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A COMPARISON OF ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARD
THE CONCEPT OF CAREER LADDERS FOR TEACHERS

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty
University of Nebraska
at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Harlan C. Rimmerman

April, 1985

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FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist in Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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To all who gave their time, effort, and love--thanks.

H.C.R.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Education, like any facet of the business world, has problems. Some of these problems, such as financial obligations, are major. Some, such as a lost library book, are minor. Regardless, there remains many problems.

In today's educational society, the common perception is that teachers are happy when best left alone. However, there is a growing feeling that teachers feel very isolated, have no way of moving up the career ladder, and fear the process of supervision and evaluation. Chapman and Lowther, in their article "Teacher Satisfaction with Teaching," explained that "teachers want to learn and be motivated. We must increase their job satisfaction, recognize accomplishments, and provide for change and challenge."¹

In order to probe this problem, a threefold examination is needed. The first segment--that of isolation--seems to be a very critical problem. When the beginning teacher first starts, everyone offers to help, but few carry through. There is always the proverbial "if you need anything just ask." Yet the beginning teacher is placed into a void called a classroom and is told, "do a good job and we will leave you alone"--the "we" being teachers and administrators. During

¹David Chapman and Malcolm A. Lowther, "Teacher Satisfaction with Teaching," Journal of Educational Research, 75(4) (March/April, 1982), 241-247.

the day, the teacher spends six to eight hours in intensive interaction with students. This goes on day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year. Very soon the teacher may feel isolated; after three or four years, the "burnout" process begins. The television special, "To Save Our Schools," told the viewing public that "teachers are burning out because they don't get support. They are placed in classrooms--isolation--and no one helps them. After five years, they burn out."² Isolation can be cruel. It can create a feeling of loneliness, a feeling of lack of support, and a feeling that no one really cares.

Coupled with the isolation is the problem, "where do I go from here?" A teacher has a choice of going into administration or remaining a classroom teacher. What about the teacher who does not want to go into administration, yet wants a higher salary? The teacher who remains a classroom teacher has only the standard increments to look forward to, or the teacher can spend his or her money to obtain more graduate hours to move laterally on the schedule.

A problem exists in the profession. Teachers have little opportunity to move up the career ladder. In most school districts, a career ladder does not exist. The problem then is that teachers have nowhere to move, and often excellent teachers are promoted out of the classroom where they are in reality also needed.

²A.B.C. Television, "To Save Our Schools," September 4, 1984.

Another aspect of the problem deals with supervision and evaluation. Teachers often feel that asking for help is a sign of weakness. Consequently, they will not ask for that help because of the fear of being "written up" in the evaluation report. Too often the teacher views the evaluations by principals as something to fear, rather than the opportunity to improve. Part of this fallacy is the principal or supervisor may in reality be seeing an atypical lesson. The presence of the administrator may be creating a superficial environment.

The master teacher could be an answer to these problems. A qualified master teacher could help relieve the feelings of isolation by being a frequent visitor, assistant, or resource to the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher and the master teacher could work together to solve problems and help create new and exciting lessons. The master teacher could also bring in supplemental materials or just be there to lend a friendly ear. Another problem that could be solved by the creation of the master teacher would be the possibility for the classroom teacher to move up. It could be that step up the career ladder that brings added satisfaction, money, and feeling of accomplishment. This position would also be a move up the career ladder without getting into administration and without leaving the classroom.

Finally, the master teacher could help solve the problem of fear of evaluation. If a classroom teacher could ask a master teacher for guidance and help without the fear of being written up, the classroom teacher would be more inclined to ask for help. The fear

factor would be eliminated. By asking an experienced master teacher, the classroom teacher could solve many typical problems and try new solutions. With a feeling of confidence, the classroom teacher could improve.

The above paragraphs give some solutions and suggestions as to what the master teacher could do. The success of the problem will hinge greatly on the people selected to serve as the master teacher.

Problem

The problems of teacher isolation, absence of a career ladder, and need for clinical or collegial assistance appear to be continuing problems. These problems may be reduced by having collegial staff members assist the teacher. The problem is to assess teacher and administrator perceptions of the career ladder program, to see if the problem of isolation could be solved, and to provide a career ladder and help with supervision and collegial support.

The purpose of this study was to compare principals' and teachers' support for a professional career program.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the Omaha Public School District, Omaha, Nebraska. The career program questionnaire was given to sixty certified teachers and ten principals. Emphasis was given to the elementary level.

Methodology

The following procedures were used to determine the perceived need for a career ladder program:

1. Review the literature and identify salient teacher problems and concerns.
2. List these problems and concerns in a questionnaire.
3. Incorporate opportunities for respondents to identify a hierarchy position or alternative personnel who could best assist the teacher to solve the respective problems and concerns.
4. Identify the sample of teachers in a larger metropolitan school district to identify problems and to judge the intensity of the problems and concerns.
5. Administer a questionnaire to the administrators to assess their perceptions of the help that teachers would like and who could be most helpful.
6. On the basis of the questionnaire, a career ladder was identified for acquiring skills for professional competence.
7. From the questionnaire, the need for a continuing colloquial support was assessed.

Definition of Terms

In order to maintain consistency throughout the study, the following definitions were used:

Administrator. A person whose position is not directly related to an academic position. This person is answerable for his or her responsibilities either directly to the chief administrator or the board of education.

Supervisor. A person whose position is with the department of instruction. This person is responsible for implementation of instructional practices and also has the responsibility for evaluation of teachers. This person is answerable to his or her chief administrator.

Master teacher. A teacher who has unique qualities of leadership, knowledge of subjects, helpfulness, and experience. This position is a non-supervisory position. It is primarily a position to help other teachers become better teachers.

Career ladder. A program that pays classroom teachers to act as mentors to other classroom teachers. It is not the creation of another level of administration.

Organization of the Study

This study was arranged in the following manner: Chapter I, Introduction; Chapter II, Review of Literature; Chapter III, Methods and Procedures; Chapter IV, Findings; and Chapter V, Recommendations and Conclusions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Problems of the Beginning Teacher

A teacher, like every other human being, is bound to have understandable and natural insecurities, especially when just beginning to apply ideas about teaching. The beginning teacher must learn to relate positively and effectively to a variety of individual personalities that are new to the teacher.

Beginning teachers also face the problems of class size, co-curricular activities, homework, school duties, learning textbooks, parent-teacher meetings, evaluation, getting along with other staff members, learning about the community, schedules, and many other factors.

New teachers are sent to teach with very little backing from administrators and fellow teachers. They are usually too busy with their own jobs to help. "Few coaches would sit in their offices while the team is practicing or playing the game itself" ¹

Clearly, discipline is one of the major worries of the new teacher. And little wonder. On the success of the teacher's efforts to build relationships of warmth, respect, and trust will depend the quality of the control, the excellence of teaching, and the opportunity


¹Karolyn J. Synder, "Instructional Leadership for Productive Schools," Educational Leadership, 39 (February, 1983), p. 34.

to grow. Behavior problems that challenge the relationship between teacher and child often grow out of a curriculum which does not make sense to the learner. The problem is often that²the curriculum experiences are trivial and academic.

Administrators and staff members have an obligation to work with new teachers. So many of these fresh graduates have innovative new ideas to try, problems to solve, or just need someone to talk to. "If schools are to become more effective, the investment in teacher effectiveness and proficiency must increase."³

This is a problem that even the public has picked up on. From the A.B.C. television special "To Save Our Schools," the reporter said: "Teachers are burning out because they don't get support. They are placed in classrooms--isolation--and no one helps them. After five years, they burn out."⁴

Problems of the Veteran Teacher

 The beginning teacher is not the only one with problems. The veteran teacher also faces many of the same problems, plus others that develop as time goes on. These problems include isolation, lack of socialization, lack of change in routine, being unable to move up the

²J. Merrill Hansen, "School Effectiveness = Teacher Effectiveness," The High School Journal, 36 (February, 1981), p. 223.

³Ibid., p. 226.

⁴A.B.C. Television, "To Save Our Schools," September 4, 1984.

career ladder, and an overall feeling of frustration that no one cares.

In an article by Chapman and Lowther, entitled "Teacher's Satisfaction with Teaching," the authors relate many of these problems to the reader.

An examination of the teaching career suggests that teaching is different from many other careers in all three aspects. The initial image of teaching is that teachers have substantial autonomy to run their classrooms as they wish. This is often not the case. Teachers are cut off from their colleagues much of the day. Within their classrooms many teachers operate within a rather complex set of expectations about what and how much material they must cover. What initially appears as autonomy is felt by many teachers as isolation (Chapman and Hutcheson, 1981; Sarasan, 1971). Job challenge is limited as teachers may be teaching the same courses over and over. Teaching new students each year poses some challenge; yet, after several years, even that challenge can dull and give way to routine. Last, financial compensation for teachers tends to be tightly tied to seniority. Teachers know what they will earn and long service brings limited salary increases. Special performance or merit is seldom recognized through financial reward.⁵

Dr. John Goodlad examined some teacher problems in an article entitled, "A Study of Schooling: Some Implications for School Improvement." In this article, Goodlad suggested some improvements for education. He made that point that:

. . . left alone, things tend to stagnate and dis-integrate. Teachers are relatively isolated from one another and tend not to receive the peer support. Into each school we must build a continuing attention

⁵David W. Chapman and Malcolm A. Lowther, "Teachers' Satisfaction with Teaching," Journal of Educational Research, 72 (March/April, 1982), p. 242.

to instruction and curriculum. This does not occur when teachers are drawn out of schools as individuals to engage willy-nilly in workshops and courses only to return to the isolation of their classroom.⁶

Even the nonprofessional magazine Newsweek, in an article entitled "Can the Schools Be Saved?" wrote that "the quality of teaching across the nation is woefully inadequate."⁷

Use of the Career Ladder

Up to this point, everything written has been negative. Yet, education has many positive aspects and the creation of the career ladder can lead to many positive improvements.

The career ladder has many different names in today's educational jargon. Some call the career ladder differentiated staffing, merit pay, or the master teacher program. Regardless of what it is called, the career ladder is a program, not a creation of another level of administration, but a program that pays classroom teachers to act as mentors to other classroom teachers.

Instead of relying solely on tenure and academic degrees, career ladders incorporate parts of both differential- and incentive-pay plans to provide higher salaries to teachers who take on new responsibilities as they advance. These extra duties may include teaching in a high-priority location,

⁶John Goodlad, "A Study of Schooling: Some Implications for School Improvement," Phi Delta Kappan, 73 (April, 1983).

⁷"Can the Schools Be Saved?" Newsweek, April, 1983, p. 50.

training new teachers or taking on administrative duties.⁸

The career ladder is a topic which was very "hot" during the early 1970's, then seemed to fade away. Then in 1983, with the Nation at Risk report, the career ladder once again became an issue. During the latter part of 1983, the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives issued a report on merit pay. In this report the committee asked:

What statement does our nation make when podiatrists are required to study longer, face much more vigorous career entrance tests, and are paid considerably more than teachers? What statement do we make when we offer teachers few incentives and inadequate compensation but constantly increase their responsibilities? What statement does our nation make when we fail to convey the simple message to students, their parents and teachers that education is important?⁹

Yet the key educational role played by teachers suggests that the most rapid improvement in education may be made by upgrading that profession. Existing or proposed plans of performance-based pay take two general forms: merit pay and a structured advanced system, sometimes called a career ladder.¹⁰

One state that has taken the lead in the creation of the career ladder is Tennessee. This state has set up a system called the Tennessee Teacher Career Ladder. In a speech given to the Harvard Education Conference in November of 1983, Beecher E. Clapp explained how the program works:

⁸Charles J. Starpoli and George W. Rumsey, "A Career Ladder Preparation Model Designed to Implement Differentiated Staffing Patterns," The Journal of Teacher Education, 23 (Winter, 1972), p. 465.

⁹Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Merit Pay Task Force Report (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), p. 2.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 4.

The Master Teacher Program has three major components. The first component of the program is in teacher education. The second component is a concern for the beginning teacher. The plans include a probationary year whereby the beginning teacher will teach under the supervision of two master teachers. At the end of the year, the candidate's evaluation, based on the criteria established, will be reviewed by the State Certification Commission which will issue or deny initial certification. Once the teacher has been certified, he/she will begin an apprentice period of three years. During that period, the teacher will again be assigned to master teachers who will be responsible for supervision and assessment of teacher deficiencies and will provide assistance in an effort to meet the competencies required. If an apprentice teacher is employed at the conclusion of three years, the State Certification Commission will issue or deny a certificate for entry into the first level, the professional level, of the career ladder. And that brings me to the third component of the Master Teacher Program. A career ladder is provided which shall be designed to promote staff development among teachers and reward with substantial pay supplements those teachers evaluated as outstanding and who accept additional responsibilities.¹¹

The career ladder can do much to help improve education.

Many articles published on this subject list the advantages of this type of program. On such article was written by Roy A. Edelfelt who stated:

Reorganizing school faculties has appeal because it satisfies to many good causes:

1. It builds in a training ladder recognizing the necessity for continuous professional development spanning preservice training and running through career long development.

¹¹Beecher E. Clapp, "Tennessee Teacher Career Ladder" (Paper presented at the Harvard Education Conference, Cambridge, Massachusetts, November 22, 1983), p. 3.

2. It provides for more choice by teachers of the roles they might take.
3. It establishes career patterns in teaching, making promotion in teaching possible.
4. It breaks the lock-step salary schedule and provides new ways to encourage able people to remain in teaching.
5. It makes clear that changes in staffing also require modification in curriculum and in the use of time and resources.¹²

Use of the Master Teacher

Many articles written about the career ladder mention the master teacher as part of this program. Since so much of the literature is written to include the master teacher, a section is included in this chapter.

The American Association of School Administrators wrote in their book, Organizing for Improved Instruction:

We are serious as never before about finding and using ways to teach and help every teacher. The individual teacher has a professional responsibility for curriculum and instructional improvement. The organization must focus on the stimulation and support of the teacher in the classroom.¹³

In his book, Controversies in Education, Dr. Dwight Allen explained the need for the master teacher:

Teachers are individuals, with diverse capacities, professional skills, and backgrounds. Furthermore, in today's school an ever increasing array of specialized

¹²Roy A. Edelfelt, "Differentiated Staffing: Where Are We?" National Elementary Principal, 52 (January, 1972), p. 46.

¹³American Association of School Administrators, Organizing for Improved Instruction (Washington, D.C.: AASA, 1963), p. 9.

functions and tasks are described by the word teaching. To effectively utilize this type of human resource and reverse the flow of good teachers away from students, a redefinition of the teaching role is required.

Differentiated staffing is an important step in this direction. Its basic premises are simple. First, teachers are not interchangeable parts: different teachers have different abilities which they should be allowed to use to the best advantage. Second, teachers are professionals. They must be allowed to advance in responsibility and compensation without leaving the classroom forever, and they must be assisted in gaining new skills necessary for such advancement. Finally, teachers are not the privates in the education army. They should have an active role as partners in the planning and decision making that affects them, the students they serve, and the schools in which they work.

There are allegedly dozens of specific differentiated staffing models which are now tried in schools throughout the United States. One of the most common uses a vertical hierarchy of teaching roles. At the bottom of this ladder is the beginning teacher, who receives a relatively small annual salary for full time classroom work under the close supervision of a more experienced instructor. At the top is the master teacher, who divides his/her time between actual teaching and specialized functions such as curriculum development, diagnostic activities, or in-service training of colleagues, at a salary level at least four times higher than that of the beginner.¹⁴

What will the master teacher do? The key word is helpfulness.

In the book by Dr. Ronald C. Doll entitled Leadership to Improve Schools, the author tells that "helpfulness has three prominent uses in schools: orienting new personnel, assisting teachers, and carrying some of the burden of problem solving. Every teacher has professional

¹⁴Dwight Allen and Jeffrey Hecht, Controversies in Education (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: W. B. Saunders Company, 1974), p. 96.

problems, but many insecure teachers are unwilling to admit that they have them."¹⁵

By using the master teacher, the insecure or unmotivated teacher can be helped. In the book, The Master Teachers and the Art of Teaching, the author reminds one that "teachers must not only be adept as instructors, but they should be eager learners themselves."¹⁶

The master teacher would be an individual who would be responsible for helping fellow teachers in all aspects of the education process. Dr. Benjamin Bloom offered some suggestions for selection of the personnel to be used as the master teacher:

The master teacher needs to be very effective in communicating confidence. This person needs to be able to help teachers set goals and to help them realize and determine what is necessary to reach these goals. At all times, the master teacher is constantly searching for the unique characteristics of the individual teacher and help them relate these to the larger field of teaching.¹⁷

The master teacher needs to be an exceptional person. That person must be one who loves teaching, who wants to see the profession improve, and one who has the experience and know-how to teach and relate to others. In the book, Expanding the Self: Personal Growth

¹⁵Ronald C. Doll, Leadership to Improve Schools (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1972), p. 50.

¹⁶J. C. Coleman, The Master Teachers and the Art of Teaching (New York: Random House, 1982), p. 142.

¹⁷Benjamin Bloom, "The Master Teacher," Phi Delta Kappan, 68 (June, 1982), p. 667.

for Teachers, the author gives twelve points to help the master teacher facilitate learning with other teachers. They are:

- 1) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which encourages the individual's discovery of the personal meaning of ideas;
- 2) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which encourages teachers to be active;
- 3) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which emphasizes the uniquely personal and subjective nature of learning;
- 4) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere in which differences are good and desirable;
- 5) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which constantly recognizes teachers' rights to make mistakes;
- 6) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which tolerates ambiguity;
- 7) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere in which evaluation is a cooperative process, which emphasizes self-evaluation;
- 8) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which encourages openness of self rather than concealment of self;
- 9) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere in which teachers are encouraged to trust in themselves as well as external sources;
- 10) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere in which teachers feel they are respected;
- 11) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere in which teachers feel they are accepted;
- 12) learning is facilitated in an atmosphere which permits confrontation.¹⁸

The master teacher has a huge job to accomplish. By following the above twelve steps, the master teachers should be helpful.

The Role of the Master Teacher and the Administration

The master teacher should have a different position than that of the principal, supervisor, or department head. This position

¹⁸Angelo V. Borg and Gerald J. Pine, Expanding the Self; Personal Growth for Teachers (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1971), p. 114.

should not be one where the individual has to worry about or spend time evaluating teachers. That is a job to be left to the principal or supervisors. Unfortunately

. . . teachers resist a principal's assistance not only because it may conflict with the "help" they want, but for a more fundamental reason. For teachers to seek or accept help is to admit that they have insufficient power to help themselves. This declaration can be threatening. Beginning teachers may see this admission as placing their new job in jeopardy. Experienced teachers, particularly if they have created an image of self-sufficiency and strength, may not want to appear weak or unable to cope with problems.¹⁹

These then are the reasons that the master teacher should be looked on as a helper. The master teacher should be one who offers help, assistance, training, and moral support without the fear of evaluation or supervisory power. The master teacher needs to be a person who is respected because he or she is there to help and work with teachers and students and to be recognized as an expert teacher.

The position of master teacher can help solve another problem. This position can be one that enables a teacher to move up the career ladder without leaving the classroom. Secretary of Education, T. H. Bell, in his article "Building a Better Teaching Profession," stated that there is need to

. . . provide an opportunity for the most outstanding teachers to earn a new distinction beyond the level of the regular teaching rank. We need to establish in American society a new position of master teacher.

¹⁹C. E. Pichhardt, "Supervisors and the Power of Help," Educational Leadership, 38 (April, 1981), p. 532.

That new position should be a much-esteemed and sought-after distinction among teachers. It should provide a step beyond the ranks of beginning teacher and regular teacher, and it should command a salary that is commensurate with other salaries that recognize accomplishments of great worth to American society.²⁰

Currently, there is a tendency to take the excellent teachers out of the classroom and reward them by making them administrators. Our public schools say to our teacher something like this: "If you want to get ahead, get out of the classroom. The bigger salaries, the greater prestige, and the more important positions are in administration."

There are many possibilities and solutions that can be created by the career ladder and the master teacher position. This chapter has attempted to bring some of those to the reader's attention. In the following chapters, the readers will have the opportunity to look at some research and determine, along with the author, the need for a career ladder.

²⁰T. H. Bell, "Building a Better Teaching Profession," American Education, 13 (March, 1983), p. 3.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN

The purpose of this investigation was to examine the comparative views between administrators and teachers concerning the establishment of a career ladder.

In reviewing the literature, certain problems kept appearing that reflected concerns of educators. Some of the problems were isolation, no support or recognition, and not enough time to teach. Coupled with these problems was the need for advancement or moving up on a career ladder. Teachers seemed to need something toward which to work. Classroom teachers are aware that some in their ranks can move up to principalships, but only after getting advanced degrees in the field of educational administration. Besides the principalship, there are very few positions to which teachers can be promoted.

In order to discover the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward a career ladder, a questionnaire was designed to enable those respondents to specify problems and concerns and, also, to indicate who would help with those concerns. By designing such a questionnaire, the results would show whether or not teachers and administrators felt there was a need for the establishment of a career ladder.

The questionnaire was devised to identify problems and concerns of teachers and to allow them to identify who could help them with these concerns. In order to create such a questionnaire

the Chicago Stress Survey was used as a major source of questions (see Appendix A). The Chicago Survey was done three years ago to discover problems the Chicago teachers were having during the school year. Previously, in another study, the teaching staff at Mount View Elementary School, in the Omaha Public Schools, was given the same survey and responded very similarly to the Chicago teachers (see Appendix B). Additionally, other questions were added by the author that also dealt with problems of the teacher. There was a total of thirty questions. (The questionnaire with the instructions can be found in Appendix C.)

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first three sections were to identify how serious the problem was felt to be. The fourth section was to determine who could help the teacher with that problem. If a respondent answered that the problem was a serious or a somewhat serious problem, the respondent would then select a person from the choices given on the questionnaire who could help solve that problem. Those choices were: principal, supervisor, master teacher, grade level chairperson, colleague, intern, or aide. By using this column, results could be tabulated concerning the need for a career ladder. Although the Omaha Public Schools did not have some of these positions at the time of the study, teachers were allowed to respond as if that position did exist. These choices were given as potential positions that could be used as the basis for the creation of a career ladder.

Teachers and administrators selected to respond to the questionnaire were randomly selected from the Omaha Public Schools. The

majority were from the elementary level. Fifty questionnaires were sent to the teachers--forty to elementary teachers and ten to junior high teachers. The other ten were sent to eight elementary and two junior high principals. The distribution of the questionnaire is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Distribution of Questionnaire to Teachers and Principals
in the Omaha Public Schools

		Number Sent
<u>Teachers</u>		
Elementary		
Kindergarten		3
Grade one		6
Grade two		5
Grade three		8
Grade four		7
Grade five		6
Grade six		6
	Total	40
	Junior high	10
	<u>Principals</u>	10
	Total	60

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

This study assessed the comparative views of teachers and administrators toward a career ladder. The questionnaire used is described in two sections. The first section discusses the items that were considered as problems and concerns of the teachers. The second section discusses the feelings and selections as to who could help solve these problems and whether or not there is a need for the establishment of a career ladder.

From the sixty questionnaires mailed to the teachers and administrators of the Omaha Public Schools, the following were returned:

34 of 45 from elementary teachers (75.5%)
5 of 5 from junior high teachers (100%)
5 of 8 from elementary principals (62.5%)
0 of 2 from junior high principals (0.0%)

Forty-four of the 60 questionnaires sent were returned for a 73.33 percent response rate (see Appendix C).

Problems and Concerns of Teachers

Thirty-four of the 45 teachers who were sent questionnaires responded, for a return rate of 75.5 percent which was 77.27 percent of the total responses received.

The responses listed by the elementary teachers are responses that received more than a score of fifty percent in the problem categories. Assigning a value of five to those concerns marked as a "serious problem," a three to "somewhat of a problem," and a one to

"not a serious problem," the thirty statements were ranked by the total number of points each statement received. The results of the elementary teachers' rankings are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Problems and Concerns as Identified by the
Elementary School Teachers

Rank	Question Number	Question	Points
1	15	Planning time	132
2	28	Time to relax	118
3	25	Time for grading	112
4	14	Filling out forms	108
5	8	Teaching below average students	104
6	13	Time to teach	96
7	19	Chance for advancement	92
8	30	Wide ability range	90
9	26	Recognition for good work	88
10	29	Attitude and behavior of some teachers	82
11	9	Maintaining student records	80
11	1	Classroom management and discipline	80
13	10	Supervising students outside the classroom	78

The results of the junior high school teachers' rankings are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Problems and Concerns as Identified by the
Junior High School Teachers

Rank	Question Number	Question	Points
1	18	Teaching below average students	15
1	14	Filling out forms	15
3	1	Classroom management or discipline	13
3	10	Supervising students outside the classroom	13
3	26	Recognition of good work	13
3	27	Recognition of good teaching	13
3	29	Attitude and behavior of some teachers	13
8	13	Time to teach	11
8	24	High amount of frustration	11

All five of the junior high teachers who were sent questionnaires responded, for a return rate of 100.00 percent which was 11.36 percent of the total responses.

The results of the elementary school principals' rankings are listed in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Problems and Concerns as Identified by the
Elementary School Principals

Rank	Question Number	Question	Points
1	29	Attitude and behavior of some of the teachers	17
1	30	Wide ability range	17
3	1	Classroom management and discipline	15
3	13	Time to teach	15
3	28	Time to relax	15
6	14	Filling out forms	13
7	15	Planning time	13
8	7	The first week of school	11
8	8	Teaching below average students	11

Five of the eight elementary school principals who were sent questionnaires responded, for a return rate of 62.5 percent which was 11.36 percent of the total response.

The combined responses of teachers and administrators to the problems and concerns that were identified are shown in Table 5. There was a total of 44 teachers and administrators who identified the problems and concerns of teachers.

TABLE 5
Problems and Concerns as Identified by Teachers and Administrators (n=44)

Rank	Question Number	Question	Points
1	15	Planning time	154
2	28	Time to relax	142
3	25	Time for grading	130
4	8	Teaching below average students	128
5	13	Time to teach	126
6	14	Filling out forms	126
7	30	Wide ability range	114
8	19	Chance for advancement	112
9	1	Classroom management or discipline	108
10	29	Attitude and behavior of some teachers	106
11	10	Supervising students outside the classroom	100

Help in Solving Problems

The second group of responses dealt with the identification of who could help in solving the problems and concerns identified in the study. In the following tables, selections are listed for all thirty statements so that the need for a career ladder could be assessed.

"Who can help" as identified by secondary teachers is shown in Table 6. "Who can help" as identified by elementary school teachers is shown in Table 7. "Who can help" as identified by elementary principals is shown in Table 8.

Discussion

Several areas will be considered when evaluating the data. Comparisons of the responses to the thirty statements will be examined first. The second part looks at the column marked "who can help," and how this column shows views given by educators toward the career ladder.

In reviewing the items selected by the elementary teachers as major problems and concerns (those selected by 50% or more), the results showed that this group marked nearly half of the items as major concerns or problems (13 of 30). Those items selected which seemed to affect this group of teachers were mostly related to the problem of time. Lack of time for planning, relaxing, grading, teaching, and filling out forms, as well as teaching below average students, ranked as the top six items selected by the elementary teachers.

TABLE 6
 "Who Can Help" as Identified by Secondary School Teachers

Question	"Who Can Help"	Question	"Who Can Help"
1	2 principals 1 master teacher	15	2 principals
2	1 principal 1 aide	16	1 grade level chairman
3	1 principal 1 grade level chairman	17	No response
4	1 supervisor	18	1 principal
5	1 supervisor	19	2 principals
6	No response	20	No response
7	1 principal	21	No response
8	1 supervisor 2 master teachers 1 intern	22	No response
9	2 aides	23	1 colleague
10	2 principals 1 colleague	24	1 principal 1 supervisor 1 aide
11	1 master teacher	25	1 principal 1 aide
12	1 master teacher	26	2 principals 1 supervisor
13	1 principal 1 master teacher 2 aides	27	2 principals
14	2 principals 1 master teacher 2 aides	28	1 aide
15	2 principals	29	2 principals 1 colleague
		30	2 master teachers 1 intern

TABLE 7

"Who Can Help" as Identified by Elementary School Teachers

Question	"Who Can Help"	Question	"Who Can Help"
1	12 principals 2 supervisors 3 master teachers 3 colleagues	12	1 principal 4 master teachers 2 colleagues 1 intern
2	7 principals 7 supervisors	13	11 principals 4 supervisors 1 master teacher 1 colleague 3 aides
3	8 principals 5 supervisors	14	10 principals 1 supervisor 2 colleagues 1 intern 9 aides
4	7 principals 5 supervisors 2 master teachers	15	12 principals 2 supervisors 1 master teacher 2 colleagues 1 aide
5	3 principals 3 supervisors	16	7 principals 4 supervisors 2 colleagues 2 interns
6	1 principal 1 supervisor 1 master teacher	17	6 principals 4 supervisors 2 colleagues 2 interns
7	4 supervisors 1 master teacher 3 colleagues 1 intern 5 aides	18	4 principals 1 supervisor 1 master teacher
8	2 principals 8 supervisors 4 master teachers 2 colleagues 1 intern 7 aides	19	8 principals 2 supervisors 1 master teacher
9	5 principals 2 colleagues 2 interns 10 aides	20	3 principals 3 supervisors 1 master teacher 1 colleague
10	5 principals 2 interns 13 aides		
11	7 principals 1 master teacher 1 colleague 1 aide		

TABLE 7 (continued)

Question	"Who Can Help"	Question	"Who Can Help"
21	4 principals 1 master teacher 1 grade level chairman 1 colleague	26	10 principals 1 supervisor 1 master teacher 2 colleagues
22	7 principals 1 supervisor 1 master teacher	27	11 principals 1 supervisor 3 master teachers 1 colleague
23	4 principals 1 supervisor 1 master teacher 1 colleague	28	10 principals 1 supervisor 1 grade level chairman 3 colleagues 2 interns 4 aides
24	6 principals 2 supervisors 1 master teacher 6 colleagues 1 intern	29	10 principals 2 supervisors 3 master teachers 3 colleagues
25	7 principals 1 supervisor 1 master teacher 1 colleague 1 intern 8 aides	30	7 principals 4 supervisors 4 master teachers 3 colleagues 3 aides

TABLE 8
 "Who Can Help" as Identified by Elementary Principals

Question	"Who Can Help"	Question	"Who Can Help"
1	4 principals	16	2 principals
2	2 principals	17	1 principal
3	1 principal 1 supervisor	18	1 principal
4	1 principal	19	1 principal
5	No response	20	1 principal
6	1 principal	21	1 master teacher
7	1 principal 2 master teachers	22	1 colleague
8	3 principals	23	1 colleague
9	1 principal	24	1 principal
10	1 principal	25	1 principal
11	No response	26	1 principal
12	1 principal	27	1 principal
13	3 principals 1 master teacher	28	1 colleague
14	2 principals	29	2 principals
15	3 principals	30	1 principal 1 supervisor

Immediately following these selections was the item, "chance for advancement." Ranked as the seventh item selected, this group of teachers seemed to be indicating this as a concern. In breaking down the results of this one item from the questionnaire, ten teachers selected this question as a "serious problem" and nine teachers selected the response as "somewhat of a problem." These figures represented 65 percent of the total responses for that statement.

The other ranked statements that were selected mostly dealt with the actual teaching process and problems connected with teaching. Some examples selected were: "wide ability range," "maintaining student records," "classroom management and discipline," and "supervising students outside the classroom." The final items selected dealt with the behavior of other teachers and wanting recognition for good work.

The junior high teachers ranked only seven of the thirty statements as problems or concerns. This group indicated that their major problems seemed to be in classroom teaching, rather than time, as selected by the elementary teachers. The junior high teachers selected "teaching below average students," "classroom management or discipline," and "supervising students outside the classroom" as some of their major concerns. "Filling out forms" and "recognition of their work" were both selected as problems by this group. The "chance for advancement" was not selected as a major problem or concern. Only one teacher picked this as a "serious problem," and one marked the statement

"somewhat of a problem."

These results indicate that junior high teachers were more concerned with actual teaching problems and getting some additional support. Concerning "advancement," it appears this item was a low priority for this group. Another interesting observation is that the junior high teachers did not indicate they had as many problems as the elementary teachers. Only six of the statements selected by the elementary teachers were selected by the junior high teachers: (1) "classroom management or discipline" (1); (2) "teaching below average students" (8); (3) "supervising students outside the classroom" (10); (4) "time to teach" (13); (5) "recognition for good work" (26); and (6) "attitude and behavior of some teachers" (29).

The elementary principals also selected nine items that were major problems and concerns. It is interesting to note that as a group, the principals selected statements not marked as frequently by the two groups of teachers. The principals indicated that the "attitude of some teachers" and "wide ability range" in the classroom were their selections as the most serious problems. Following these choices were "classroom management or discipline," followed by four items concerning lack of time. The final items selected dealt with the "first week of school" and "teaching below average students." This group also seemed to indicate that "chance for advancement" was not a problem. Only two principals picked this statement as "somewhat of a problem."

In comparing the principals' responses to the elementary teachers, only the following items were listed by both groups: (1) classroom management or discipline (1); (2) teaching below average students (8); (3) time to teach (13); and (4) attitudes and behavior of some teachers (29).

The junior high teachers and elementary principals selected five of the same items: (1) classroom management or discipline (1); (2) teaching below average students (8); (3) time to teach (13); (4) filling out forms (14); and (5) attitudes and behaviors of some teachers (29).

These results indicate that principals and teachers had different feelings about problems and concerns of teachers. There seemed to be different areas of concerns between elementary and junior high teachers. These differences may be attributed to the age of the students and the amount of planning time for the day. Only the elementary teachers selected "chance for advancement" as a major concern.

As a total group, there were eleven items selected as major problems. Due to the weight of the questionnaire, the responses of the elementary teachers seemed to speak for the total response. The most frequently selected statements had to do with adequate time and management of students.

Item 19, "chance for advancement," was ranked eighth out of the eleven common selections. From the total tally of 44 responses, 11 respondents selected this item as a "serious problem," and 12 selected the response "somewhat of a problem." This represented 52.0

of the total responses.

The discussion now focuses on who could help with these problems. This facet is very important to this study because these selections show whether or not there is a perceived need for a career ladder.

In considering these results, it is necessary to look at all the responses that received marks in the first two columns. These tallies indicate who could help and who the educators felt most comfortable working with. These selections also indicate whether or not additional personnel are needed in the system.

For the responses of the elementary teachers, all thirty of the statements had some tallies marked in the column, "who could help." The responses indicate that in twenty-five of the statements, the principal was the person selected to help with the problem. In the other five, three chose the supervisor, one the master teacher, and one the aide. It should be noted that in seven of the twenty-five responses where the principal was selected, the supervisor was a very close second. The master teacher was selected in twenty-one of the responses, although as stated, this choice was only selected on item 12, "lesson plans" as the majority choice.

The junior high teachers marked twenty-five of the thirty items in the "who could help" column. Their responses seemed to differ somewhat from the elementary teachers. Of the twenty-five responses, fourteen selected the principal, two selected the supervisor, four selected the master teacher, one the grade level chairperson, one a colleague, and three the aide. Those selecting the master teacher

marked this choice for items 8, "teaching below average students"; 11, "change in duties"; 12, "lesson plans;" and 30, "wide ability range."

The elementary principals indicated the least variety of choices of the three groups, but as with the other two groups, the principals selected themselves as the person to be most helpful to the teachers. The master teacher was mentioned only twice in their selections as a person who could help.

At this point, a discussion of item 19, "chance for advancement" should be singled out. Since this item was the main focus of this study, a look at these specific responses to the statement needs to be taken.

The elementary teachers selected the principal as the person who could help most with this concern (18 responses). The supervisor received two responses and the master teacher one. The junior high teacher listed two responses to this statement, both selecting the principal. Teachers and principals both seemed to indicate in this study that the principal was the person who could best help with advancement of the teacher. The responses also indicated that teachers and principals saw no need to establish a career ladder to help with their problems or give them the opportunity to advance.

The respondents in the survey indicated that isolation was also a minor problem. The literature indicated that isolation is a major cause for job burnout and other problems. Yet, 79.0 percent of the respondents indicated that isolation was not a problem.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine comparative views of administrators and teachers toward a career ladder.

The questionnaire administered to teachers and administrators allowed them to state their attitudes and concerns and to suggest who could help them with their problems. The questionnaire, also, provided data as to whether or not a career ladder was needed and would be supported. Question nineteen of the questionnaire was primarily designed to gather information about the career ladder.

The results of the questionnaire indicated that the selected teachers and administrators in the Omaha Public Schools felt there were problems, especially with lack of time and classroom management. Question nineteen, "the chance for advancement," received a score that indicated this was a concern of the elementary teachers; however, it was ranked lower than other concerns of time and management.

Teachers and administrators indicated that if additional support were to be received, this support should come from the building principal or district supervisor. Another source of help for the classroom teacher would be the implementation of non-teaching aides. The results did not indicate that either teachers or administrators saw a need for the establishment of a career ladder. They preferred to have additional support from their principal or supervisor.

Conclusions

1. Only elementary school teachers indicated a desire for the opportunity to have a career ladder.
2. The majority of the teachers wanted more classroom support from principals and supervisors.
3. Teachers were concerned with being promoted, but they were more concerned with handling classroom problems.
4. Principals agreed with the teachers' views with regard to giving the teachers more support.

Recommendations

1. A career ladder is not needed at this time for teachers.
2. Principals and supervisors need to spend more time in the classroom working with teachers.
3. Teacher aides should be hired to help teachers with non-professional duties.
4. A topic for further study would be to look at this same question with a larger group.

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APPENDIX A

The Chicago Teaching Events Stress Inventory

The Chicago Teaching Events Stress Inventory

1. The first week of the school year
2. Reorganization of classes or program
3. Colleague assaulted in school
4. Voluntarily transferred
5. Attendance at inservice meetings
6. Notification of unsatisfactory performance
7. Overcrowded classroom
8. Preparing for a strike
9. Change in duties/work responsibilities
10. Conference with principal/supervisor
11. Involuntarily transferred
12. Managing "disruptive" children
13. Implementing board of education curriculum goals
14. Developing and completing daily lesson plans
15. Supervising student behavior outside the classroom
16. Threatened with personal injury
17. Dealing with community racial issues
18. Maintaining self-control when angry
19. Talking to parents about their child's problem
20. Dealing with students whose primary language is not English
21. Target of verbal abuse by student
22. Evaluating student performance or giving grades
23. Lack of availability of books and supplies
24. Dealing with staff racial issues
25. Teaching students who are "below average" in achievement
26. Lavatory facilities for teachers are not clean or comfortable
27. Taking additional course work for promotion
28. Teaching physically or mentally handicapped children
29. Disagreement with supervisor
30. Teacher-parent conference
31. Seeking principal's intervention in a discipline matter
32. Maintaining student personnel and achievement records
33. Having a research or training program from "outside"
34. Denial of promotion or advancement
35. Dealing with student racial issue
36. Disagreement with another teacher
37. Other; please explain:

APPENDIX B

Comparison of Chicago and Mt. View Teaching Events
Stress Inventories

Comparison of Chicago and Mt. View Teaching Events
Stress Inventories

<u>Chicago Ranking</u>	<u>Mt. View Ranking</u>
1. Involuntarily transferred	Managing disruptive children
2. Managing disruptive children	Overcrowded classroom
3. Notification of unsatisfactory performance	Notification of unsatisfactory performance
4. Threatened with personal injury	Colleague assaulted in school
5. Overcrowded classroom	Target of verbal abuse by student
6. Lack of availability of books and supplies	Supervising student behavior outside the classroom
7. Colleague assaulted in school	Change in duties/responsibilities
8. Reorganization of classes or programs	Involuntarily transferred
9. Implementing board of education curriculum goals	Reorganization of classes or programs
10. Denial of promotion or advancement	Maintaining self-control when angry
11. Target of verbal abuse by student	Threatened with personal injury
12. Disagreement with supervisor	The first week of the school year
13. The first week of the school year	Disagreement with supervisor
14. Maintaining self-control when angry	Disagreement with another teacher
15. Teaching students who are below average	Dealing with student racial issues
16. Maintaining student personnel and achievement records	Maintaining student personnel and achievement records
17. Preparing for a strike	Talking to parents about their child's problem
18. Supervising student behavior outside the classroom	Evaluating student performance or giving grades
19. Change in duties/work responsibilities	Lack of availability of books and supplies
20. Dealing with community racial issues	Attendance at inservice meetings
21. Seeking principal's intervention in a discipline matter	Conference with principal or supervisor

<u>Chicago Ranking</u>	<u>Mt. View Ranking</u>
22. Disagreement with another teacher	Having a research or training program from the outside
23. Dealing with staff racial issues	Taking additional course work for promotion
24. Teaching physically or mentally handicapped students	Voluntarily transferred
25. Dealing with student racial issues	Dealing with staff racial issues
26. Lavatory facilities for teachers are not clean or comfortable	Denial or promotion of advancement
27. Developing and completing daily lesson plans	Implementing board of education curriculum goals
28. Conference with principal/supervisor	Teacher-parent conferences
29. Evaluating student performance or giving grades	Teaching students who are below average in achievement
30. Having a research or training program from the outside	Seeking principal's intervention
31. Attendance at inservice meetings	Preparing for a strike
32. Taking additional course work for promotion	Lavatory facilities for teachers are not clean or comfortable
33. Talking to parents about child's problem	Teaching physically and mentally handicapped students
34. Dealing with students whose primary language is not English	Dealing with students whose primary language is not English
35. Teacher-parent conferences	Dealing with community racial issues
36. Voluntarily transferred	Developing and completing daily lesson plans

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire

Dear Teacher/Principal

I am working on my Specialist Degree and would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes of your time to complete the following questionnaire.

DIRECTIONS:

On the next page, you will find thirty problem areas that a teacher may face during the year. Please check box 1, 2, or 3 if you feel that a problem is (1) a serious problem; (2) somewhat of a problem; (3) not a significant problem. Here are some examples:

	1 Serious Problem	2 Somewhat a Problem	3 Not a Problem	Who Could Help
Teaching a science lesson	<u> </u>	<u> ✓ </u>	<u> </u>	<u> 3 </u>
Developing a learning center	<u> ✓ </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> 2 </u>
Cleaning your room	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> ✓ </u>	<u> </u>

If you mark box 1 or 2, would you then select from the list of personnel, the person you feel would be the most helpful to you in solving that problem. In order to assist you, here are some definitions you will need:

Supervisor:	Central office personnel whose main responsibility is to assist, instruct, and evaluate teachers.
Master teacher:	A teacher who has responsibilities to assist fellow teachers in a specific building. This person helps with providing ideas, instruction, and support. This person does not evaluate.
Grade level chairman:	A classroom teacher who has a full-time classroom assignment, and is responsible for coordinating activities for that grade level.
Colleague:	A classroom teacher whose primary responsibility is his/her own class. This teacher has at least three years experience and tenure.
Intern:	A classroom teacher with zero to three years of experience. This person holds a probationary certificate.

Aide: A non-certified position; the main purpose is to assist teachers in non-teaching situations.

Even though the Omaha Public Schools does not use some of these positions, please use them as if they do exist.

Please use the following numbers for the "who could help" column.

- 1 = Principal
- 2 = Supervisor
- 3 = Master teacher
- 4 = Grade level chairman
- 5 = Colleague
- 6 = Intern
- 7 = Aide

Thank you in advance for your help. Please return this questionnaire by February 22, to: Harlan Rimmerman, Mt. View School.

None of your names will be used, nor will anyone know which answers are yours. If you would like a copy of the results, please let me know.

Harlan Rimmerman

	1 Serious Problem	2 Somewhat a Problem	3 Not a Problem	Who Could Help
1. Class management or discipline	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Overcrowded classrooms	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Lack of books or supplies	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Organization of classes or programs	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Disagreement with supervisor	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Implementing board curriculum goals	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. The first week of school	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Teaching below average students	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Maintaining student records	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Supervising students outside the classroom	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Change in duties or responsibilities	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Lesson plans	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Time to teach	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. Filling out forms	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Planning time	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. Teaching materials	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. Not enough classroom support	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. Evaluation	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. Chance for advancement	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. Pace of school day is too fast	_____	_____	_____	_____
21. Consultation with other personnel	_____	_____	_____	_____
22. Can't express negative emotions	_____	_____	_____	_____
23. Sense of isolation	_____	_____	_____	_____
24. High amount of frustration	_____	_____	_____	_____
25. Time for grading	_____	_____	_____	_____
26. Recognition of good work	_____	_____	_____	_____
27. Recognition of good teaching	_____	_____	_____	_____
28. Time to relax	_____	_____	_____	_____
29. Attitude and behavior of some teachers	_____	_____	_____	_____
30. Wide ability range	_____	_____	_____	_____

Your age: _____ 20 to 30 _____ 30 to 40 _____ 40 to 50 _____ above

Years experience: _____ 0 to 10 _____ 10 to 20 _____ 20 to 30
 _____ 30 above

Sex: _____ F _____ M