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A Study of Some Characteristics of Chippewa Valley Public School Teachers and Their Attitudes toward Merit Pay

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A STUDY OF SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CHIPPEWA VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARD MERIT PAY

by

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The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between certain personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers and their level of support of merit pay and related forms of compensation. It was also the purpose of this study to determine if there is a relationship between personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay has an effect on learning. Teachers in the Chippewa Valley Schools in Macomb County, Michigan, were the subject of this study.

A survey questionnaire was sent to all teachers in the school district. There were four sections to the survey. The first three sections gathered data related to personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers. The fourth section was dual scaled with teachers responding twice. Various forms of merit pay were described and respondents indicated first their level of support for that type of merit pay and second, the extent they thought this form of merit pay would have on student learning. The basic format for this research uses a

correlational design.

It was found that when teachers consider merit pay and related compensation, their opinions are more likely to be related to their educational philosophy than their personal or educational status. Personal characteristics such as age, sex, or marital status or educational background such as level of teaching, type of degree, or frequency of in-service are not significantly related to their level of support of merit pay. Their opinions of what effect merit pay has on learning also closely match their level of support for merit pay.

Performance incentive programs for teachers, except perhaps salary merit, are rather new. More research needs to be done, particularly in school districts that have merit pay programs. This study was done in one community and, of course, is not exhaustive. Similar studies in rural or metropolitan areas should be conducted. Different geographic regions of the country might be studied to determine if there would be differences in attitudes toward merit pay.

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Education in the United States is in the midst of an educational reform movement. Public schools are the object of much attention and there is significant concern about the quality and excellence of the schools. According to the U.S. Department of Education (1983), Americans will remember 1983.

> During that year deep public concern about the nation's future created a tidal wave of school reform which promises to renew American education. Citizens perplexed about social, civic and economic difficulties, turned to education as an anchor or hope for the future of their nation and their children. (p. 11)

There has been frequent criticism about the quality of teaching by the general public, while the education profession, like others, contends that nothing can be done better without more money. Some teacher labor groups have the conviction that improved education is not worth considering unless large sums of money are made available for increased salaries. Teacher unions are committed to the union doctrine that all employees must be treated and compensated alike even though some do more or better work than others.

A position often taken by the general public is that they would be willing to finance an increase in education funding if they had some reasonable assurance that the increase in education funding

would, indeed, improve the quality of education. In a recent study of secondary school reform (Freeman, Cusick, & Houang, 1985), it was found that 72% of the respondents were willing to pay increased taxes for educational reforms if the money was earmarked for their preferred reforms. It was also found that the public and its varied components were willing to support standards for schools and were examining indicators of how schools met those standards. The public seems willing to pay the personal, social, and financial costs that accompany those reforms. This position is also supported by some states' department of education and some national groups. It is not likely that a large infusion of dollars will be directed toward education without some assurances of improved results. States such as Tennessee, Kentucky, and California who have granted large teacher salary increases in an attempt to improve education have tied these increases to teacher accountability in the form of merit pay.

There has recently been a strong interest for improving the educational system of the United States. This concern has been coming from all quarters. Parents, legislators at both the state and national level, investigatory commissions, and teaching professionals have called for higher standards. That these groups are looking for higher teacher standards to improve education is commonly accepted. The public, however, is willing to pay for exceptional teaching not mediocre teaching. A recent U.S. House of Representatives (1983) Merit Pay Task Force Report said:

> The opportunity for economic improvement and professional advancement should not be dependent on moving into school administration. A superior teacher should be able to

> receive a superior salary. No state pays a good teacher more than an average or a poor teacher. Polls have shown that the public regards this fact as an impediment to improving teacher performance. (p. 6)

Recently there have been several reports issued on the quality of American education. Reports from the National Commission on Excellence in Education, A Nation at Risk: The Imperatives for Educational Reform; Education Commission of the States, Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools; the Carnegie Foundation report entitled The Conditions of Teaching: A State by State Analysis; National Science Boards, Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science, and Technology entitled Educating Americans for the 21st Century; and the Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher are a few of the recent reports addressing the conditions of education in the United States. A common recommendation found in the above reports and in other reports is the recommendation for a system of merit pay for teachers.

In a report published by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), it is stated that:

> Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive and performance based. Salary, promotions, 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. (p. 30)

Reagan (cited in "President Critizes Teachers," 1983) also embraced the possibility of merit pay and advocated its adoption as the main vehicle for change in education. He stated:

> We spend more money per child for education than any other country in the world--we just aren't getting our money's worth. . . . Teachers should be paid and promoted on the basis of their merit. . . . Hard-earned tax dollars should encourage the best. They have no business rewarding incompetence and mediocrity. (p. A1)

The current reports, as well as proposals from state governors and other public officials for some form of merit pay as a way of improving education, have placed new pressures on school officials to develop some workable merit and/or incentive plan for teachers. At the very least, there needs to be an investigation of the possibility of these plans.

Though these reports generated a high level of interest and support in educational circles and the general public, not everyone agreed with their findings. Caution must be exercised to not assume they represent absolute answers, for in many instances they merely represent the summaries of investigators. Nevertheless, they did stimulate interest in education and brought about a new interest in merit pay.

To act constructively, school officials need facts and information regarding merit pay to approach this issue with knowledge. It is important that the concerns for quality education be directed in a positive way to bring lasting improvements in American education. It is the purpose of this research to gather information to assist in the analysis of the merit pay issue. If boards of education are to respond to the various groups supporting merit pay they need to know how it is to be instituted, with whom it has greatest support, and the possibility of its success in their district.

Background and Need

Those directly and indirectly involved in education, as well as those who have various political and ideological inclinations, either support or reject concepts of merit pay for teachers rather than specific issues.

Many proponents who want school improvement, but who feel that the majority of teachers are inadequate or mediocre, see merit pay plans as an opportunity to reward good teachers and maintain the status of the mediocre or poor teachers. Some advocates of merit pay see an opportunity to provide teachers recognition, higher salaries, attract more qualified teachers, and improve student learning. Many educators who, in the past, have not been supportive of merit pay are now giving attention and sharing an interest in some form of merit pay.

Historically, both the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) have taken a strong position against merit pay for teachers. In an undated pamphlet published by the AFT, Megel, a past president of the union, stated that the American Federation of Teachers has vigorously opposed this specious practice for more than 50 years. Merit ratings, he said, were educationally and professionally unsound. Megel concluded that no way for rating the effectiveness of one teacher against another on a dollar-and-cents basis has ever been devised.

Shanker (1983), the current president of the AFT, also condemned merit pay plans as having no merit, being old and with bad ideas, and

being unworkable. Writing in the New York Times, he reviewed research from the business sector to show that there is no merit in merit pay for teachers.

The National Education Association has, through the years, opposed plans to compensate teachers on the basis of their performance. In an interview with White (1983), Freetag, vice-president of NEA said that merit pay hasn't worked yet. It has been subjected to a lot of political influence and patronage and abuse. He also said that NEA should be reluctant to accept merit pay plans because of the management structure.

It has been noticed, however, that there has recently been a softening of both labor groups toward merit pay. Both unions have shown an interest in at least exploring its possibilities. Shanker (cited in White, 1983) has indicated that he would consider various proposals of merit pay and expressed a willingness to consider it if evaluations were made by somebody in whom teachers had confidence.

At a conference discussing issues in education, Shanker (cited in White, 1983) touted several new ideas he said would contribute to school reform. He proposed supercertification for teachers which would, he said, tie in with merit pay. Acknowledging that merit pay won't go away and that most teachers favor it, union opposition does not help the image of teachers.

There has been a noticeable change in the position the NEA has taken against merit pay. Their former absolute rejection of the concept has changed. Cameron (1985), executive director of the NEA, said:

> In any event, it is important that the merits or demerits of the single salary schedule not become the central issue in the debate about teacher compensation. The central issue should be how we can develop a remuneration system for teachers that simultaneously recognizes education, experience, extra work, and outstanding teaching. . . . For our part, the NEA has consistently stated its opposition to merit pay schemes for all the reasons I've enumerated here. On the other hand, we have also consistently said we will discuss with open minds any new ideas that seek to solve the problem of teacher compensation. (p. 111)

Although teacher unions have almost invariably resisted and opposed merit pay plans, both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, the two largest teacher unions, have now been willing to consider some modification to the single salary schedule. This willingness to consider modification represents a change from their long standing position of the same salary for teachers with the same experience. No doubt their recent change in position is in reaction to the strong forces supporting some merit pay plan. Some states who legally or politically were able to institute merit pay plans have done so. In some cases, because of the legal ramifications, these merit pay plans were instituted in strong union states. State instituted plans were able to overrule individual local district's contracts.

Although it is too early to know the effects of teacher incentive plans in the states that have instituted them or to measure the effects on student learning and improving teaching, it is possible to draw some general observations from the programs now in existence. It has generally been found that:

1. There is wide variation in who controls the program. Some states have clearly defined standards while others allow local

autonomy.

2. States and local districts are proceeding cautiously, some implementing plans over a long period and others implementing pilot programs.

3. The movement of teacher merit and incentives has stimulated changes in evaluating classroom performance and what constitutes effective teaching. This is evident in Michigan's blueprint for action.

4. Teachers are volunteering in greater numbers to participate in merit and incentive programs.

The concept of rewarding exemplary teachers and providing increased responsibilities which carry with them increased rewards is gaining acceptance. A report issued by the Southern Regional Education Board (1985) entitled Career Ladder Plans: Trends and Emerging Issues describes plans in 46 of the 50 states. Although some states have no specific proposals at this time, there are indications that much study is going on with the goal of implementation in the near future.

Importance of the Study

Present methods of paying teachers, including the single salary schedule, has received much criticism. This becomes uniquely evident at a time when the quality of the public schools is questioned. Many critics claim that the single salary schedule cuts off initiative. Merit pay, it is said, appeals to many people as a way to eliminate

the perceived inadequacies of the single salary schedule.

Merit programs have been recently instituted in many states and have become an important educational innovation in the first half of the 1980s. Millions of dollars have been spent and allocated toward merit pay plans in various parts of the United States. Although merit pay plans are becoming increasingly popular, there does not seem to be any replication of the various plans or a common body of research. It is not known whether any of these plans would be effective if duplicated elsewhere. At the present time, it is a matter of conjecture whether the conditions for successful implementation of merit pay plans could be replicated in other districts. Without some idea of the common conditions from district to district and the critical personnel and professional situational variables in the various merit pay plans, replicability is largely accidental.

The merit pay problem is further complicated by the fact that there are various models and terminology. In a recent report for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company conducted by Harris (1984), it is said that:

> To some extent the words "merit pay" arouse more disagreement than the concept. In addition, merit pay is being debated fiercely in almost thirty statehouses (and almost thirty different proposals are being considered). In Table 22 teachers agreed (by 87-12%) with the idea of establishing career ladders that could lead to more responsibility and more pay. Merit pay could have similar implications, but the words themselves generate great controversy. (p. 43)

There are a variety of merit pay or incentive plans in operation and there are a variety of attitudes toward merit pay. There seems

to be some agreement as to what merit pay plans should incorporate in a general sense, but no plan examined included all the ingredients. There are a wide range of technical, organizational, and financial implications in any plan. The literature demonstrates that the general public and, in certain cases, teachers too favor the development of merit plans; however, these groups differ markedly in their views about merit pay plans. Although there are instances of teacher involvement in the development of the plans, there appear to be no studies of teacher attitude in specific areas. In this study, the investigator grouped teacher responses along a number of dimensions suggested by other studies as significant. It was important to determine if relationships exist between dimensions of sex, teacher age, and present salary and support of merit pay concepts. Since boards of education, administrators, and central office personnel are the ones implementing merit pay plans, they need to know what teachers think about a plan if that plan is to be successful. Attitude, the need for job security, degree of militancy, perception of school, and school climate vary from school district to school district and across regions and states.

This study is important to boards of education, central office personnel, and school administrators, because merit pay plans can best be implemented when one knows what the attitudes of the teaching population are regarding merit pay. Merit pay plans will have the greatest opportunity for success if they are entered into with thought. It is important to know before plans are implemented what

are the attitudes of the teachers affected and wherein lies the greatest potential for success.

Those responsible for implementation must realistically appraise the commitment of teachers to a merit pay plan. Factors of teacher sex, age, length of teaching experience, and present salary can greatly enhance or limit the success of a merit program. Although most programs look to the administration for leadership, program success depends on many factors. It should be noted that merit pay incentive programs are largely experimental at this time. Administrators should expect intended and unintended results. Uncertainty, however, should not diminish efforts to develop programs, since programs based on accurate information can provide new insights for achieving the goals of improved education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine which variables of those examined appeared to be statistically significant in relation to teacher response to the concept of merit pay for the Chippewa Valley School District located in Macomb County in the state of Michigan. The inference is that given this information, the school district may then carefully examine the investment of time, financial cost, and resources before leaping into a premature merit pay plan. The study was aimed at assessing teacher response to merit pay and adds to the body of information on merit pay for teachers.

Lack of Definition of Merit Pay

In spite of all the significant discussion about paying outstanding teachers higher salaries or increasing their benefits, there has not been developed a commonly acceptable definition of merit or incentive pay. Merit pay has been used to describe a variety of financial reward programs. Jordan and Borkow (1983) addressed the confusion over what is merit pay when they stated, "Part of the confusion associated with this issue comes from the fact that discussions on 'merit pay' often refer to many different kinds of programs as if they were the same" (p. 9). Merit pay has been used to refer to incentives based on such diverse standards as length of tenure, graduate course work, and conditions of teaching, as well as how well one teaches or the responsibility they have. School districts and teachers use the term "merit pay" to describe a wide variety of programs that provide extra compensation to qualifying teachers. Efforts to study merit pay plans must take into consideration the lack of a common definition. For the purpose of this study the following definitions will be used:

Career ladder: A promotion system within the teaching ranks. It provides several levels of teachers from apprentice teacher through several intermediate steps to master teacher. Different salaries and responsibilities are associated with each step.

Differentiated staff: The idea that some teaching tasks are more difficult than others and, therefore, are worth more salary.

Market sensitive pay: Starting teachers at a higher step to attract teachers in shortage areas.

Fast track: The concept of rewarding teachers for outstanding work by moving them up more than one step at a time. Also used to retain teachers in shortage areas.

Incentive pay: Additional money paid when teaching under difficult conditions. Sometimes called "combat pay." Pay is related to working conditions.

Development award: A monetary award given to a teacher for outstanding work to be used specifically for professional development such as conferences or workshops.

Professional merit: Paying teachers additionally according to their qualifications, such as education, training, or experience.

Length of service: Additional salary given beyond the basic salary schedule for years of service.

Productivity merit: A compensation system that rewards teachers beyond the basic salary. It is based on objective measurement of their students' progress toward specific learning goals.

Bonus: Financial compensation given to an individual teacher, a team of teachers, a department, or school for outstanding achievement by a student or a group of students.

Mentor teacher program: Teachers are selected on the basis of exemplary teaching and receive additional pay for curricular development and work with other teachers (also called master teacher program).

Supply award: A provision that allots a teacher an increased budget to be used for classroom enrichment materials when the teacher has demonstrated exemplary teaching.

In the discussion that follows, the term "merit pay" will be used in a generic sense to include the various types of financial reward plans.

Research Questions

This study addressed the question of teacher characteristics and their response toward merit pay. Personal characteristics, educational characteristics, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers were surveyed to determine what composition of teachers are likely to be receptive to merit pay proposals. A study was needed to determine where efforts toward merit pay implementation would have the greatest likelihood of success.

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Does a relationship exist between personal demographics of a teacher and their level of support of merit pay?

2. Does a relationship exist between educational demographics of a teacher and their level of support of merit pay?

3. Does a relationship exist between educational philosophy of a teacher and their level of support of merit pay?

4. Does a relationship exist between a teacher's personal demographics and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning?

5. Does a relationship exist between a teacher's educational demographics and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning?

6. Does a relationship exist between a teacher's educational philosophy and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning?

Overview of Study

Presented in the first chapter of this dissertation are the background, need, importance, and purpose of the study. The quality of education has been a source of major concern and controversy in the educational community, on the political scene, and at the highest levels of government. This concern has raised the research questions since teachers are the focus of much attention. There has been, however, only a passing interest in assessing their response to merit pay, a suggested method to improve education.

Attention on related literature and substantiation of the need for the study are the focus of Chapter II. The history of merit pay in the country was examined to provide the background for the present study. The literature was reviewed to determine arguments for merit pay as well as against merit pay.

The methodology and design which was used in this study are detailed in Chapter III. The population was described and procedures were explained.

The data that were collected are presented and analyzed in Chapter IV. The findings are discussed relevant to the hypotheses.

A discussion of the major findings and presentation of information and implications are included in Chapter V. Recommendations for further study are given.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historical Perspective of Merit Pay

Merit pay for teachers is not a new issue although it is a popular concept at this time. Robinson (1983) said, "Merit pay for teachers has been vigorously debated in many school systems and in almost every state in the nation" (p. 1). In the early 1900s merit pay was the acceptable and common method of paying teachers. It was around the time beginning with the 1920s that a change toward the single salary schedule occurred. In an attempt to end "the disparity in salaries between elementary and secondary school teachers (and males and females), school systems began to adopt 'single salary schedules'" (Jordan & Borkow, 1983, p. 5). This was an attempt to give all teachers with similar experience and training the same financial rewards. As a result, beginning with the 1920s, there was a diminishing number of school districts using a merit pay plan and an increasing number moving toward the single salary schedule.

Schneider (1984) has traced the trends in merit pay programs and cites the important dates:

> 1908--First attempt at merit pay plan in Newton, Massachusetts, discarded as unworkable.
>
> 1920--Merit plans reported to be common (salary based on training, sex, school assignment).

1930--Peak of merit systems which diminished toward single salary schedules.

1940--Study of merit plans indicated unreliability of measuring teaching efficiency.

1950--Interest in merit pay reviewed. Task groups set up to study merit pay in North Carolina, Utah, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

1968--Merit plans stabilized and began to decline. One third of systems in operation that were reported in 1958.

1973--School systems of 6,000 plus enrollment, having plans, fell to 5.5% after peaking to 11.3% in 1968.

1975--Delaware, Florida, and New York legislated plans for teachers and abandoned them as unworkable.

1978--Educational Research Service Study of 11,502 school systems indicated:

4% had a plan in operation.

4.7% were considering plans.

6.4% had programs which were not operating.

31.7% of discontinued plans lasted one or two years.

21.6% of discontinued plans lasted three or four years.

15.1% had a plan that was more than ten years old when it was discontinued.

1979--Survey of systems (30,000+ population) indicated 170 having merit plans in 1959, but only 33 in 1979.

1980--Resurgence of interest in merit plans by larger school systems and state legislatures. (p. 3)

In reviewing studies related to merit pay for teachers, Schneider (1984) said:

A review of studies about merit pay only underscores how complex an issue it is. Arguments in favor of merit pay stress the equity and logic of paying teachers what they are worth, but present day systems generally treat all

> teachers alike. This implicitly rewards mediocrity and discourages teachers from exerting extra effort to do a better than average job. (p. 2)

Although merit pay plans have been used in industry with apparently more success than schools, one questions the reason. Schneider (1984) raised this question when he said:

> Over the years, merit incentives have been used in industrial settings, and it would seem that applying such methods to schools could help professionalize teaching. However, although merit pay plans have been tried in education since 1910, they have been discontinued for one reason or another, and the idea remains controversial today. (p. 2)

Goodman (1983), in speaking about merit pay, concluded that many white collar workers in noneducational employment believe that salary raises of their peers come about by less than objective means. She also said that merit pay rides the social pendulum as it swings. The government for years focused on issues of equality in the schools. Now the focus is on excellence. Colleges formerly gave out scholarships to the neediest while now, scholarships are given to the brightest.

Recognizing the difficulty and complexity of a merit pay plan in any educational setting, the U.S. House of Representatives (1983) Merit Pay Task Force has concluded that "despite mixed and inconclusive results with performance based pay in the private sector and in education, we support and encourage experiments with performance-based pay" (p. 6).

The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) released a report in 1985 vital to the teaching profession. The document, prepared by ATE's Commission on Master Teachers, represented the best thinking of

members of the profession engaged in a wide variety of roles. It was developed through research, analysis, and the pooling of collective experience. The article states:

> All across the country, in local school districts and at the state level, people are rethinking the ways in which teachers are evaluated and rewarded. School board members and legislators recognize that better ways are needed to attract and keep good teachers. As a result, traditional incentives and rewards are being re-examined. Some recommendations are simplistic, others are complex. A common occurrence is for proposals to be simple at first--for example, pay the better teachers more money. But as the ramifications of a new system are explored, it becomes clear that more than salary is involved. (p. 1)

Looking back to past attempts at merit pay for teachers, Johnson (1984) wrote in the Harvard Educational Review:

> In the 1920's and again in the 1960's educators enthusiastically instituted merit pay plans throughout the country. Each time widespread public concern about the country's international standing, promoted in the first instance by World War I and in the second by the launching of Sputnik and the ensuing space race, fueled merit pay plans. (p. 97)

In an attempt to determine the extent of merit rating, Young (1933) studied programs in 48 districts and found "a teacher's rating directly and automatically determines the amount of her salary increase" (p. 12). His research demonstrated that there were three basic merit plans in existence: one that used annual merit ratings to determine raises, another that used merit to determine maximum salary, and a third that placed teachers into salary groups on the basis of merit (p. 30). Young clearly demonstrated that merit pay was anything but a vague notion in the 1920s, and found that in 91.7% of the cases studied, the annual increment was determined by the merit rating.

Merit pay received little attention from the mid 1930s to the mid 1950s. There is little recorded about previous plans and how they fared except that they slowly faded from existence. With increased student population in the mid 1950s and a great need for more facilities along with a teacher shortage and formation of unions, the public gave new attention to education. The American School Boards Association (cited in Ovard, 1959) reluctantly accepted the public demand for merit pay by stating: "It is our general feeling that merit rating for teachers is coming and that we had best face this fact and begin now studying and preparing for it" (p. 36). Merit pay plans did increase and during the 1960s, Porwoll (1979) found approximately 10% of the school districts in the United States had some type of plan (p. vi). The plans of the 1960s did not last any more than did those of the 1920s, and by 1972 the estimated percentage of merit pay plans had dropped from 10% to 5.5%.

From September of 1982 through January of 1984, there had been published nine significant reports on American education. Although there were many others, these nine were significant because they received greater notoriety and their content was focused on curriculum, student learning, and teachers and teaching. Following are the titles and the authors of these reports: Academic Preparation for College (College Board), Action of Excellence (Education Commission of the States), America's Competitive Challenge (Business-Higher Education Forum), High School (Boyer), Making the Grade (Twentieth Century Fund), A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education), The Paideia Proposal (Adler), A Place Called School

(Goodlad), and A Study of High Schools (Sizer). The significance of these reports to the issue of merit pay is not so much their content as the conclusion drawn from them. The role of the schools, the impact of goals and curriculum on structure, and the quality of teaching emerge as primary factors. In the report entitled A Study of High Schools (Sizer, cited in Griesemer & Butler, 1986), it is indicated that teachers prefer a developing career with responsibility and corresponding compensation. The report entitled Making the Grade (Twentieth Century Fund, cited in Griesemer & Butler, 1986) recommends a national master teacher program; and in A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), there is a direct recommendation for merit pay. The wide circulation received by the last report with its merit pay recommendation has been significant in creating a renewed interest in performance based salary. Since the publication of A Nation at Risk, much has occurred nationally in areas of career ladders, master teacher programs, and merit pay plans.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1985) conducted a survey of legislative and administrative actions in the 50 states. Their nine survey categories included one addressing teacher incentives and specifically merit pay. The report said:

> In many states, reform was first initiated by the numerous education reports issued in 1983-84. The legislative and administrative policies which resulted are many and varied. The rapid movement in the states is most apparent in three of the policy areas covered by the survey: standards, incentives and irregular certification routes. . . . Incentives to enter the profession such as career ladders or merit pay programs have found their way into 15 state lawbooks. (p. iii)

That teacher incentive programs are moving too rapidly without sufficient research was recently cited by a report entitled Teacher Incentives: A Tool for Effective Management (1984) which said:

> Among educators a broad spectrum of opinions are voiced, ranging from the conviction that merit recognition programs damage faculty morale to arguments that sufficient funds do not exist to do the job properly and to a belief that careful planning and commitment will bring positive results.
>
> The American public, however, shares few of these apprehensions and appears determined to implement teacher performance programs. The argument that merit pay has come and gone in education for 70 years makes little difference to the typical citizen. "These are new times with new demands that require a new effort," is the response. . . . We are concerned, however, that some school districts are rushing into establishing teacher performance or incentive pay programs without adequate preparation. (p. v)

During the 1980s there have been more than 100 national reports concluding that there is a crisis in American education. They all seem to conclude that unless significant changes are made in the quality of education, the nation is facing a serious problem.

Hurd (1986) indicated that there needs to be direction to these changes when he said:

> Once they have agreed that "quality" and "excellence" are important, however, the critics are by no means agreed on the direction and intellectual substance of these changes. There has been little study of the transitions in society and the emerging requirements for knowledge that must undergird the construction of coherent policies of education reform. (p. 353)

He further stated:

> The cumulative effect of the national reports and the publicity they received was sufficient to convince the American public that something had to be done quickly to "save the schools" and thus preserve the nation. The response has been a plethora of legislative and

> administrative actions designed to change educational practice and alter the structure of schooling. (p. 357)

As the nation moves in the direction of educational reform, and merit pay programs are one of the suggested reforms, researchers and practitioners need to be involved to answer the many questions. There seems to be a nationwide experiment to see what works best. Research that isolates cause and effect relationships are necessary. Kirst (1986) said:

> State policy makers need to know whether there are identifiable cause-and-effect relationships between student achievement and such interventions as state mandated curriculum alignment. Finding out will be difficult and expensive. How can we separate the effects of local policies from those of state policies when they either reinforce or work against one another? For instance, such innovations as career ladders may attract better qualified candidates to the profession of teaching while state-mandated, text-driven curriculum standards may repel the very same people. (p. 345)

Although Bacharach, Lipsky, and Sheed (1984) implied there are no studies to indicate teacher attitudes toward merit pay, a study entitled The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher conducted for Metropolitan Life Insurance Company by Harris (1984) shows that 71% of the teachers surveyed said that merit pay could work if a teacher's merit can be judged on an objective standard. This percentage was higher for those teachers with less than 5 years of experience and lower for those who had more than 10 years of experience.

In another study of teachers as reported in In Honor of Excellence (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1985), 87% of the teachers in a national sample of "outstanding teachers"

were found to favor the establishment of career ladders that provide teachers with greater opportunities to take on more responsibility and pay.

That merit pay has long been of interest and not so often successful was indicated by Frase, Hetzel, and Grant (1982) when they said:

> Rewarding teachers on the basis of instructional excellence and motivating them to continue their excellent practices has long been an area of intense interest to both practitioners and researchers in school personnel management. Merit pay programs have been designed and implemented to accomplish this goal, but most if not all have ended in dismal failure. (p. 67)

It was the intent of this section to show that merit pay has long been a practice. It is true, however, that it has not endured over the many years. Renewed interest and perhaps stronger interest exists at this time. The renewed interest should be explored. Are teachers different now and is there more known about what makes a teacher meritorious? Is it now possible to produce improved evaluative designs and is implementation now better? That merit pay has not survived over previous years is not sufficient reason to ignore it. Rather the renewed interest at state and national levels and the interest and desire of the general public make the study of merit pay necessary in order to better understand conditions under which it will succeed.

Argument Against Merit Pay

The idea that changing the reward system will bring immediate and positive changes to American education is not accepted by all, be

they educators, legislators, or the general public. Major national educational organizations, respected theorists, and researchers have a variety of positions on the merit pay issue. This section of the review of the literature focuses on what has been found to provide a background of information about representative positions against merit pay. There has been á long history of disagreement about merit pay between and among educators and those who make policy. Because this issue is so significant, it requires a closer examination of the reasons why merit pay is rejected by some and accepted by others.

Many of the objections found to merit pay today are similar to those that were argued in previous years. Young (1933) studied merit pay in 48 districts that had such a plan and found the following disadvantages:

> 1. There is no agreement as to just what constitutes either merit or efficient teaching.
>
> 2. No reliable, scientific instrument has been developed to measure the various degrees of teaching efficiency.
>
> 3. Merit rating destroys the espirit de corps of the teaching force.
>
> 4. Merit pay hinders the proper relationship between supervisor and teacher.
>
> 5. The practice of merit rating hampers a teacher's work and prevents the expression of individuality.
>
> 6. Merit rating tends to unionize the teachers and, thereby, antagonize the administration.
>
> 7. Teachers who meet the merit pay promotional standards are ostracized by their peers. (p. 4)

An examination of current reasons against merit plans finds similarities in objections. The most common objection appearing in

the literature is the difficulty of objectivity in evaluation. Summarizing reasons most often cited against merit plans, Frase et al. (1982) listed the following:

> 1. Merit rating cannot fairly evaluate the true effectiveness of teachers.
>
> 2. Merit rating rewards conformity.
>
> 3. Merit rating places a premium on teachers who conduct their classrooms with a minimum of problems for the administration.
>
> 4. Merit rating fosters a competitive rather than cooperative spirit.
>
> 5. Merit rating threatens the security of teachers.
>
> 6. Merit rating disregards the type of environment in which a teacher teaches.
>
> 7. Merit rating cannot improve the quality of education. (p. 68)

That there is difficulty in using merit pay for teachers because of the lack of criteria to evaluate was indicated by Lawler (1975). He said it is impossible to develop clear criteria to relate pay to performance. Lacking objective measures of performance, evaluators use subjective measures which, in turn, lead to distrust. Casey (1983) said that there is a fear in having evaluators determine which teachers are meritorious. They will be forced, he said, to make decisions on the basis of essentially subjective criteria. Tipper (1983) expressed concern by indicating the need to address three issues in teacher evaluation: What is the criteria for excellent teaching, can it be addressed accurately, and should there be rewards? Rosenholtz (1984) said that researchers disagree on specifics of teaching and the context is important. If teachers are to be

evaluated for merit, it must be done in a total context of the act. She continued, "It seems reasonable to conclude from the literature on teaching effectiveness that no system of evaluating teachers can be context-free" (p. 20).

The difficulties in applying merit pay to good teaching was stated by Johnson (1984), when she said:

> Merit pay plans have been tried in many forms, in many places and they have failed. A close analysis of the tenets of merit pay and the realities of teachers and teaching suggests that competitive pay will not serve as an incentive for good teaching and may, in fact, interfere with other efforts to improve the schools. (p. 97)

Merit pay would reduce cooperation among teachers according to Johnson (1984). She said:

> On the basis of what we know from the experience of business with competitive pay, the introduction of merit pay into schools would likely obstruct rather than advance efforts to promote collegiality and cooperation among teachers. Competitive reward systems encourage independence rather than cooperation and divert employees' commitment from group goals to personal goals. (p. 105)

Bacharach et al. (1984) stated the belief that merit pay may actually serve as a disincentive among meritorious teachers. They further said that for average teachers, "those who do not receive the merit increment will experience a relative decline in their rewards, and commensurately lower their performance" (p. 20). Casey (1979) said that there is a danger based on experience that merit pay plans foster dissension, rivalry, and jealousy among teachers and that studies have shown increased conflict among faculty. Weissman (1969) contended that according to studies she reviewed, merit pay stimulates a competitive spirit and leads to dissension, misunderstanding,

and lowered morale among teachers.

In establishing a merit pay plan it is important to establish goals of the plan. What the goals are is often the center of debate in rewards for performance systems. What constitutes good teaching? The danger in merit pay is that teachers will emphasize outcomes and deemphasize process. Palaich and Flannelly (1984) said that establishing standards for teaching and learning and being able to increase performance against these standards is difficult, time consuming, and controversial. "To a large extent, the belief in the efficacy of merit pay--as well as other types of reward-for-performance systems--is unexamined" (p. 8).

Accurate means of evaluating teachers to determine their merit is one of the greatest roadblocks to adopting a plan. Toch (1984) said, "Few school systems use methods of evaluating teachers that would offer a fair and reliable basis for rewarding them merit pay or placing them on a career ladder" (p. 7).

Scherer (1983) addressed the importance of education as a group effort. If quotas are imposed for rewarding merit pay, the collegiality of the staff will suffer. Research of effective schools shows that quality education is a group effort. A compensation system that only rewards individual effort will discourage teachers from sharing ideas.

Arnold (1984) expressed disagreement to merit pay when she said:

> Moreover, monetary incentive programs should not be installed, because there is no objective way to measure a teacher's performance. A test will measure a teacher's ability to increase a student's knowledge in a specific subject, but what of the inspiration and encouragement a

> teacher gives to such student? Who is going to judge these subjective aspects of teaching? (p. 512)

Barber and Klein (1983) made the point that teachers do need to be recognized for superior effort, but believed that they cannot trust evaluations. They indicated that there are two myths that keep the merit issue alive: (a) Merit pay is widely used in business and industry, and (b) merit pay is a cheap way to motivate teachers. Both of these they said are myths because:

> The accumulated evidence about the first of these myths shows that neither the federal government nor private business has found merit pay to be widely usable. Developing objective measure of performance and maintaining the necessary record-keeping systems are too difficult, expensive, and time consuming to be of much practical interest. . . . The truth about the second myth is that evaluation is not cheap. (p. 247)

Based on the literature that has been reviewed thus far, there appears to be significant reasons for not considering merit pay. It has been indicated that, frequently, merit pay plans have been discontinued or not tried because of problems with fair evaluation, loss of morale, or measuring effective performance. It is important to determine if merit pay plans will not be successful for these reasons. Are these reasons justified at this time? The need to determine these answers is the basis for the research questions undertaken in this study.

Arguments Favoring Merit Pay

The recent renewed interest in merit or performance pay for teachers has resulted in numerous articles, discussions, and debates relative to this highly controversial and sensitive subject. The

word renewed was used because merit pay is not a new subject. Although a considerable amount of the opinion being published is in opposition to merit pay, there appears to be much more written in support of the issue. The support, it seems, is a result of the wide publicity recent national educational reports have received. Merit pay, having been endorsed by some of these reports, seems to be legitimized. Another reason why merit pay is in such sharp focus now is that incentive systems combine an emphasis on improvements in teaching with performance appraisal systems to increase accountability by providing rewards for performance. In this section, an examination will be made of the literature which supports merit pay plans.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the American Association of School Administrators agreed that excellent teachers are the key to an improved educational system in this time of high technology and information based society requirements. A handbook published jointly by these three associations (Teacher Incentives, 1984) express their concern with school districts rushing into incentive pay programs without adequate preparation. However, a need for incentive programs is acknowledged. It is said:

> Because we cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past, school districts throughout the country must develop and apply promising teacher incentive programs that are formulated rationally and based solidly upon research and experience. Our three associations believe the best strategy to recognize outstanding teaching is teacher incentive programs. (p. 5)

During the 1983-84 school year the Dallas Independent School District (Texas) designed and instituted a district-wide incentive pay plan which was a supplement to its general pay plan. The plan was known as the Campus Incentive Pay Plan because pay incentives were given to entire school staffs which attained established criteria. The superintendent of the district, Wright (1986) said the plan achieved its objectives, student achievement levels increased, student attendance increased, and teacher absenteeism was significantly reduced. Wright said, "Campus incentive pay also was a big success in improving morale, motivation, and cooperation among school employees" (p. 6).

The single salary schedule as a method of paying teachers has long been under attack. Stewart (1980), a special program administrator for the New Orleans Public Schools, said, "Compensation models today, especially in the public sector, guarantee income regardless of effort. Worse, it cuts off initiative by a failure to reward creativity and innovation" (p. 3).

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) surveyed 1,261 elementary and secondary school teachers in 1983 to learn their attitudes toward merit pay. An Educational Research Service (Merit Pay Plans for Teachers, 1983) report on that study indicates that "almost two-thirds of the respondents (63 percent) indicated support for the idea. Giving principals the 'greatest' say in teacher evaluations was the preference of 39 percent of the respondents" (p. 6).

MacQueen (1984) believed that through proper planning, implementation, and administration, merit pay can achieve many positive

advantages. It is important, he continued, that workers perceive a relationship between the pay and performance of a merit plan. MacQueen stated:

> It is imperative, therefore, that school districts seek to establish increased pay for higher levels of teacher performance. Critical to this task is devising a pay for performance scheme that teachers perceive as rewarding the extra or additional effort required to achieve the level of excellence being rewarded. (p. 26).

MacQueen further stated that recent research confirms the positive relationship between merit pay and high performance.

Lawler (1975) suggested that individual preferences for merit pay are influenced by a person's need and by his particular situation. Employees with high levels of responsibility favor merit pay. He further stated that the more competent the individual, the more he will support merit pay. Milhourn (1980) said, "Pay can be an important source of motivation when the amount of pay an employee receives is tied to his or her job performance" (p. 34). Perry and Pearce (1983), in simplifying Vroom's expectancy theory, said, "The theory posits that if individuals expect to receive a valued reward for high performance, they are more likely to strive for this level of performance than if there were no payoff" (p. 231). Katz and Kahn (1978) reported that extrinsic rewards and incentives improve performance in many occupations.

In June of 1983 the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, Education Commission of the States (ECS, 1983) published a report called Action for Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools. This report closely followed the A Nation at Risk

(National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) report and it too supported the concept of pay for performance. The report said:

> We recommend that boards of education and higher education in each state--in cooperation with teachers and school administrators--put in place, as soon as possible, systems for fairly and objectively measuring the effectiveness of teachers and rewarding outstanding performance. (p. 39)

The report recommends that states should create career ladders for teachers.

In a report supported by the Rand Corporation entitled Beyond the Commission Reports: The Coming Crisis in Teaching, Darling-Hammond (1984) wrote:

> Professionalizing teaching will require a new career structure in which improved preparation and professionally enforced standards of practice are combined with increased responsibility for technical decision-making by those who successfully demonstrate their competence. Upgrading teaching compensation and creating more professional working conditions are part of a structural solution, one that addresses the interrelated causes of the teacher supply and quality problems, rather than merely their symptoms. (p. vi)

In a handbook published by the National Elementary and Secondary Principals Associations in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators (Teacher Incentives, 1984), they indicated their support of incentives for teachers. Identified are key assumptions:

> First, the right incentives, coupled with other appropriate management strategies, are capable of significantly influencing teacher job choice and motivation. Second, the attraction, retention, and motivation of highly qualified persons will affect the quality of teacher performance which, in turn, will affect student outcomes. Third, all school districts can make important gains through appropriate use of incentives, but each district must fashion its own incentive plan to meet its own particular needs. (p. 2)

Although it is generally thought that teachers are not in favor of merit pay, an examination of recent surveys indicates that is not the case. Though there may have, at one time, been strong opposition to the concept, recently more teachers favor the idea. Educational Research Service conducted a national poll of teachers in May of 1984 called the Educator Opinion Poll (Teachers and Principals, 1984). The purpose was to provide a comprehensive look at the opinions, status, and experiences of that group. When asked if teachers in critical shortage areas should be paid higher salaries, only 18.3% responded affirmatively. In the area of career ladders quite a different response is found with 81.6% in favor. When asked if merit pay should be available to all teachers meeting appropriate criteria of performance, 50.8% favored the idea.

The National Education Association in 1983 conducted the Nationwide Teachers Opinion Poll. The purpose was to assess the opinions of public school teachers on a variety of current issues. Of the nation's 2.2 million teachers, 1,978 were surveyed. It was found that:

> Specifically, 55 percent of the respondents support salary supplements to reward outstanding teachers, 46 percent support stipends to teachers in "critical shortage" areas such as science and mathematics, and 83 percent support differential salary schedules for teachers based on career stages such as beginning, professional, and masters. (p. 11)

Although teachers have received much attention as a result of recent educational studies, much of that attention has been in the form of criticism. There has been only a passing interest in what the teachers think. It was within that framework that a national

teacher study was conducted for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company by Harris (1984) called The Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher. Seven major areas were examined, one of them directed at accountability and merit pay. It was found that 72% of the teachers surveyed believed that they have not been adequately heard or their opinions represented. On the issue of merit pay it was found that:

> Contrary to the charges of many of their critics, teachers are highly positive about increasing their own accountability. By 87-12%, a big majority look with favor on the concept of career ladders to provide greater opportunities, more responsibility, and more pay as a way to attract and to keep better teachers in the system. By 84-14%, they also support changes which would make it easier for incompetent teachers to be removed. By 57-42%, they would welcome periodic retesting of teachers in their own subject areas. By 90-9%, a big majority of teachers in this country are willing to have their performance measured periodically by their current administrator, and a 72-27% majority are willing to have their performance evaluated by a committee of teachers in their own school. By 70-30%, they are in favor of standardized tests being employed to measure the improvement of their own students. And a 61-39% majority would support the use of standardized tests to measure the improvement of all students in the school. By 60-39%, they are even willing to have their performance evaluated by standardized tests that measure teachers' skills. While they have reservations about merit pay as such, a 71-28% majority believe such a system could work if there were an objective standard on which a teacher's individual merit could be judged. (p. 6)

These findings reinforce the data of other studies indicating that teachers are not basically opposed to the concept of career ladders or merit pay.

When Gallup (1984) conducted his survey, the results favoring merit pay were not as strong. His survey, as those mentioned above, included a national sample of teachers and the purpose was to

determine teacher attitudes. It was found that in the teacher population, merit pay is opposed by a 2 to 1 ratio. Teachers center their objection to two main points. One is the difficulty in determining who should receive merit pay and the other is the morale problems that might be created if a merit pay plan was put in effect. When asked how many teachers in their own schools should receive merit pay if a plan was put in effect, they indicated that 75% of the teachers should receive such merit. When comparing these teachers' opinions to the opinions of the public, different results were noted:

> The views of the public provide a rather dramatic contrast to the attitudes of teachers. The public favors merit pay for teachers by a ratio of 4:1 (76% to 19%). The public also feels that the most important criterion upon which to base merit pay should be the academic achievement or improvement of students as measured by standardized tests (68%). (p. 98)

Those that argue against merit pay say that deciding who should get the merit is not easy. Figuring out responsible and defensible performance ratings for workers between the extremes is difficult. Cohen and Murnane (1985) offered the following response:

> These are worthy concerns, but they are no reason to ignore merit pay in education. After all, this idea has been powerfully though intermittently appealing to school boards, administrators, and school reformers for more than half a century, and thousands of districts have tried merit pay. Any idea of such allure is worth looking into, if only because so many people who matter in American education have taken it seriously. In addition, the idea makes some intuitive sense. (p. 4)

The single salary schedule has helped bring equity to the teaching profession. It has eliminated the differentials between men and women that were common in the 1930s. It has also provided equity between elementary and secondary teachers and between black and white

teachers. However, as much as the single salary has helped in the teaching profession, Robinson (1984) said:

> But for all these virtues and past contributions, single salary schedules are basically flawed in that they discriminate against superior teachers. By rewarding all teachers only in terms of college degrees and years of teaching, single salary schedules discriminate against superior teachers whose performance and productivity are outstanding, but who may have few academic degrees or fewer years of experience. (p. 6)

O'Shea (1984) also has taken a position against the single salary schedule and favors a merit pay plan. He said, "The flaw in the single salary schedule is that teachers are not equal, yet school systems pay them as if they were" (p. 21).

This section has provided an overview of the literature that supports merit pay concepts. The literature indicates that there is a strong base of support from the public, educational associations, and to a significant degree, teachers themselves. The evaluation process remains an impediment to a wide adoption of any plan.

Motivational Theory and Merit Pay

Arguments for or against merit pay, though not explicitly mentioned, often have a basis in motivational theory. Any plan under consideration should be considered in relationship to motivational theory. Merit programs based on management and motivational research are possible and exist in education. Frase et al. (1982) described a workable merit program that incorporates as its basis Herzberg's research of motivation-hygiene and correlate this closely with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This theoretical foundation can lead to

a merit system where internal rewards can, in turn, serve as motivators.

According to Lawler (1975), research evidence and models of motivation clearly indicate that, under certain conditions, money can be used to motivate good performance. Lawler said that theory and research suggest, however, that this motivation will require a belief among employees that good performance will lead to high pay.

Johnson (1984) asserted that merit pay does not take into account motivational needs of teachers nor the independent nature of schools. Johnson advised that when looking for models of salary reform, the successful corporate models that base their theories on group goals for motivational incentives should be examined.

Brinks (1980) positioned himself opposite those who would say money does not motivate. Though commonly accepted by many personnel psychologists that money does not motivate, his personal experience definitely indicates it still motivates.

Sergiovanni and Carver (1973) said money is universally understood to bring status and recognition to people. It communicates success to others, but is a secondary motivating factor. Sergiovanni and Carver believed that the motivation-hygiene theory of Herzberg has useful application to education. Money can directly motivate, however, large sums are required.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature indicated that there has been a long history in this country of merit pay for teachers. There has been an ebb and

flow of support for merit pay which changed with significant events of the time. Each change was different from the one that preceded. The literature focusing on objections to merit pay plans presented strong arguments; however, support of merit pay presented equally strong arguments. The support of merit pay which is currently sweeping the states comes, however, with circumstances different from those of past history. The plethora of national reports has fueled the support of merit pay at a time when research has provided better means of teacher evaluation. These conditions add to the relative importance of this research effort.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between certain personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers and their level of support of merit pay and related forms of compensation. It was also the purpose of this study to determine if there is a relationship between personal characteristics, educational backgrounds, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay has an effect on learning. The study was exploratory and descriptive.

Population

The Chippewa Valley School District is comprised of portions of Macomb and Clinton Townships and is one of the fastest growing geographic areas in the state of Michigan. Chippewa Valley is the third largest school district of the 21 districts in the county of Macomb and is located approximately 25 miles northeast of the city of Detroit. The 28 square mile school district is primarily a residential community with a total student population of 8,290.

The population for this study consisted of 413 teachers who were employed by the school district as of January 6, 1987. There were 175 elementary and 218 secondary teachers. In addition, 20 teachers

had neither classification and served the district in a special capacity of psychologist, speech pathologist, or social worker. The sample from the accessible population for use in this study was the entire accessible population. The entire population was surveyed to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the school district.

Instrumentation

The literature review led this writer to examine three background areas of teachers that were considered to have a relationship to merit pay. The selection of personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers as areas for this study were based on information from a review of the literature and other studies.

The personal characteristics used for this study were sex, marital status, age, number of children, salary classification, and salary step. It was hoped that some answers to questions about merit pay could be found here. Is there a difference between men and women toward merit pay? Does age affect one's opinion of merit pay? Does the present salary of a teacher make a difference?

The second section of the survey was developed to gather educational background data. This section examined level of teaching, number of years of teaching, and highest degree. Also of interest, were how many hours teachers prepared for teaching, frequency of in-service, and their graduate work. The question was, does any of this information make a difference in the degree to which a teacher supports merit pay?

The third section of the survey was intended to solicit teachers' opinions of educational issues and philosophy. Responses to career plans and satisfaction with teaching were investigated. An attempt was made to determine what teachers thought of evaluation, measurement, and supervision as well as goal sharing and team teaching.

A survey questionnaire was sent to all teachers in the Chippewa Valley School District. The survey was divided into four sections with the first three sections gathering data related to personal characteristics, educational background, and educational philosophical opinions of teachers. The fourth section was dual scaled with teachers responding twice. Respondents indicated their level of support for a type of merit pay as well as their opinion of the effect this form of merit pay would have on student learning. All items on the survey were closed-ended to allow for quantitative analysis. The questionnaire was presented to a review panel to establish content validity.

A pilot study of the survey was administered to a group of 20 teachers in a school district similar to Chippewa Valley for the purpose of refining the instrument. The 20 people in the pilot study were chosen to provide an assortment of teaching levels, backgrounds, and experience. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the respondent's ability to complete the survey with the directions provided, the time required, and their comfort level with the questions asked. Several changes were made to the instrument based on feedback from the pilot study.

Data Collection Process

The questionnaire was mailed to all teachers in the Chippewa Valley School District. A cover letter was used to introduce the respondent to the purpose of the survey. In addition, a letter of endorsement from the president of the Chippewa Valley Education Association was included to demonstrate a cooperative effort with the local union in this research. Since the subject of merit pay is a sensitive issue with many teachers, it was hoped that this endorsement from the union would increase the response rate.

The questionnaire was mailed in a sealed envelope through interschool mail to all teachers in the school district. An addressed return envelope was provided. Because the issue of merit pay is sensitive, no coding of responses was used to trace respondents and nonrespondents. It was hoped that anonymity would increase the response rate. Within each of the 2 weeks following the distribution of the questionnaire, reminders were sent to all teachers encouraging them to respond if they had not already done so. Questionnaires were distributed on February 2, 1987, and respondents were requested to return them by February 12, 1987. The collected data were entered into a computer for analysis.

Hypotheses

For purposes of this research, six hypotheses were generated and tested. Stated in their null form, they are:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between certain personal characteristics of teachers and their levels of support of various types of merit pay.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between certain educational backgrounds of teachers and their levels of support of various types of merit pay.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding a number of educational philosophical statements and their levels of support of various types of merit pay.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between certain personal characteristics of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between certain educational backgrounds of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding a number of educational philosophical statements and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning.

Analysis

The basic design for this research was a correlational design. Chi square or Pearson product-moment was used as the type of analysis depending on the particular scales for the survey items. All six hypotheses were tested using a family alpha level of .01.

In addition, there was frequency analysis including percentages and averages where appropriate.

The collected data were arranged for computer analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine if a significant relationship existed between certain personal, educational, or philosophical demographics of teachers in the Chippewa Valley School District and a teachers' support of various forms of merit pay or related compensation. It was also the purpose of this study to determine if a significant relationship existed between certain personal, educational, or philosophical demographics of Chippewa Valley teachers and their opinion of various forms of merit pay or related compensation effecting learning.

A questionnaire was used to collect the information (see Appendix B). Presented in this chapter are the results of the correlations that were found in this study in relation to the six hypotheses that were tested. Secondly, also presented in this chapter is the demographic information reported by the respondents.

Questionnaire Response

On February 2, 1987, questionnaires were distributed through the internal mail system to all teachers in the Chippewa Valley School District. The date of distribution was selected so as not to conflict with any school district functions or vacations. The date was 1 week after the second semester began.

Questionnaires were distributed to all persons classified as teachers and responses were received through the internal mail system. Three hundred three questionnaires were returned providing a response rate of 73.36%. As with all questionnaires, sampling error is just one measure of reliability. Mail back surveys may be biased by interests of those willing to participate. A check of age, sex, teaching assignment, and salary classification by those responding show that those who participated, as a group, roughly portray a cross section of the teaching staff.

Statistical Results of Hypothesis Testing

Six hypotheses written in the null form were tested in this study. For variables interval or interval appearing, a Pearson r was computed to determine if a relationship existed in each hypothesis using an alpha level of .01.

Three of the dependent measures were nominal variables, thus eta (η) was used to obtain measures of their relation with the respondents' support of the various types of merit pay and the extent to which they thought merit pay would effect student learning. Analyses of variance were then computed for each; however, no significant differences were found.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that there is no significant relationship between certain personal characteristics of teachers and their support of various types of merit pay. Pearson product-moment

correlations were calculated for each of the personal characteristics and support for each of the 12 types of merit pay. Of the 72 paired variables, only 3 showed any significance at an alpha level of .01.

When individual personal characteristics were paired with weighted averages for support of all 12 types of merit pay, again no significant relationships were found. Table 1 provides the correlation for those relationships. Lacking a significant correlation, Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Table 1

Correlation of Personal Characteristics of Teachers and Their Support of Merit Pay

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Support of merit pay			
Sex	258	.0827	No
Marital status	258	-.0864	No
Age	258	-.0536	No
Children	258	.0486	No
Salary classification	258	-.1140	No
Salary step	258	-.0033	No

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is no significant relationship between the educational background of teachers and their level of

support for various types of merit pay. Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated for each informational item of the educational background and support for each of the 12 types of merit pay. Of the 96 paired variables, only 5 showed any significance at the .01 alpha level.

When individual educational background items were paired with weighted averages for support of all 12 types of merit pay, no significant relationships were found. These data, with the correlations, can be found in Table 2. Since no significant correlations were found, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Table 2

Correlation of Educational Backgrounds of Teachers and Their Support of Merit Pay

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Support of merit pay			
Teaching assignment	253	-.1452	No
Number of years teaching	253	-.0267	No
Highest degree	253	-.0870	No
Time since in-service	253	-.0558	No
Hours of school work	253	-.1308	No
Time since college credit	253	.0171	No
Undergraduate major	253	-.0501	No
Number of memberships	253	-.1263	No

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding a number of educational philosophical statements and their level of support for various types of merit pay. Table 3 lists Pearson product-moment correlations for each philosophical statement and their support for various types of merit pay. Of the 108 paired variables, 41 were found significant at the .01 level of significance.

Table 3

Correlation of Educational Philosophical Statements of Teachers and Their Support of Specific Types of Merit Pay

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Return to basics			
Career ladder	240	-.0367	No
Differentiated staffing	240	.0775	No
Market sensitive pay	240	.0053	No
Fast track	240	.0400	No
Incentive pay	240	.0007	No
Development award	240	.0869	No
Professional merit	240	.0433	No
Length of service	240	.0954	No
Productivity merit	240	.0710	No
Bonus	240	.1130	No

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Mentor teacher program	240	-.1013	No
Supply award	240	.0425	No
Satisfaction with teaching			
Career ladder	240	.0443	No
Differentiated staffing	240	.0226	No
Market sensitive pay	240	.0665	No
Fast track	240	.0388	No
Incentive pay	240	.0717	No
Development award	240	.0685	No
Professional merit	240	.0487	No
Length of service	240	.1109	No
Productivity merit	240	.0099	No
Bonus	240	.0090	No
Mentor teacher program	240	.0717	No
Supply award	240	.0892	No
Career plans			
Career ladder	240	.0276	No
Differentiated staffing	240	-.0318	No
Market sensitive pay	240	-.0436	No
Fast track	240	.0369	No
Incentive pay	240	.0061	No

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Development award	240	.0344	No
Professional merit	240	-.1142	No
Length of service	240	-.0214	No
Productivity merit	240	-.0204	No
Bonus	240	.0415	No
Mentor teacher program	240	.1085	No
Supply award	240	.0417	No
Team teaching			
Career ladder	240	.1901	Yes
Differentiated staffing	240	.0869	No
Market sensitive pay	240	.0716	No
Fast track	240	.1508	Yes
Incentive pay	240	.0776	No
Development award	240	.1433	No
Professional merit	240	.1297	No
Length of service	240	-.0305	No
Productivity merit	240	.0893	No
Bonus	240	.0699	No
Mentor teacher program	240	.2831	Yes
Supply award	240	.0593	No

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Expert teachers supervise			
Career ladder	240	.3198	Yes
Differentiated staffing	240	.2400	Yes
Market sensitive pay	240	.1749	Yes
Fast track	240	.3046	Yes
Incentive pay	240	.1722	Yes
Development award	240	.3532	Yes
Professional merit	240	.2019	Yes
Length of service	240	.0147	No
Productivity merit	240	.2054	Yes
Bonus	240	.2057	Yes
Mentor teacher program	240	.5092	Yes
Supply award	240	.2980	Yes
Group goals and cooperation			
Career ladder	240	.1101	No
Differentiated staffing	240	.0455	No
Market sensitive pay	240	.1394	No
Fast track	240	.0945	No
Incentive pay	240	.1193	No
Development award	240	.0793	No
Professional merit	240	.0737	No

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Length of service	240	-.0082	No
Productivity merit	240	.1937	Yes
Bonus	240	.1701	Yes
Mentor teacher program	240	.1313	No
Supply award	240	.0393	No
Shared purposes			
Career ladder	240	.2041	Yes
Differentiated staffing	240	.0492	No
Market sensitive pay	240	.1635	Yes
Fast track	240	.1742	Yes
Incentive pay	240	.0166	No
Development award	240	.1327	No
Professional merit	240	.1136	No
Length of service	240	.0495	No
Productivity merit	240	.1521	Yes
Bonus	240	.2046	Yes
Mentor teacher program	240	.2718	Yes
Supply award	240	.2011	Yes
Based on measurable objectives			
Career ladder	240	.1778	Yes
Differentiated staffing	240	.1812	Yes

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Market sensitive pay	240	.2014	Yes
Fast track	240	.2786	Yes
Incentive pay	240	.1670	Yes
Development award	240	.1413	No
Professional merit	240	.0649	No
Length of service	240	-.0157	No
Productivity merit	240	.4563	Yes
Bonus	240	.4141	Yes
Mentor teacher program	240	.1262	No
Supply award	240	.2066	Yes
Possible to measure performance			
Career ladder	240	.2237	Yes
Differentiated staffing	240	.2070	Yes
Market sensitive pay	240	.2972	Yes
Fast track	240	.3571	Yes
Incentive pay	240	.1615	Yes
Development award	240	.2251	Yes
Professional merit	240	.1229	No
Length of service	240	.0461	No
Productivity merit	240	.2934	Yes
Bonus	240	.3411	Yes

Table 3--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Mentor teacher program	240	.2949	Yes
Supply award	240	.3102	Yes

When individual educational philosophical statements were paired with weighted averages for support of all 12 types of merit pay, 6 of the 9 philosophical statements were found to be significant at the .01 level of significance. These correlations are listed in Table 4.

The high number of correlations between philosophical statements and support of merit pay whether treated as individual types of merit pay (Table 3) or as a group (Table 4) leads this researcher to reject Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that there is no significant relationship between certain personal characteristics of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay would effect student learning. Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated for each of the personal characteristics and effects on learning for each type of merit pay. Of the 72 possible relationships, only 3 were significant at the .01 level.

Individual personal characteristics were paired with weighted averages for effects on learning for all 12 types of merit pay to

Table 4

Correlation of Educational Philosophical Statements and Teacher Support of Merit Pay

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Support of merit pay			
Return to basics	240	.0263	No
Satisfaction with teaching	240	.0938	No
Career plans	240	.0123	No
Team teaching	240	.1943	Yes
Expert teachers supervise	240	.4458	Yes
Group goals and cooperation	240	.1768	Yes
Shared purposes	240	.2701	Yes
Based on measurable objectives	240	.3640	Yes
Possible to measure performance	240	.4342	Yes

determine significant relationships. Table 5 lists the correlations and shows no significant relationship at the .01 level. Hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that there is no significant relationship between the educational background of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning. Pearson

Table 5

Correlation of Personal Characteristics and What Teachers Think Are the Effects of Merit Pay on Learning

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Merit pay effect on learning			
Sex	242	.0278	No
Marital status	242	-.0271	No
Age	242	-.0563	No
Children	242	.0637	No
Salary classification	242	-.0943	No
Salary step	242	-.0451	No

product-moment correlations were calculated for each informational item of the educational background and effects on learning for each type of merit pay. Of the 96 relationships, 4 were found to be significant at the .01 level.

Educational backgrounds were paired with weighted averages for effects on learning for all 12 types of merit pay and no significant relationships were found. Correlations are listed in Table 6. Hypothesis 5, therefore, is accepted.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding a number of educational

Table 6

Correlation of Educational Backgrounds of Teachers and What Teachers Think Are the Effects of Merit Pay on Learning

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Merit pay effect on learning			
Teaching assignment	238	-.0297	No
Number of years teaching	238	-.0398	No
Highest degree	238	-.1021	No
Time since in-service	238	-.0653	No
Hours of schoolwork	238	-.1408	No
Time since college credit	238	.0409	No
Undergraduate major	238	-.0154	No
Number of memberships	238	-.0349	No

philosophical statements and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect student learning. Pearson product-moment correlations are shown in Table 7 for each educational philosophical statement and the effects on learning for each type of merit pay. Of the 108 relationships, 37 correlations were statistically significant at the .01 level.

Table 7

Correlation of Educational Philosophical Statements and Teachers' Opinions of Effect on Learning for Specific Types of Merit Pay

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Return to basics			
Career ladder	228	-.0327	No
Differentiated staffing	228	.0318	No
Market sensitive pay	228	.0030	No
Fast track	228	.0062	No
Incentive pay	228	-.0632	No
Development award	228	-.0729	No
Professional merit	228	-.0151	No
Length of service	228	.1068	No
Productivity merit	228	.0579	No
Bonus	228	.1164	No
Mentor teacher program	228	-.1053	No
Supply award	228	.0323	No
Satisfaction with teaching			
Career ladder	228	.0795	No
Differentiated staffing	228	.0276	No
Market sensitive pay	228	.0698	No
Fast track	228	.0695	No
Incentive pay	228	.0310	No

Table 7--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Development award	228	.1047	No
Professional merit	228	.0753	No
Length of service	228	.1265	No
Productivity merit	228	.0018	No
Bonus	228	-.0566	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.0962	No
Supply award	228	.0578	No
Career plans			
Career ladder	228	.0637	No
Differentiated staffing	228	-.0400	No
Market sensitive pay	228	-.0792	No
Fast track	228	.0257	No
Incentive pay	228	-.1199	No
Development award	228	.0604	No
Professional merit	228	-.0790	No
Length of service	228	-.0359	No
Productivity merit	228	-.0565	No
Bonus	228	.0411	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.1038	No
Supply award	228	-.0035	No

Table 7--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Team teaching			
Career ladder	228	.1892	Yes
Differentiated staffing	228	.1177	No
Market sensitive pay	228	.0380	No
Fast track	228	.0745	No
Incentive pay	228	.0459	No
Development award	228	.1416	No
Professional merit	228	.2106	Yes
Length of service	228	.0263	No
Productivity merit	228	.0415	No
Bonus	228	-.0285	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.2435	Yes
Supply award	228	.0044	No
Expert teachers supervise			
Career ladder	228	.3317	Yes
Differentiated staffing	228	.2708	Yes
Market sensitive pay	228	.1482	No
Fast track	228	.2687	Yes
Incentive pay	228	.1867	Yes
Development award	228	.3326	Yes
Professional merit	228	.2856	Yes

Table 7--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Length of service	228	.0458	No
Productivity merit	228	.1850	Yes
Bonus	228	.1539	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.5043	Yes
Supply award	228	.2331	Yes
Group goals and cooperation			
Career ladder	228	.1501	No
Differentiated staffing	228	.0382	No
Market sensitive pay	228	.0267	No
Fast track	228	.1076	No
Incentive pay	228	.1349	No
Development award	228	.0495	No
Professional merit	228	.0884	No
Length of service	228	.0212	No
Productivity merit	228	.1453	No
Bonus	228	.1034	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.1066	No
Supply award	228	.0758	No
Shared purposes			
Career ladder	228	.2693	Yes
Differentiated staffing	228	.0840	No

Table 7--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Market sensitive pay	228	.1505	No
Fast track	228	.2491	Yes
Incentive pay	228	.1841	Yes
Development award	228	.1036	No
Professional merit	228	.1770	Yes
Length of service	228	-.0157	No
Productivity merit	228	.1692	Yes
Bonus	228	.1334	No
Mentor teacher program	228	.2881	Yes
Supply award	228	.2667	Yes
Based on measurable objectives			
Career ladder	228	.2334	Yes
Differentiated staffing	228	.1879	Yes
Market sensitive pay	228	.1791	Yes
Fast track	228	.2411	Yes
Incentive pay	228	.1859	Yes
Development award	228	.1298	No
Professional merit	228	.0655	No
Length of service	228	.0810	No
Productivity merit	228	.4189	Yes
Bonus	228	.3613	Yes

Table 7--Continued

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Mentor teacher program	228	.1628	Yes
Supply award	228	.1470	No
Possible to measure performance			
Career ladder	228	.1707	Yes
Differentiated staffing	228	.1791	Yes
Market sensitive pay	228	.3002	Yes
Fast track	228	.3022	Yes
Incentive pay	228	.1909	Yes
Development award	228	.1504	No
Professional merit	228	.1746	Yes
Length of service	228	.1065	No
Productivity merit	228	.2517	Yes
Bonus	228	.2445	Yes
Mentor teacher program	228	.2900	Yes
Supply award	228	.2232	Yes

The educational philosophical statements were paired with weighted averages for effects on learning for all 12 forms of merit pay. Table 8 shows that there were significant relationships with five of the nine relationships with an alpha level of .01. This research rejects Hypothesis 6.

Table 8

Correlation of Educational Philosophical Statements and What Teachers Think Are the Effects of Merit Pay on Learning

Variable pair	Number	Obtained	Statistically significant at .01 level
Merit pay effect on learning			
Return to basics	228	.0121	No
Satisfaction with teaching	228	.0961	No
Career plans	228	-.0170	No
Team teaching	228	.1568	Yes
Expert teachers supervise	228	.4344	Yes
Group goals and cooperation	228	.1468	No
Shared purposes	228	.3093	Yes
Based on measurable objectives	228	.3622	Yes
Possible to measure performance	228	.3879	Yes

Demographic Information

There were 204 females and 87 males responding to the questionnaire and who returned it before the deadlines. Eighty-one percent of those who responded were married.

Overall the respondents were young compared to the average age of teachers in the state. Of those who responded, there were 163, or 55.8%, in the 30-40 year age group. Seventy-nine percent of the

group had degrees beyond the bachelor degree. There were 11 annual steps to the maximum salary and the mean salary step of those responding was 8.05.

Forty-one percent of the teachers were teaching at the elementary level, 23.3% at the middle school level, and 25.3% at the high school level. Nine and nine-tenths percent taught at combined levels.

When asked about their attendance at workshops, it was found that 79% had attended a workshop within the last year. When considering a 2-year period, it was found that 96.6% had attended workshops. Fifty-nine percent received their degree in education rather than in an academic area. Ninety-one percent held two or more memberships in professional organizations.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter represents an overview of the study. The problem is discussed along with the purpose and need for the study. The design of the study is explained along with the presentation of the findings.

Interpretations and conclusions from the six hypotheses are given. Lastly, implications and recommendations for further study are offered.

General Summary of Purpose and Need

In April of 1983 the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued its report, A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform. The report contained several recommendations, among them a recommendation that teaching salaries be competitive, market-sensitive, and performance based. Salary, the report continued, should be tied to an effective evaluation system and be based on merit. The Nation at Risk report was widely circulated and quoted by many recognized experts in the field of education. This interest in educational reform received additional impetus through the publication of other reports by prominent educators. Of particular interest to the teaching profession was the recommendation for a merit pay plan. Merit pay plans had frequently been mentioned in the many

reports.

Within 1 year, in 1984, 6 states had enacted a plan incorporating compensation related to merit plans, and 24 states had plans under consideration or proposed for consideration. Though merit pay for teachers was not a new idea, the many reports and interest in educational reform prompted a renewed national interest in the subject.

Although there was a renewed popularity for some new way to compensate teachers related to performance, there had not been much success in this regard in past history. There was, it seemed, after the impetus for renewed efforts toward merit pay, a movement toward a variety of plans. Teachers' unions softened from their original hard line approach, but were not specific in what they would support. The single salary schedule which for a long time was the basic form of payment to teachers, was strongly criticized.

With all the national emphasis on some form of compensation related to merit, it seemed logical to investigate this issue in the Chippewa Valley Schools. Boards of education, administrators, and teachers involved in any merit related compensation plan need to know what is acceptable and what has a possibility for success. Many merit pay plans presently in existence are experimental and some have been developed without teacher input. It would be helpful to the Chippewa Valley Schools, for both administration and teachers, to know what are the attitudes of teachers toward merit related compensation. People improve and are more supportive when they fully participate in the policy formation of an organization. It was the

purpose of this research to determine which variables, of those examined, were statistically significant in relation to teachers' attitudes toward merit pay in the Chippewa Valley Schools. If a merit related compensation plan is ever considered in the Chippewa Valley Schools, it would have a greater chance for success if it is based on accurate information.

To determine teacher response to the question of merit pay, this investigator prepared a questionnaire which was sent to all teachers in the Chippewa Valley Schools. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. The first three parts addressed personal information, educational information, and responses to philosophical statements. The fourth part listed 12 forms of merit compensation and respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each one of these. They were also asked to indicate to what extent they thought this form of merit pay would effect student learning.

The responses obtained from these questionnaires were analyzed to determine if relationships existed between personal, educational, and philosophical information and a teacher's level of support of merit compensation. The investigation also sought to determine if relationships existed between personal, educational, and philosophical information and a teacher's opinion on what effect various forms of merit pay have on student learning.

Discussion of Findings

This study was made in an attempt to determine if relationships exist between personal demographics, educational demographics, or

philosophical opinions of teachers and between, first, their level of support of merit pay and, second, whether there was a relationship between these three factors and the degree to which teachers think merit pay has an effect on learning. Six hypotheses were used in the study and a discussion of each follows:

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between certain personal data of teachers and their level of support of various types of merit pay. This hypothesis was supported.

Each of the six personal demographics of teachers which were used in the questionnaire were matched with each of the 12 types of merit pay. This provided 72 possible relationships. Of the 72 relationships, only 3 were significant at the .01 level. It was found that teachers with higher salary classifications (higher degrees) supported the career ladder form of merit pay, that those with more years of service supported the length of service form of merit pay, and that as age of a teacher increased so did their support for productivity merit, the form of merit pay that is based on objective measurement of students' progress toward goals.

It is likely that if a career ladder form of merit pay was started, teachers with advanced degrees would occupy the higher levels on the ladder. Although expert teachers without advanced degrees could advance on the ladder, most expert teachers pursue advanced degrees and those with advanced degrees see themselves occupying higher levels on the career ladder. It can be assumed that

is why teachers with advanced degrees support the career ladder form of merit pay.

It was found that teachers at higher salary steps were more supportive of a merit plan that provided increased pay for teachers based on length of service. This is not surprising since the Chippewa Valley Schools do pay teachers salary increments for experience through 11 years with automatic increases each year. There also is a provision for salary increases each 5 years beginning with the 15th year. Considering that the mean salary step of those responding to the questionnaire was 8.05, and that they were all benefiting from increases based on longevity, it could be predicted that they would support this type of merit.

As age of a teacher increases so does their support of a productivity form of merit pay, which would compensate them in relation to students achieving specific goals. Through experience, teachers sharpen skills and have greater success with their students. It seems reasonable to assume that is why they supported that form of merit pay.

When all 12 forms of merit pay were considered together, no significant relationships with personal data were found. It can be concluded that certain personal factors have no bearing on a teacher's level of support of merit pay.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that there is no significant relationship between certain educational demographics of teachers and their level

of support of merit pay. This hypothesis was supported.

Each of 8 educational factors relating to teachers were paired with 12 types of merit pay. This provided for 96 possible relationships. Only 5 were found to be significant. It was found that the more advanced degrees a teacher had, the greater the likelihood they will support merit pay based on length of service. This was evident in relation to personal data also, when the inquiry was based on salary classification which is related to degrees. This again supports the information that those with higher degrees favor merit based on length of service. It was also found that there is a significant relationship between the number of hours a teacher spends on school related responsibilities and their support of the mentor teacher form of merit pay. Regarding the former, it is expected that teachers who have advanced degrees would favor a compensation system rewarding length of service. Teachers who have advanced degrees usually have spent more time with the school district and more years in teaching. Regarding the latter, teachers who spend many additional hours related to teaching favor the mentor teacher plan which pays a teacher for more responsibility and investment of time. These teachers are already spending the extra time and they see themselves as probable candidates for this form of merit pay.

When all 12 forms of merit pay were considered together, no significant relationships were found with educational demographics. It can be concluded that the educational factors used in this study have no significant relationship with a teacher's level of support of merit pay.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding a number of educational philosophical statements and their level of support of various types of merit pay. This hypothesis was not supported since significant relationships were found.

Each of 9 educational philosophical statements were matched with 12 types of merit pay. This provided 108 possible relationships. Of the 108 relationships, 41 were found to be significant at the .01 level. Of the 9 philosophical statements, 4 were found to provide a stronger relationship with support of merit pay than others. These 4 philosophical statements were:

1. The school district should involve expert teachers in the supervision and assistance of their peers and those in need of special assistance.

2. Good schools are organizations in which the participants share purposes, values, and a determination to succeed together.

3. Based on past experience, the most successful merit pay programs appear to be those based on a concept of increased student learning and which are objectively measurable and visibly fair.

4. Although teacher evaluation remains an underconceptualized and underdeveloped activity, it is possible to obtain reasonable measures of classroom performance.

The results indicate that a relationship does exist between support of merit pay and certain philosophical positions. It is

reasonable to believe that merit pay has greater likelihood of success when it is implemented with certain philosophical understandings.

Teachers apparently will support merit pay if support is available to assist teachers who need it and if help is available to improve skills. Schools accomplish goals through group efforts. No teacher can be individually responsible for the education of a child since teaching is a group effort. Teachers believe this and a merit plan must accommodate for this. Merit pay has a chance of succeeding if it is based on objective measurement. Teachers who agree that classroom performance is measurable are more likely to tend to support merit pay.

The results of this study suggest the importance of certain philosophical concerns regarding education and merit pay. Successful merit pay plans, one may conclude, should address philosophical issues rather than personal or educational concerns.

When all 12 forms of merit pay were considered together, a significant relationship was found in 6 of the 9 philosophical statements. Those statements concerning peer help, shared purpose, and measurable objectives were the most significant.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that there is no significant relationship between certain personal demographics of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect learning. This hypothesis was supported.

Each of 6 personal factors of teachers were matched with 12 types of merit pay providing 72 possible relationships. Only 3 of the 72 were significant at the .01 level. Based on these data, it is reasonable to conclude that of the personal factors selected for this study there is no relationship with the extent to which teachers think merit pay will effect learning.

When all 12 types of merit pay were considered together, no significant relationships with effects on learning were found with personal factors. Based on these results, it cannot be concluded that the extent to which teachers think merit pay will effect learning is related to the personal factors selected.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that there is no significant relationship between certain educational factors of teachers and the extent to which they think merit pay will effect learning. This hypothesis was supported.

Each of 8 educational factors relating to teachers were matched with 12 types of merit pay providing 96 possible relationships. Of the 96 relationships, only 4 were significant at the .01 level. The results do not support a relationship between educational factors of teachers and how they think merit pay will effect learning.

When all 12 types of merit pay are considered together, no significant relationships were found. Since a relationship is not supported, it was not possible to relate a teacher's opinion on the

effects merit pay has on learning to the educational factors selected in this research.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 stated that there is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions regarding selected educational philosophical statements and the extent to which merit pay will effect learning. Significant relationships were found and the hypothesis was rejected.

Each of 9 educational philosophical statements were matched with 12 types of merit pay. This provided 108 relationships between philosophical statements and a teacher's indicated significance of the extent on learning for each type of merit pay. Of the 108 relationships, 37 were found significant at the .01 level. It was found that the philosophical statements that showed the strongest relationships to effects on learning were the same as those that showed a strong relationship to the support of merit pay.

When all 12 forms of merit pay were considered together, a significant relationship was found for 5 of the 9 philosophical statements. These same 5 were also found significant when considering the relationship between philosophy and support of merit pay.

Conclusions

Teachers are more likely to base their decisions related to merit pay on philosophical reasons than on their personal or educational status. Factors of age, marital status, sex, number of

children, or salary level showed no significant relationship to their level of support of merit pay. When looking at teachers' opinions on the effects merit pay has on learning, no significant relationships were found with personal demographics. Teachers who support merit pay seem to think it will improve learning; however, it cannot be concluded that teachers support merit pay for that reason.

The educational demographics of teachers used in this study have no significant relationship to a teacher's level of support of merit pay nor to the degree they think merit pay will effect learning. The grade level taught, the number of years of teaching, recent graduate work, or frequency of in-service show no relationship to how much a teacher supports merit pay or how much they think it will improve learning. Furthermore, the type of degree, whether in education or some academic subject, had no relationship to support of merit pay by teachers. Teachers do, however, think that they should receive additional salary for years of service. Since that form of merit was already being paid in the Chippewa Valley Schools, teachers were expected to support it.

Relationships between educational philosophical perceptions of teachers and support of merit pay and relationships between educational philosophical perceptions of teachers and the significance merit pay has on learning suggest that the educational philosophy of a teacher is of great significance in their response to merit pay. When teachers in this study supported a form of merit pay, they also supported its value in improving learning.

Teachers who support merit pay believe that expert teachers should assist and supervise their peers. They also believe that education is a group responsibility shared by many teachers and they are believers in a team effort. Merit pay should be based on programs that can be measured objectively and though teacher evaluation still needs to be developed and refined, it is possible to measure classroom performance.

Merit pay will likely be supported by staff in a school district if it is consistent with the philosophy of the teaching staff, that is, if it fits the worker. A goal of merit pay, better instruction and improved learning, is possible; however, the form merit pay takes must be consistent with teachers' thinking in areas related to improvement of teachers' skills, shared purposes, and objective and fair evaluation.

Implications

The review of the literature has indicated that there are diverse opinions regarding merit pay for teachers. Performance incentive programs, except possibly salary merit, have only recently increased in use. Insufficient research has been done on merit systems such as career ladders or mentor teacher programs which are now being used in some school districts. Most of the justification for such programs are extrapolated from research done on effective teaching. As more merit programs have had a chance to operate, a base of knowledge will, hopefully, develop. Planners of merit programs should, in the meantime, be prepared for a variety of results.

It is important to be aware that the improvement of teaching and learning are at the center of the debate over merit pay and performance rewards. Developing standards of evaluation are difficult, time consuming, and controversial, however, necessary for objective measurement. The implications are that for the system to work, the effort will need to be made; and for a system o be successful, it should be based on an agreed philosophy of teaching.

Recommendations for Further Study

Conclusions and implications of the present study suggest additional researches.

1. Merit pay programs have been suggested as a means of improving instruction. Studies need to be conducted in school districts that have implemented merit pay to determine if merit pay has, in fact, improved instruction.

2. Intrinsic rewards may be a greater motivator of better performance in teaching than extrinsic rewards. Studies should be conducted to determine if intrinsic rewards significantly influence teachers' job performance.

3. This study was conducted in a school district that was growing in enrollment and where teacher satisfaction was high. A study should be done in a school district of stable or declining enrollment and where teacher satisfaction levels are moderate to low.

4. Merit rating in the corporate sector should be explored to determine which of those plans that are successful can be applied to the field of public education.

5. An investigation should be made to determine the attitudes of the public toward various aspects of merit pay.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Cover Letter to Solicit Teacher Participation

February 2, 1987

Dear Chippewa Valley Teacher:

Your help is requested in supplying information for a research project which I have undertaken for my dissertation through Western Michigan University.

Within the last few years the subject of merit pay has become a frequently discussed topic. Some of the recently published educational reports have suggested that we give it closer examination. No doubt that has added to its popularity as a topic of discussion.

The purpose of this study is to better understand teachers responses to the concept of merit pay. The research is not intended to evaluate merit pay, but only to determine teachers' attitudes towards the subject.

I am hoping you will cooperate by completing the enclosed questionnaire. I pledge that your answers will be anonymous and that only group data will be reported. The results of this study should be informative and of some value to public education.

All information, whether published or not, generated from this project will be available to the Chippewa Valley Educational Association. Furthermore, the CVEA will be consulted throughout this project just as they have been up to now.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return by the indicated date. Your prompt response is requested. An addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Samulski

MICHAEL D. SAMULSKI
Doctoral Candidate

Joseph Oliverio

JOSEPH OLIVERIO
President, CVEA

MDS:JO/dms

Appendix B

Teacher Merit Pay and Related Types of Compensation Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information about teacher attitudes toward merit pay and related types of compensation. It will provide a golden opportunity to tell how you feel.

The study is not an attempt to devise a plan for the merit rating of teachers, nor is it an attempt to prove or disprove that teachers' salaries should be based on merit ratings. This survey is being undertaken to determine the attitude of Chippewa Valley teachers on this question.

Your cooperation in assisting in this study will be greatly appreciated. Please complete the questionnaire now and return through school mail in the envelope provided. It will only take a few minutes and your reply will be anonymous.

PLEASE RETURN VIA SCHOOL MAIL TO MICHAEL D. SAMULSKI AT WYANDOT MIDDLE SCHOOL BY THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1987.

PART I

The following questions are included so that this data can be correlated to the other data in this study. Please check the answer that best describes you.

A. Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

B. Marital Status

_____ Married
_____ Separated, divorced or widowed
_____ Single

C. Age

_____ 20 to 25	_____ 36 to 40	_____ 51 to 55
_____ 26 to 30	_____ 41 to 45	_____ 56 to 60
_____ 31 to 35	_____ 46 to 50	_____ 61 and over

D. Do you have any children?

_____ Yes _____ No

E. Your salary classification.

_____ Bachelors
_____ Bachelors + Vocational Certificate
_____ Masters
_____ Masters + 30 Hours
_____ Second Masters or Specialist
_____ Ph.D

F. Your salary step (1 to 11)

_____ Please indicate.

PART II

The purpose of this section is to gather information related to educational demographics.

A. Please indicate your present teaching assignment.

_____ Elementary K -5	_____ Middle School 6-8
_____ High School 9-12	_____ Combination

B. Regardless of the types of schools you taught in, for about how many years in total have you worked as a teacher.

_____ Less than 5	_____ 16 to 20
_____ 5 to 10	_____ over 20
_____ 11 to 15	

C. Indicate highest educational degree.

_____ Bachelor Degree	_____ Specialist Degree
_____ Masters Degree	_____ Doctorate Degree

D. How long has it been since you attended an educational workshop, conference or seminar. Don't count inservices held within our district.

_____ During last six months.
_____ Between six months and one year.
_____ More than one year, but less than two.
_____ More than two, but less than four.
_____ More than four years.

E. In an average week, about how many hours do you spend, in total, on school related responsibilities -including all responsiblities in the classroom, any responsibilities outside the classroom, and any work you do at home?

_____ Less than 26 hours
_____ 26 to 30 hours
_____ 31 to 35 hours
_____ 36 to 40 hours
_____ 41 to 45 hours
_____ 46 to 50 hours
_____ 51 to 55 hours
_____ More than 55 hours

F. How long ago has it been since you took a college or university credit course?

_____ During the last six months.
_____ Between six months and one year.
_____ More than one year, but less than two years ago.
_____ More than two years, but less than four years ago.
_____ More than four years ago.

G. Was your undergraduate college major in education or in some academic subject area?

_____ Education
_____ Academic subject area.

H. Other than your union membership, are you a member of a professional teacher organization, which is concerned with an academic subject or professional educational interest?

_____ No membership.
_____ One membership.
_____ Two memberships.
_____ Three memberships.
_____ More than three memberships.

PART III

This section is intended to get your point of view about teaching.

A. Please react to the following statement:

The problems in American education could be solved by returning to the basics with less emphasis on experimentation.

_____ Strongly agree.
_____ Agree
_____ Neutral
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree

B. All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with teaching as a career?

_____ Very satisfied.
_____ Somewhat satisfied.
_____ Neither satisfied or dissatisfied.
_____ Somewhat dissatisfied.
_____ Very dissatisfied.

C. Which of these statements best describes your career plans at the present time?

_____ Teaching is my career.
_____ I'm considering other career opportunities.
_____ Teaching is not my career.
_____ I'm undecided.

D. What are your feelings about "team teaching" and being observed by other teachers?

_____ Very positive.
_____ Positive
_____ No feelings.
_____ Negative
_____ Very Negative.

E. The school district should involve expert teachers in the supervision and assistance of their peers, and those in need of special assistance.

_____ Strongly agree.
_____ Agree
_____ Neutral
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree.

F. The emphasis on group goals over individual incentives is consistent with what we know about the need for cooperation in improving schools.

_____ Strongly agree.
_____ Agree
_____ Neutral
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree.

G. Good schools are organizations in which the participants share purposes, values and a determination to succeed together.

_____ Strongly agree.
_____ Agree
_____ Neutral
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree.

H. Based on past experience the most successful merit pay programs appear to be those based on a concept of increased student learning and which are objectively measurable and visibly fair.

_____ Strongly agree
_____ Agree
_____ Neutral
_____ Disagree
_____ Strongly disagree.

I. Although teacher evaluation remains an under-conceptualized and underdeveloped activity, it is possible to obtain reasonable measures of classroom performance.

_____ Strongly agree.
_____ Agree
_____ Some agreement.
_____ Little agreement.
_____ No agreement.

PART IV

Since "merit pay" means different things to different people, this section will list various forms of merit pay and related compensation. For each form of pay that follows, you will be given a definition of that type of pay and asked for indications of both the extent to which you support that type of pay and what you think its effects are on student learning.

For each statement the following two scales will apply.

Degree of Support		Effects On Learning	
1. Strongly Support	(SS)	1. Very Positive	(VP)
2. Support	(S)	2. Positive	(P)
3. Neutral	(N)	3. Neutral	(N)
4. Oppose	(O)	4. Negative	(O)
5. Strongly Oppose	(SO)	5. Very Negative	(VO)

Circle you Response						Circle your Response				
SS	S	N	O	SO	Career Ladder – A promotion system within the teaching ranks. It provides several levels of teachers from apprentice teacher through several intermediate steps to master teacher. Different salaries and responsibilities are associated with each step.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Differentiated Staffing – The idea that some teaching tasks are more difficult than others and, therefore, are worth more salary.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Market Sensitive Pay – Starting teachers at a higher step to attract teachers in shortage areas.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Fast Track – The concept of rewarding teachers for outstanding work by moving them up more than one step at a time. Also used to retain teachers in shortage areas.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Incentive Pay – Additional money paid when teaching under difficult conditions. Sometimes called "combat pay." Pay is related to working conditions.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Development Award – A monetary award given to a teacher for outstanding work to be used specifically for professional development such as conferences or workshops.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Professional Merit – Paying teachers additionally according to their qualifications, such as education, training or experience.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Length of Service – Additional salary given beyond the basic salary schedule for years of service.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Productivity Merit – A compensation system that rewards teachers beyond the basic salary. It is based on objective measurement of their students' progress toward specific learning goals.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Bonus – Financial compensation given to an individual teacher, a team of teachers, a department or school for outstanding achievement by a student or a group of students.	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Mentor Teacher Program – Teachers are selected on the basis of exemplary teaching and receive additional pay for curricular development and work with other teachers (also called Master Teacher Program).	VP	P	N	O	VO
SS	S	N	O	SO	Supply Award – A provision that allots a teacher an increased budget to be used for classroom enrichment materials when the teacher has demonstrated exemplary teaching.	VP	P	N	O	VO

Appendix C

First Follow-up Letter

Dear Chippewa Valley Teacher:

Recently you received a questionnaire asking for your participation in an important survey. Many teachers have already returned their form and if you were one of them I thank you for your cooperation.

If you have not had a chance to do so, may I ask you to return the completed form. Only a few minutes of your time will be required. It is important that you respond so that the final results will reflect your view as well as the view of others.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Samulski

MICHAEL D. SAMULSKI
Doctoral Candidate

MDS/dms

Appendix D

Second Follow-up Letter

Dear Chippewa Valley Teacher:

Approximately two weeks ago you were asked to participate in a survey on merit pay. I am pleased with the great number who have responded so far.

I am trying to get as near to a "perfect survey response" as is possible and it may be your response that is needed to do that. If you have been unable to complete the questionnaire before this, I would certainly appreciate your cooperation at this time.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Samulski

MICHAEL D. SAMULSKI
Doctoral Candidate

MDS/dms

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