Administrative Support</td>
<td>2.714</td>
<td>all others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates which barrier subscale scores were significantly different from the others at alpha = .05 when compared using a t-test for non-independent means

Summary

Chapter Four presented the descriptive data for the respondents from the seven educational districts included in this study. The survey instrument, pilot study, and state-
wide survey were described. Results of hypotheses testing provided the answers to research questions one through ten. Research questions 11 and 12 were answered using frequency data. A test of significance was also used for research question 12. For each hypothesis test results of the statistical analyses were provided in tables. A series of t-tests for independent means were used to test hypotheses 1, 4, 6, 8, and 9. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test hypotheses 2, 3, 5, and 7. A chi-square test of independence was used to test hypothesis 10. The null hypotheses were rejected in each case except for hypothesis five (perceived barriers by job classification).

Significant differences were found based on past attempts at Career Ladder levels II and III, future plans to attempt Career Ladder levels II and III, age, gender, years of teaching experience, level of educational attainment, administrative support, race, and source of information regarding the Career Ladder Program.

Respondents' scores were significantly different on the eleven barrier subscales. Respondents, who were teachers eligible for Career Ladder Levels II and II, but who have not attained these levels, indicated their overall opinion of the TCLP as negative. The greatest perceived barrier to participation was Personal Obstacles and the least problematic was Administrative Support. Chapter Five provides a discussion of these results, conclusions, and
recommendations.
Chapter 5
Summary, Discussion of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The Tennessee Career Ladder Program was instituted in 1984. Highly touted as an innovative and dynamic reform needed to lead Tennessee education into the twenty-first century, the program has produced mixed results. Proponents and opponents have been highly vocal. Although over 34,000 educators do participate in the Tennessee Career Ladder on a Level I basis, the fact remains that as of August, 1992, over 27,000 educators who are eligible for Levels II and III of the program have chosen not to participate. It was therefore, the purpose of this study to identify the barriers, as perceived by eligible teachers in Tennessee, to participation in Levels II and III of the Career Ladder Program. The study was designed to address the differences in these perceived barriers among various demographic groups.

An extensive search of relevant literature revealed a broad treatment of merit pay plans, as well as, a thorough review of the positive and negative perceptions of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. However, there has been no systematic attempt to determine the reasons why a majority of eligible teachers in Tennessee do not attempt to gain upper level Career Ladder status. There has not been a
comprehensive attempt to identify which barriers are most problematic to these educators.

Following the review of literature, the researcher incorporated educators' positive and negative viewpoints about the career ladder into survey format. After a pilot study involving ninety respondents, the resulting survey included sixty-two statements requiring a five scale response (strongly agree to strongly disagree). A demographic section, three multiple choice statements, and two open-ended questions were also included. The survey statements were organized into eleven barrier subscales. These subscales are Administrative Support Barriers, Teacher Morale Barriers, Participation Process Barriers, Evaluation Process Barriers, Financial Considerations Barriers, Personal Obstacle Barriers, Political Facet Barriers, Teaching Professionalism Barriers, System Improvement Barriers, Individual Role Professionalism Barriers, and Tennessee Education Association Support Barriers. Definitions of these barriers and which statements are included in them are provided in Chapter Three.

Discussion of Findings

The survey sample was determined by stratified random sampling in the seven districts of Tennessee. The survey was sent to 575 educators. There were 426 surveys returned for a return rate of 75.87%. Twenty-two surveys were unusable due to survey defacement, untraceable address
change, and deaths of chosen respondents. This resulted in a usable return rate of 70.26%. Respondents were predominantly female and white. They had a bachelor's degree, had never attempted the TCLP upper levels, did not plan to attempt the upper levels, and had an overall negative opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program.

Frequencies, percentages, and means for all the data are found in Chapter Four. The level of measurement for the survey was treated as interval and the mean scores on the barrier subscales were compared between demographic subgroups by using either a t-test for independent means or an analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the demographic groups with more than two categories. These tests were used to determine whether a given subgroup's mean scores differed significantly from the other subgroups being considered. Alpha was set at .05 for decisions regarding hypothesis testing in this study.

All but one of the ten hypotheses were rejected. The one which was not rejected compared the mean barrier subscale scores of educators with different job classifications (elementary teacher, middle school teacher, high school teacher, special education teacher, special subject teacher, and principal). Significant differences in mean scores were found based on these factors: past attempts at career ladder upper levels, future plans to attempt career ladder, age, gender, teaching experience, educational
level, administrative support levels, and race. Overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder program was related to the source of information concerning the program. One research question's answer indicated that a large majority of educators (71.8%) have a negative opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. The other research question answer indicated that the Personal Obstacle Barrier was the greatest perceived barrier to participation.

Null hypothesis one "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who have attempted Career Ladder Level II or III status and those who have not" was rejected. Those who attempted the upper levels in the past had significantly higher scores on the Administrative Support Barrier (3.10 v. 2.70) and Teacher Morale Barrier (3.61 v. 2.10).

Null hypothesis two "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between those who plan to attempt Career Ladder Level II or III status, those who do not, and those who are unsure." was rejected. Those who do not plan to attempt the upper levels scored significantly higher on the Evaluation Process Barrier (3.78 v. 3.67), the Financial Consideration Barrier (3.77 v. 3.36), and the Teaching Professionalism Barrier (4.02 v. 3.69) than those who do plan to try for the upper levels. Those who did not plan to
null hypothesis three "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different ages" was rejected. The older group (age 55 and older) scored significantly higher (4.04 v. 3.96) than the middle group (ages 40-54) and the middle group scored significantly higher (3.96 v. 3.69) than the younger group (under 40 years) on the Teaching Professionalism Barrier. The middle group also scored significantly higher than the younger group (under 40 years) on the Individual Role Professionalism Barrier (3.51 v. 3.28).

Null hypothesis four "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between males and females." was rejected. Males scored significantly higher on the Administrative Support Barrier (2.87 v. 2.67) while females scored significantly higher on the Personal Obstacles Barrier (4.11 v. 3.83).

Null hypothesis five "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents in different
job classifications" was not rejected. No significant differences were found on the barrier subscale scores between elementary teachers, middle school teachers, high school teachers, special education teachers, special subject teachers, and principals.

Null hypothesis six "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents with different numbers of years of teaching experience" was rejected. Educators with 20 or more years experience scored significantly higher than those with less than 20 years experience on all but three of the barrier subscales. Those subscales with no significant differences were Administrative Support, Personal Obstacles, and TEA Support. On the remaining eight subscales the more experienced teachers scored higher.

Null hypothesis seven "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents with different educational levels" was rejected. Significant differences existed regarding the TEA Support Barrier. Those with a bachelor's degree scored significantly lower than those with a master's degree (2.84 v. 3.07).

Null hypothesis eight "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents who indicate
different levels of administrative support" was rejected. Those who agreed that their principal had encouraged participation in the Career Ladder Program scored significantly lower on all eleven barrier subscales than those who disagreed.

Null hypothesis nine "There will be no difference in the identified barriers to participation in Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III between respondents of different races" was rejected. For this hypothesis test race categories were collapsed into two categories "whites" (86%) and "other" (14%). This was done because there were only two respondents each in the "Hispanic" and "other" categories. On one subscale, Administrative Support, those in the race category "other" score significantly higher than those in the "white" category (2.89 v. 2.69). On seven other subscales those in the "white" category scored significantly higher than those in the "other" category. Those barrier subscales were: Participation Process (3.79 v. 3.50), Evaluation Process (3.85 v. 3.58), Financial Considerations (3.70 v. 3.47), Personal Obstacles (4.11 v. 3.64), Teaching Professionalism (3.97 v. 3.51), System Improvement (3.79 v. 3.40), and Individual Role Professionalism (3.48 v. 3.27). No significant differences were found on the Teacher Morale, Political Facet, and TEA Support Barriers.

Hypothesis ten "There will be no difference in the
overall opinions regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder Program between respondents indicating various sources of information regarding the Tennessee Career Ladder program" was rejected. Educators who indicated their source of information as peers, the Tennessee Education Association, and a combination of sources had a lower than expected percentage with a positive opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder program (20.7%, 0.0%, and 19.0%, respectively with the expected as 28.2%). Educators who indicated their source of information as reading/State Department of Education and local administration had a greater than expected percentage with a positive opinion of the TCLP (34.3% and 51.6%, respectively with the expected as 28.2%).

It should be noted that the number of respondents who indicated that the TEA was their sole source of information was small (n=14), however all those respondents indicated a negative opinion. Educators who indicated that they had received their information from an official source were much more likely to have a positive opinion of the program than those who got their information from peers, TEA, or a combination of sources.

Each of the first ten research questions was answered through the hypotheses tests discussed above. Research question 11 "Do the respondents have an overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder program that is negative or positive?" was answered through the responses provided by a
single question regarding their overall opinion. A negative opinion was prevalent (72.8% of the respondents) while positive opinions were in the minority (27.2%). A number of respondents did not answer this question (n=26 or 6.4% of all respondents). The population studied might well be expected to have a negative opinion of the Career Ladder program. They are eligible through certification and experience to attain the upper levels, but they have not done so. This study addresses why this may be so through the identification of barriers to such attainment.

Research question 12 "Which barriers are most problematic to respondents?" was answered through the mean barrier subscale scores for all respondents (provided in Table 16). Each subscale was significantly different (using a t-test for dependent means) from the others unless the difference in the mean barrier scores was 0.10 or less. The most problematic barrier was the Personal Obstacles barrier, it had a mean of over 4.0 on a scale of 1 to 5. Three barriers had scores of 3.0 or less. These were the Teacher Morale Barrier (3.009), the TEA Support Barrier (2.95), and the Administrative Support Barrier (2.71). These three may not be barriers at all. In descending order the barriers were: Personal Obstacles (4.046), Teaching Professionalism (3.907), Evaluation Procedures (3.811), Political Facet (3.763), Participation Process (3.747), System Improvement (3.738), Financial Considerations (3.669), Individual Role.
Professionalism (3.453), Teacher Morale (3.009), TEA Support (2.953), and Administrative Support (2.714).

The most problematic barrier involves personal obstacles. This indicates that the stress involved and the time required is thought of as being so overwhelming that program participation is not a viable option. Many respondents commented on the time necessary just to do their jobs and that anything beyond was not worth the strain, pressure, and distress that attempting the program would cause.

Teaching Professionalism was next in order of difficulty. This points out that respondents believe that the field of education has not benefitted from the program. They believe the program has not benefitted their chosen field and has not added value to it.

Following the Teaching Professionalism barrier is the Evaluation Procedures barrier. Many educators believe that the process of evaluation is not fair and does not measure - nor can it measure - the true worth of a teacher. Their view is that "good teaching" includes so many intangibles that the career ladder evaluation cannot possibly measure them.

Next in the ranking was the Political Facet barrier. There is agreement with the concept that participation is in some ways politically oriented. This concept was mentioned repeatedly in the open-ended request for comments. It is
also believed that the program itself was a political move to gain support for then Governor Lamar Alexander, rather than a sincere effort to improve education in the state of Tennessee.

The Participation Process barrier was next in line, and expresses the believe of educators that the processes required to participate are too prohibitive. Some misconceptions were noted here. Several educators thought that upper level status required extra work or that using the Tennessee Instructional Model was mandatory for participation.

System Improvement was the sixth barrier. This barrier is indicative of the fact that educators do not see the value of the program for their system or education in general. The program is not seen as a conduit for improvement of schools.

Financial Considerations was a barrier and was supplemented with written comments. In essence, the rewards do not provide an incentive for participation.

The final barrier was that of Individual Role professionalism. This barrier indicates that teachers do not believe the program improves them professionally. They therefore do not see, from a professional point of view, the value of participation.

Teacher Morale, TEA Support, and Administrative Support all had mean scores of 3.0 or below. This may lead to
questioning whether they are in fact barriers at all.

Conclusions

Based upon the results of this study, the following conclusions are posited:

1. Of the eleven barriers put forth, at least eight are perceived to be problematic (by virtue of a mean score of 3.5 or above on a scale of 1 to 5). These are, in order from the greatest barrier to the least, Personal Obstacles, Teaching Professionalism, Evaluation Procedures, Political Facet, Participation Process, System Improvement, Financial Considerations and Individual Role Professionalism. Three of the barriers tested may not be barriers at all since the mean scores 3.0 or less on a scale of 1 to 5, these are the Teacher Morale, TEA Support, and Administrative Support barriers.

2. Significant differences regarding the barriers exist between different groups. Differences were found based on factors such as whether or not the respondent had made past attempts at career ladder upper levels, whether the respondent had future plans to attempt career ladder, age, gender, teaching experience, educational level, administrative support levels, and race. Differences did not exist based on job classifications.

3. The viability of the Tennessee Career Ladder
Program may be threatened due to the fact that over 72% of respondents expressed an overall negative opinion of the program and 55% of the respondents indicated that they would not attempt to gain the upper levels in the future, 35% were unsure, with only 15% indicating they would try. Although this study only included those educators who have chosen not to participate, this population is the vast majority of Tennessee educators (over 80% or those who are eligible).

4. The Tennessee Education Association, when listed as the sole source of information about the TCLP, has a negative influence on educator's views of the program. It is important to note that very few educators listed the TEA as their sole source of information. Conversely, administrators can have a very positive effect on educator's perceptions of the program.

5. A large majority of educators who are eligible for the upper levels of the TCLP hold a negative opinion of the program, and therefore, do not support it. Supporting comments expressed by educators include the following quotes from surveys:

"It's the biggest farce seen in my 30 years of education. I'm now a principal".

"The program is ill-conceived - requirements change too fast - one of the most unfair things ever put before teachers."
"Not one single child in the whole state has been helped by the program to get a better education."
"I was the Teacher of the Year in my county. I didn't make Career Ladder II. Something is wrong. I was crushed! I am a good teacher and I know I deserved it."
"Teachers I know on the upper levels are barely competent."
"Some excellent teachers I know won't apply because it does not reward excellence or performance."
"Lamar Alexander saddled us with these prestigious policies and left us to do nothing for education in Washington and then will run for President."
"The first Career Ladder evaluator I knew was one of my supervising teachers during my student teaching. He was so abusive to me and ineffective as a teacher I was removed from his supervision. This colored my opinion of the Career Ladder when he was selected as a Career Ladder evaluator."
"The Career Ladder rewards persistence instead of teaching ability."
"The Career Ladder Program was an ego building trip for our leaders and for the publicity."
"The Career Ladder has absolutely nothing to do
with the quality of teaching."

"Poor administrators and principals who have obtained Level III make it laughable."

"The whole system is a joke...It can be rigged and is on a regular basis. It's a dog and pony show."

"Many excellent teachers are not interested in applying due to the stress involved in the process."

"Teachers put on a front during evaluation - then go back to the "old ways".

"It's more political than anything."

"The evaluation system is stupid, evaluators are weird, the allocation of extended contract funds is political."

"All I see is extra work for extra pay."

"...the implementation is seriously flawed."

"My principal consented to do some of the on-site evaluations and then stopped doing them after a certain date. How would you feel?"

"It's a farce."

"This program is like driving your car 150 miles for the sole purpose of filling up with gasoline."

"Merit pay itself is a contradiction. There's no simple way to evaluate teacher performance in so diverse an environment as classes."

"I place the Career Ladder program on the same
level as our new value-added program for students. These ideas must be the creative work of politicians who don't know how to run a county, much less education."

"I love teaching and want to be the best teacher I can possibly be. If I thought that "climbing the ladder" would help me to be a better teacher, I'd do it in a minute! I just don't see it that way."

"Success on the Career Ladder proves only that one can 'play the game' or put on a show. It has very little to do with good teaching."

6. The Personal Obstacles Barrier is the most problematic barrier in a hierarchical ranking of barriers. The Administrative Support Barrier is the least problematic in the rankings. This indicates that the personal time and stress involved in the achievement and maintenance of the upper levels of the Career Ladder is perceived to be prohibitive. As one teacher stated, "My job consumes my life. I do not want to work more hours for more pay." Another teacher who had taught 23 years said, "My husband said he'd love me whether I made Career Ladder II or not, but if I ever try it again, he'd leave me." Others commented that, "It takes too much personal time", "My time can be better spent", or "The extra jobs they make you do are a joke". The encouragement of educators by
administrators to participate in the upper levels does not seem to be a significant barrier.

7. Since the educators surveyed are eligible to be on the upper levels of the Career Ladder - but are not - one may conclude that the barriers identified in this study are factors keeping them from participation. Since the barriers are thought of by these educators as being prohibitive, then they actually become prohibitive. However, one may conclude that these barriers would not actually be prohibitive if the participants did not perceive them to be so. For example, many respondents commented on the fact that so much extra work was necessary if one attains the upper levels. Extended contract work such as before and after school tutoring and summer school was often mentioned. In reality, teachers need not accept any extended contract work - nor any extra work - but simply receive the extra pay for the level attained. Therefore the Participation Process Barrier may be perceived as a barrier, when in reality it may not be a barrier.

8. One can conclude that those who attempted the upper levels perceive these areas as more problematic than did those who never attempted the upper levels. This may be due to the fact that educators who attempted the upper levels, but did not attain those levels, feel
that administrators were not helpful throughout the process of evaluation and therefore were responsible for the "failure" of the educator to attain his/her goal. Administrators may be seen as withholding vital information concerning the evaluation process or as being complacent toward the process, therefore impeding the success of the respondent. In addition, teacher morale may be viewed by this group as a problem because the very process of being evaluated may be perceived as demeaning, humiliating, or detrimental to the respondent who has attempted it in the past. This could impact not only the individual's morale, but would likely impact the morale of educators with which he or she works. It is possible that the Career Ladder is seen to foster competition and win/lose situations, thus negatively impacting morale.

9. Educators who do not plan to attempt the upper levels feel that they may justify that decision by citing the overwhelming difficulty of the evaluation process itself, the insignificant financial rewards, and the thought that the Career Ladder II,III levels would not improve their chosen field of teaching. This group also feels that attempting to gain upper level status would not help their school system in general and would not help them professionally. Those who do not plan to reach the upper levels may simply be
overwhelmed by their perceptions of the process barriers.

10. There are significant differences between age groups in viewing the impact of attaining career ladder levels on the teaching field as well as on the professionalism of the individual educator. Older educators view these as greater barriers than do younger ones. Perhaps older educators believe that, after watching the birth of the Career Ladder Program, its progress, and their peers who have attempted and attained it, that there is no real benefit to themselves or the profession. Younger educators may believe that the "jury is still out".

11. Males may identify the administrative support barrier as higher because the majority of administrators are male and may be perceived as being in "competition" with them. Males may also feel that administrators would not feel the need to encourage or help them as much since they would be more likely to "take care of themselves". Females may view personal obstacles as a greater barrier simply because they have more demands on their time due to combined professional, household, and parenting chores.

12. All eligible educators view the barriers in essentially the same manner. Although job classifications differ, educators are united in the
business of education. This commonality may ensure a certain uniformity of mind set toward the career ladder. The logistics of the job mean that peers, professional literature, professional organizations, etc. contribute information to all educators concerning the program in a relatively equal way.

13. More experienced teachers are more likely to be older teachers. These teachers, as in hypothesis three, have worked within the system longer. Because of what they consider to be the wisdom of experience, they may believe that they understand the career ladder and its demands more fully than their younger counterparts who may be more willing to experiment. Older educators may be less likely to change the status quo and more likely to be satisfied with a lower career ladder status until retirement.

14. Respondents with a higher level of education may be more likely to be members of TEA or to have been members longer and therefore they might be more willing to listen to the TEA or be guided by TEA. This could lead to recognition of the influence of TEA and that, coupled with a belief that TEA has a negative opinion of the Career Ladder Program, could lead them to conceive of the TEA as more of a barrier.

15. A more aggressive public relations play by the Tennessee Department of Education, through various
professional media could provide a positive impact on educators concerning their views of the program. It is important to note that 100% of those who cited TEA as their source of information had a negative opinion of the Career Ladder program. This is interesting, but should be tempered with recognition of the small sample size (n=14) and the knowledge that the overall score on the TEA Barrier was only 2.953, which indicates the TEA Barrier was not very much of a problem overall. It was tenth out of eleven barriers. A more precise finding would have been possible if the respondents had been asked to list the single most influential source of information about the career ladder. Since it was an open-ended question, many respondents listed TEA and other sources. Therefore these responses were categorized as a "combination of sources", rather than as TEA.

16. The fact that the Administrative Support barrier had the lowest mean score (2.71) may indicate that educators believe that administrators have a negligible effect on career ladder success or failure. This is linked to the findings in research question ten which indicated that those gaining information about the career ladder from administrators were more likely to have a positive opinion of the program. Educators, according to this, do not think administrators hinder
them from being successful in the program, and in fact, may be a positive force upon them.

**Recommendations**

Based upon the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Since a large majority of eligible educators hold a negative view of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program, an effort should be made by the Tennessee Department of Education to reverse this trend. The perceived barriers in this study should be addressed by the Tennessee Department of Education and solutions should be developed to alleviate the concerns indicated by this population of educators. According to this study, positive opinions are more readily effected through dissemination of information by administrators, the state department of education, and other official sources. A more focused effort should be attempted to disperse positive information about the program through these sources.

2. A study is needed to determine the future viability of the Tennessee Career Ladder as it is presently implemented. Three main factors call into question its future existence: An uncertain commitment by political leaders due to an upcoming gubernatorial election, limited acceptance and support by the eligible teachers of the state, and a poorly informed and basically
apathetic public.

3. The barriers identified in this study may be described as justifications or excuses rather than barriers. A study is needed to determine the extent to which fear of failure is the catalyst for all barriers to participation.
References


Cramer, J. (1983). Yes - merit pay can be a horror, but a few school systems have done it right.
*The American School Board Journal, 170*(9), 33-34.


*Education Digest, 5,* 42-43.


*English Journal, 73*(1), 23.


Brentwood, TN.


Research Service.


*The Observer, then and now.* (1991, April 15). *Knoxville News Sentinel*.


Norwalk, CT: The Easton Press.


Appendix A

Tennessee Career Ladder Levels II and III Survey
The following information will only be used to classify responses by aggregate demographic groups.

Present Career Ladder Status: ____________________________

Birth Year: ________

Gender: Male ____
Female ____

Race: White ____
Black ____
Hispanic ____
Other ____

Job Classification (i.e. 3rd grade teacher) ______________________

Total Years of Teaching Experience: ________________________

Highest Educational Level Attained:

- Bachelor's degree ____
- Master's degree ____
- Master's plus ____
- Specialist's degree ____
- Doctoral degree ____

In the past, I attempted to gain Career Ladder II or III status, but was not successful.

Yes ____ No ____

In the future, I plan to attempt to reach Tennessee Career Ladder levels II or III.

Yes ____ No ____ Unsure ____

I have obtained most of my information about the Tennessee Career Ladder levels II and III, from ____________________________

My overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program is

Positive ____ Negative ____

Additional Comments (Optional): ____________________________

________________________________________________________
Please respond to the following statements concerning the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. All statements refer specifically to levels II and III of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program in its present form. Throughout the survey the Tennessee Career Ladder Program, Levels II and III, are referred to as TCLP/II, III.

**KEY:**
- **SA** = STRONGLY AGREE
- **A** = AGREE
- **U** = UNSURE
- **D** = DISAGREE
- **SD** = STRONGLY DISAGREE

1. The TCLP/II, III causes discord among the faculty .......................... **SA A U D SD**
2. The evaluation process for the TCLP/II, III is valid .......................... **SA A U D SD**
3. The principal is apathetic to staff participation in the TCLP/II, III .... **SA A U D SD**
4. The steps to reach TCLP/II, III are too complicated and hard to understand **SA A U D SD**
5. Updated information on the TCLP/II, III is readily available ............ **SA A U D SD**
6. Peers have stated that the process to reach TCLP/II, III is too difficult , **SA A U D SD**
7. The process to reach TCLP/II, III is too time consuming .................... **SA A U D SD**
8. The TCLP/II, III represents more pay for more work - not merit pay .... **SA A U D SD**
9. There is encouragement by the principal for staff participation in the TCLP/II, III .......................... **SA A U D SD**
10. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is too difficult .......................... **SA A U D SD**
11. There is no long-range professional growth associated with the TCLP/II, III **SA A U D SD**
12. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is fair .......................... **SA A U D SD**
13. The TCLP/II, III does not necessarily identify better teachers .......... **SA A U D SD**
14. The TCLP/II, III deals with the reality of teaching .......................... **SA A U D SD**
15. The TCLP/II, III concept that teacher pay should vary in proportion to teaching excellence is proper .......................... **SA A U D SD**
16. Instruction will improve via merit ratings as found in the TCLP/II, III ... **SA A U D SD**
17. There is no definition of what constitutes effective teaching which can be applied to the TCLP/II, III .......................... **SA A U D SD**
18. The TCLP/II, III causes the destruction of esprit de corps ............. **SA A U D SD**
19. The TCLP/II, III is a prime motivator for teachers .......................... **SA A U D SD**
20. There is ostracism of teachers who participate in the TCLP/II, III ...... **SA A U D SD**
21. The TCLP/II, III hinders the relationship between teachers and principals .......................... **SA A U D SD**
KEY: SA = STRONGLY AGREE
A = AGREE
U = UNSURE
D = DISAGREE
SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE

22. The TCLP/II, III does not promote teacher competency .......... SA A U D SD
23. The TCLP/II, III does not improve teacher performance .......... SA A U D SD
24. The TCLP/II, III links accountability and reward .............. SA A U D SD
25. The TCLP/II, III isolates administrators from teachers .......... SA A U D SD
26. The TCLP/II, III amplifies differences among teachers .......... SA A U D SD
27. Good teachers are paid commensurate with their ability in the TCLP/II, III ...... SA A U D SD
28. The Tennessee Education Association has encouraged participation in the TCLP/II, III ........ SA A U D SD
29. The TCLP/II, III is an incentive to get better qualified people to enter the teaching profession .......... SA A U D SD
30. The TCLP/II, III helps keep better teachers in the classroom .......... SA A U D SD
31. The TCLP/II, III is cost-effective ......................... SA A U D SD
32. A salary based only on the amount of college preparation and teaching experience preserves mediocrity .............. SA A U D SD
33. The TCLP/II, III lowers teacher morale ........................ SA A U D SD
34. Teaching styles differ so the TCLP/II, III evaluation is not equally fair to everyone ................. SA A U D SD
35. The TCLP/II, III stifles innovation .............................. SA A U D SD
36. The TCLP/II, III is a framework for individual teachers in goal-setting for professional growth .......... SA A U D SD
37. The TCLP/II, III provides options for diverse work responsibilities without leaving the classroom ................. SA A U D SD
38. The Tennessee Education Association has expressed a negative opinion of the TCLP/II, III .............. SA A U D SD
39. The TCLP/II, III allows teachers to form their own career decisions ...... SA A U D SD
40. The TCLP/II, III encourages study and personal advancement .......... SA A U D SD
41. The TCLP/II, III utilizes the full potential of the teacher .......... SA A U D SD
42. The TCLP/II, III allows role definition for teachers ................ SA A U D SD
43. There is performance accountability in the TCLP/II, III .............. SA A U D SD
KEY:  
SA = STRONGLY AGREE  
A = AGREE  
U = UNSURE  
D = DISAGREE  
SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE

44. The TCLP/II, III promotes unhealthy competition and hostility ...............  
45. In reality, the TCLP/II, III represents tokenism .................................  
46. The TCLP/II, III gives teachers control over career options ..................  
47. The TCLP/II, III provides improved working conditions .......................  
48. The TCLP/II, III leads to principals displaying favoritism toward some teachers ....................................................  
49. The TCLP/II, III performance criteria are indefinite ...........................  
50. The majority of teachers want merit pay under the present conditions of the TCLP/II, III .........................................................  
51. Salary distribution should emphasize helping all teachers rather than rewarding a few, as in the TCLP/II, III .................................  
52. The TCLP/II, III increases enthusiasm for teaching ..............................  
53. The TCLP/II, III detracts from instructional efforts ............................  
54. The TCLP/II, III does not result in a burden of excessive paperwork .......  
55. The TCLP/II, III depends on politics, not merit .................................  
56. The TCLP/II, III increases worry, nervous tension, and insecurity .........  
57. The TCLP/II, III motivates teachers to higher productivity .................  
58. The TCLP/II, III gives the best teachers recognition and reward ..........  
59. There is too much bureaucratic paperwork in the TCLP/II, III ...............  
60. The TCLP/II, III improves the quality of teaching ..............................  
61. In the TCLP/II, III one must "play the game" to be successful ...............  
62. The TCLP/II, III takes too much personal time ...................................  

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, your help is appreciated!
Appendix B

Cover Letter for Statewide Survey
Dear Colleague,

I am an educator in Hamblen County. I am working on a doctoral study concerning teacher attitudes toward the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. I am conducting a large (and expensive!) sample of several hundred teachers throughout the state. You were randomly chosen to complete the enclosed survey.

Since I have over 20 years teaching experience, I know you face an overwhelming daily work load. I would, however, greatly appreciate it if you could find the time to complete and return the survey within ten days. It should take less than 15 minutes to complete and can be mailed back in the postage paid preaddressed envelope provided.

I must have a large return in order to generalize my findings to all teachers in Tennessee. This is an opportunity for you to provide input regarding the Career Ladder Program, so please participate by returning the survey promptly. Your responses will, of course, remain anonymous. If you have questions please call either myself at 615-581-8103 or Dr. Anthony DeLucia, Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, East Tennessee State University, 615-929-6134.

Sincerely,

Julia Price
Appendix C

Formula for Determining Sample Size
The formula for determining the sample size for estimating a population proportion as provided by Schaeffer, Mendenhall, and Ott (1986, p. 59) is:

\[
n = \frac{Npq}{(N-1) D + pg}
\]

where \( q = 1 - p \) and \( D = \frac{B^2}{4} \)
Appendix D

Pilot Study Cover Letter and Instrument
Dear Colleague,

I am an educator in Hamblen County. I am working on a doctoral study concerning teacher attitudes toward the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. I intend to attempt a large (and expensive!) sample of several hundred teachers throughout the state. Prior to doing so I am conducting a pilot test of the survey form which I will use. The purpose of this pilot test is to refine the survey before its final use.

Since I have over 20 years teaching experience, I know you face an overwhelming daily work load. I would, however, greatly appreciate it if you could find the time to complete and return the survey within ten days. Please help me by returning the survey promptly. It should take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Please provide your name on the form, so that I can avoid sending you another survey form during the next phase of the study. Your responses will, of course, remain anonymous. If you have questions please call either myself at 615-581-8103 or Dr. Anthony DeLucia, Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, East Tennessee State University, 615-929-6134.

Sincerely,

Julia Price
The Tennessee Career Ladder Program (Levels II and III)

NAME* ____________________________

* Your name will only be used to assist the researcher in assuring that you are not included in both the pilot study and the final study.

THIS DATA WILL BE USED TO CLASSIFY RESPONSES BY AGGREGATE DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS.

PRESENT CAREER LADDER STATUS: ____________________________

BIRTHYEAR: ____________________________

GENDER: Male ______ Female ______

RACE: White ______ Black ______ Hispanic ______ Other ______

JOB CLASSIFICATION (i.e. 3rd grade teacher) ____________________________

TOTAL YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE: ____________________________

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ATTAINED:

Bachelor's degree ______
Master's degree ______
Master's plus ______
Specialist's degree ______
Doctoral degree ______

In the past, I attempted to gain Career Ladder II or III status, but was not successful.

Yes____ No____

In the future, I plan to attempt to reach Tennessee Career Ladder levels II or III.

Yes____ No____ Unsure____

I have obtained most of my information about the Tennessee Career Ladder levels II and III, from ________________________

My overall opinion of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program is

Positive______ Negative______

Additional Comments (Optional): ____________________________
Please respond to the following statements concerning the Tennessee Career Ladder Program. All statements refer specifically to levels II and III of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program in its present form. Throughout the survey the Tennessee Career Ladder Program, Levels II and III, are referred to as TCLP/II, III.

**KEY: SA = STRONGLY AGREE**  
**A = AGREE**  
**U = UNSURE**  
**D = DISAGREE**  
**SD = STRONGLY DISAGREE**

1. The TCLP/II, III causes discord among the faculty ........................................ SA A U D SD
2. The evaluation process for the TCLP/II, III is valid ........................................ SA A U D SD
3. The administrator is apathetic to staff participation in the TCLP/II, III ................ SA A U D SD
4. The steps to reach TCLP/II, III are too complicated and hard to understand ........... SA A U D SD
5. Updated information on the TCLP/II, III is readily available ............................. SA A U D SD
6. A quota system is in place making it difficult to reach TCLP/II, III ................... SA A U D SD
7. Peers have stated that the process to reach TCLP/II, III is too difficult ............. SA A U D SD
8. The process to reach TCLP/II, III is too time consuming .................................. SA A U D SD
9. The TCLP/II, III represents more pay for more work - not merit pay ................ SA A U D SD
10. Funding for the TCLP/II, III will last on a long-term basis .............................. SA A U D SD
11. The monetary award for the TCLP/II, III is adequate ..................................... SA A U D SD
12. There is encouragement by the principal for staff participation in the TCLP/II, III ................................................................. SA A U D SD
13. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is too difficult ....................................... SA A U D SD
14. There is no long-range professional growth associated with the TCLP/II, III ........ SA A U D SD
15. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is fair .................................................. SA A U D SD
16. The TCLP/II, III does not necessarily identify better teachers .................... SA A U D SD
17. The TCLP/II, III deals with the reality of teaching ....................................... SA A U D SD
18. The TCLP/II, III is outdated ............................................................................. SA A U D SD
19. Teachers might leave teaching because of the TCLP/II, III ............................... SA A U D SD
20. The financial gain is outweighed by the negative aspects of the TCLP/II, III .... SA A U D SD
21. The TCLP/II, III concept that teacher pay should vary in proportion to teaching excellence is proper ................................................................. SA A U D SD
22. Instruction will improve via merit ratings as found in the TCLP/II, III ............ SA A U D SD
23. There is no definition of what constitutes effective teaching which can be applied to the TCLP/II, III ........................................ SA A U D SD
24. The TCLP/II, III causes the destruction of esprit de corps ............... SA A U D SD
25. The TCLP/II, III prevents individuality ..................................... SA A U D SD
26. The TCLP/II, III is a prime motivator for teachers ....................... SA A U D SD
27. There is ostracism of teachers who participate in the TCLP/II, III ...... SA A U D SD
28. The TCLP/II, III hinders the relationship between teachers and supervisors SA A U D SD
29. The TCLP/II, III does not promote teacher competency .................. SA A U D SD
30. The TCLP/II, III does not improve teacher performance .................. SA A U D SD
31. The TCLP/II, III links accountability and reward .......................... SA A U D SD
32. The TCLP/II, III isolates administrators from teachers ................. SA A U D SD
33. The TCLP/II, III amplifies differences among teachers .................. SA A U D SD
34. Good teachers are paid commensurate with their ability in the TCLP/II, III SA A U D SD
35. The Tennessee Education Association has encouraged participation in the TCLP/II, III ........................................ SA A U D SD
36. The TCLP/II, III results in professional recognition ...................... SA A U D SD
37. The TCLP/II, III is an incentive to get better qualified people to enter the teaching profession ........................................... SA A U D SD
38. The TCLP/II, III helps keep better teachers in the classroom ........... SA A U D SD
39. The TCLP/II, III is cost-effective ........................................... SA A U D SD
40. A salary based only on the amount of college preparation and teaching experience preserves mediocrity ............................... SA A U D SD
41. The TCLP/II, III lowers teacher morale .................................... SA A U D SD
42. Teaching styles differ so the TCLP/II, III evaluation is not equally fair to everyone ......................................................... SA A U D SD
43. The TCLP/II, III stifles innovation .......................................... SA A U D SD
44. The TCLP/II, III improves the image and prestige of the school system SA A U D SD
45. The TCLP/II, III is a framework for individual teachers in goal-setting for professional growth ............................................ SA A U D SD
46. The TCLP/II, III provides options for diverse work responsibilities without leaving the classroom ......................................... SA A U D SD
47. The TCLP/II, III is unworkable because the desire for wealth is not a motivation for being a teacher ................................... SA A U D SD
48. The Tennessee Education Association has expressed a negative opinion of the TCLP/II, III                      SA A U D SD
49. The TCLP/II, III allows teachers to form their own career decisions      SA A U D SD
50. The TCLP/II, III encourages study and personal advancement               SA A U D SD
51. The TCLP/II, III utilizes the full potential of the teacher               SA A U D SD
52. The TCLP/II, III allows role definition for teachers                     SA A U D SD
53. There is performance accountability in the TCLP/II, III                  SA A U D SD
54. The TCLP/II, III promotes unhealthy competition and hostility          SA A U D SD
55. In reality, the TCLP/II, III represents tokenism                         SA A U D SD
56. The TCLP/II, III ‘gives teachers control over career options’         SA A U D SD
57. The TCLP/II, III provides improved working conditions                   SA A U D SD
58. The TCLP/II, III promotes favoritism                                    SA A U D SD
59. The TCLP/II, III performance criteria are indefinite                    SA A U D SD
60. The majority of teachers want merit pay under the present conditions of the TCLP/II, III            SA A U D SD
61. Excellence of teaching cannot be purchased with extra money              SA A U D SD
62. Salary distribution should emphasize helping all teachers rather than rewarding a few, as in the TCLP/II, III     SA A U D SD
63. The TCLP/II, III increases enthusiasm for teaching                      SA A U D SD
64. The TCLP/II, III detracts from instructional efforts                   SA A U D SD
65. The TCLP/II, III does not result in a burden of excessive paperwork    SA A U D SD
66. The TCLP/II, III depends on politics, not merit                        SA A U D SD
67. The TCLP/II, III increases worry, nervous tension, and insecurity      SA A U D SD
68. The TCLP/II, III motivates teachers to higher productivity            SA A U D SD
69. The TCLP/II, III gives the best teachers recognition and reward      SA A U D SD
70. There is too much bureaucratic paperwork in the TCLP/II, III             SA A U D SD
71. The TCLP/II, III improves the quality of teaching                     SA A U D SD
72. In the TCLP/II, III one must “play the game” to be successful        SA A U D SD
73. The TCLP/II, III takes too much personal time                           SA A U D SD

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, your help is appreciated!
Appendix E
Reverse Coded Statements and Table 4
The following statements concerning the Career Ladder were stated in a positive nature on the survey and then reverse coded for data analysis. Thus the higher the mean score, the greater a barrier to Career Ladder participation.

Statement 2
Statement 5
Statement 9
Statement 12
Statement 14
Statement 15
Statement 16
Statement 19
Statement 24
Statement 27
Statement 28
Statement 29
Statement 30
Statement 31
Statement 32
Statement 36
Statement 37
Statement 39
Statement 40
Statement 41
Statement 42
Statement 43
Statement 46
Statement 47
Statement 50
Statement 52
Statement 54
Statement 57
Statement 58
Statement 60
Reverse coded as (5=1) (4=2) (2=4) (1=5).
Table 4

Mean Scores for Survey Statements 1-62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The TCLP/II, III causes discord among the faculty</td>
<td>3.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The evaluation process for the TCLP/II, III is valid (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The principal is apathetic to staff participation in the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>2.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The steps to reach TCLP/II, III are too complicated and hard to understand</td>
<td>3.338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Updated information on the TCLP/II, III is readily available (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>2.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Peers have stated that the process to reach TCLP/II, III is too difficult</td>
<td>3.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The process to reach TCLP/II, III is too time consuming</td>
<td>4.206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The TCLP/II, III represents more pay for more work - not merit pay</td>
<td>4.209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. There is encouragement by the principal for staff participation in the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is too difficult</td>
<td>3.497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. There is no long-range professional growth associated with the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>3.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The evaluation for the TCLP/II, III is fair (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.616</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
Table 4 - continued

Mean Scores for Survey Statements 1-62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. The TCLP/II, III does not necessarily identify better teachers</td>
<td>4.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The TCLP/II, III deals with the reality of teaching (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The TCLP/II, III concept that teacher pay should vary in proportion to teaching excellence is proper (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Instruction will improve via merit ratings as found in the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. There is no definition of what constitutes effective teaching which can be applied to the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>3.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The TCLP/II, III causes the destruction of esprit de corps</td>
<td>3.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The TCLP/II, III is a prime motivator for teachers (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>4.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. There is ostracism of teachers who participate in the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>2.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The TCLP/II, III hinders the relationship between teachers and principals</td>
<td>2.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. The TCLP/II, III does not promote teacher competency</td>
<td>3.892</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
Table 4 - continued

Mean Scores for Survey Statements 1-62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. The TCLP/II, III does not improve teacher performance</td>
<td>3.957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. The TCLP/II, III links accountability and reward (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The TCLP/II, III isolates administrators from teachers</td>
<td>2.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. The TCLP/II, III amplifies differences among teachers</td>
<td>2.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Good teachers are paid commensurate with their ability in the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The Tennessee Education Association has encouraged participation in the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>2.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. The TCLP/II, III is an incentive to get better qualified people to enter the teaching profession (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. The TCLP/II, III helps keep better teachers in the classroom (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. The TCLP/II, III is cost-effective (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. A salary based only on the amount of college preparation and teaching experience preserves mediocrity (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. The TCLP/II, III lowers teacher morale</td>
<td>3.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Teaching styles differ so the TCLP/II, III evaluation is not equally fair to everyone</td>
<td>4.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. The TCLP/II, III stifles innovation</td>
<td>3.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. The TCLP/II, III is a framework for individual teachers in goal-setting for professional growth (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. The TCLP/II, III provides options for diverse work responsibilities without leaving the classroom (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. The Tennessee Education Association has expressed a negative opinion of the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>2.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. The TCLP/II, III allows teachers to form their own career decisions (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. The TCLP/II, III encourages study and personal advancement (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. The TCLP/II, III utilizes the full potential of the teacher (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. The TCLP/II, III allows role definition for teachers (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.447</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43. There is performance accountability in the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. The TCLP/II, III promotes unhealthy competition and hostility</td>
<td>3.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. In reality, the TCLP/II, III represents tokenism</td>
<td>3.545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. The TCLP/II, III gives teachers control over career options (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. The TCLP/II, III provides improved working conditions (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>4.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. The TCLP/II, III leads to principals displaying favoritism toward some teachers</td>
<td>2.910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. The TCLP/II, III performance criteria are indefinite</td>
<td>3.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. The majority of teachers want merit pay under the present conditions of the TCLP/II, III (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>3.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Salary distribution should emphasize helping all teachers rather than rewarding a few, as in the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>4.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. The TCLP/II, III increases enthusiasm for teaching (Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td>4.010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
Table 4 - continued

Mean Scores for Survey Statements 1-62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (after reverse coding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53. The TCLP/II, III detracts from instructional efforts</td>
<td>3.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. The TCLP/II, III does not result in a burden of excessive paperwork</td>
<td>4.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. The TCLP/II, III depends on politics, not merit</td>
<td>3.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. The TCLP/II, III increases worry, nervous tension, and insecurity</td>
<td>4.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. The TCLP/II, III motivates teachers to higher productivity</td>
<td>3.889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. The TCLP/II, III gives the best teachers recognition and reward</td>
<td>4.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. There is too much bureaucratic paperwork in the TCLP/II, III</td>
<td>4.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. The TCLP/II, III improves the quality of teaching</td>
<td>4.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Score reflects reverse of this concept)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. In the TCLP/II, III one must &quot;play the game&quot; to be successful</td>
<td>4.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. The TCLP/II, III takes too much personal time</td>
<td>4.130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The higher the score, the more problematic is the concept presented in the statement in encouraging Career Ladder participation. A high score indicates the concept presented in the statement is a barrier to Career Ladder Level II/II participation.
VITA

JULIA JONES PRICE

Personal Data: Date of Birth: December 28, 1945
Place of Birth: Maryville, Tennessee

Education:
Public Schools, Newport, Tennessee
Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tennessee; elementary education, B.A., 1966
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; elementary education, M.A., 1972
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; supervision and administration, Ed.D., 1994

Professional Experience:
Teacher, Northport Elementary School; Newport, Tennessee, 1967-1968
Assistant Principal, Alpha Elementary School; Morristown, Tennessee, 1993
Principal, Alpha Elementary School, Morristown, Tennessee, 1994
Adjunct Faculty, Carson-Newman College; Jefferson City, Tennessee, 1990-1994

Honors and Awards:
Career Ladder III, 1984
Hamblen County Teacher of the Year, 1986

Professional Memberships:
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
American Association of University Women
Professional Educators of Tennessee
Kappa Delta Pi