

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE INFLUENCE OF
AWARDS RECEIVED FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
EARLY IN THEIR CAREERS

by

M. JEAN BALLEW

B.A., Eastern Nazarene College, 1977
M.S., Indiana University School of Education, 1995

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Manhattan, Kansas

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Abstract

This study sought to provide insight regarding how novice teachers perceive the influence of receiving an award for excellence early in their careers. The questions guiding this study focus on the perceptions of the respondents regarding whether or not they perceived that the award was motivating; whether the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally; and whether they perceived an increase in commitment to the profession.

This quantitative study gathered data from an on-line questionnaire sent to teachers who received the Kansas Horizon Award from 2003 through 2011. The study used exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, and analysis of variance procedures to ascertain whether or not there was any significance regarding the way awardees responded to 15 Likert items. The data were compared to six demographic variables: year of award; age of winner at the time of the award; level taught – elementary or secondary; location of school – urban, suburban, or rural; gender; and teaching status.

Each of the 15 Likert items were aligned with one of the four factors identified by the factor analysis – internal influence, expectations, external influence, and commitment to the profession. The significant statistics from the factor analysis ranged from .506 through .900. The analysis of variance showed significance for three factors and variables.(1) The most recent awardees (2009-2011) perceived a greater influence from the award regarding expectations ($p = .03$) than did those teachers who won the award in previous years. (2) Teachers from urban schools perceived a greater significance from the award regarding external influence ($p = .05$) than those from suburban schools. (3) Females perceived a greater influence from the award than did males regarding commitment to the profession ($p = .03$).

Recommendations for practice include the need for increased awareness of administrators regarding the importance of awards and recognition for teachers, increased support for teacher attendance at the state conference, and increased leadership opportunities for awardees.

Recommendations for further research include studies of how administrators choose nominees for awards and why some never nominate anyone, the relationship between leadership opportunities and awards, and retention of award-winning teachers.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all teachers everywhere. Know that your hard work and dedication to the profession of education is appreciated. Those long hours are worth it because what you do makes a difference, whether you perceive it or not. You are influencing lives, schools, and communities in ways that have far-reaching effects.

Thank you for the sacrifices you make to get the job done, for the enthusiasm you express to and inspire in your students, for the creativity you bring to the classroom to engage your students in learning, and most of all, for your perseverance in striving for excellence. You are the shining stars in the profession that makes all other professions possible – and yes, you touch the future. You teach.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

There is much interest today in making sure students in public schools across America are learning from exemplary teachers. Schools and teachers are in the headlines, indicating widespread societal interest. The media identifies outstanding schools, which are held up as examples to emulate. Individual teachers are recognized for excellence in teaching. On-line scorecards provide information about the performance of any school in any state, resources for learning, and interviews with educators.

Since the implementation of the federally legislated No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, with its emphasis on accountability and highly qualified teachers, there seems to be both increased societal and professional interest in education. In addition to the success stories, failing schools and teachers are often blamed for much of what is wrong with education and held up as examples of a system that has failed the children and citizens of America.

Obviously, American society values education and recognizes that various elements contribute to excellence in the classroom – teachers, principals, curriculum, and the family. Some studies show that the teacher is the most important element in the classroom (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2006; Sanders & Rivers. 1996). Although some studies focus on what makes good teachers exemplary or distinguished, few studies examine the influence of awards and recognition upon exemplary teachers. Most research on rewards examines them in the context of the business world or higher education. Awards for teaching tend to be given to experienced teachers with well-documented accomplishments. However, some teachers excel in even their

first year of teaching. What influence does recognition for excellence in teaching have upon novice teachers?

This chapter will begin with an overview of the issues regarding the importance of exemplary teachers and the influence that recognition and awards for teachers has upon them – personally, professionally, and organizationally. This is followed by the statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the scope. The chapter closes with a brief description of the study limitations, definition of terms, and a summary.

Overview of the Issues

This section will introduce the broad issue – the interest in and need for exemplary teachers and how recognition influences teachers personally, professionally, and organizationally.

The need: Sanders & Rivers (1996) found that students who have an exemplary teacher for three years in a row may achieve much more academically than those with less skilled teachers. Additionally, students who moved from mediocre teachers to more exemplary teachers took only a year to catch up to their peers.

Research also shows that up to 50% of all teachers leave within the first five years. Ingersoll (1998 & 2002), discovered that many of the most proficient teachers are the ones who are most likely to leave. This makes the retention of teachers a matter of concern. As many as 14% of teachers (20% in urban areas) leave the profession after their first year (McKinsey & Company, 2010).

Given the observation that teachers have a high turnover rate, what motivates those who stay in the profession? Overwhelmingly, the answer seems to be that they want to make a difference. As Christa McAuliffe said before her fateful space shuttle mission: “I touch the

future. I teach.” Research shows that when teachers believe that they are able to help their students grow academically and in other ways, they feel fulfilled. When they feel helpless and cannot make a difference, they leave in droves. (Ingersoll, 1998).

While inadequate pay is often cited for a reason teachers leave (Budig, 2006; Ingersoll, 2001; NCTAF, 2002), it is hypothesized that when people feel appreciated, they will put up with a lot. Can recognition via awards for excellence influence teachers’ commitment to the profession?

Most research regarding awards has been conducted in the business world or in higher education. In the business world, the attitude toward recognition is different from the attitude of those in education – the word usually used in business is *rewards*. In many cases, these rewards are something that employees deliberately strive for by meeting explicit criteria (Jensen, McMullen & Stark, 2007). Employees often have some control over whether they will win the reward or not. In contrast, many teaching awards, but not all, are awarded to teachers who are nominated by others such as colleagues, peers, parents, or past and present students. In some cases, such as the national Milken Award, teachers do not even complete an application, as the award is a total surprise to the recipient.

Personal influence addresses teachers’ lives outside of the classroom – their interactions with family and friends and anything else not connected with education. It is possible that awards have far-reaching effects that motivate beyond the reason for which they are given.

Professional influence addresses the various issues of being a teacher. It may include such things as risk-taking and being willing to try new strategies in the classroom, leadership opportunities, and increased expectations, both on the part of the teacher and of colleagues.

Organizational influence addresses how teaching awards may affect the winners' schools and communities. Awards may not only bring recognition to the individual, but to a wider scale. Whether teachers perceive this is an important element of an award or not was examined in this study.

Statement of the Problem

Historically, awards for excellence in teaching are given later in a teacher's career. Few awards are given to novice teachers – those within their first year or two of teaching. With all the emphasis in the USA on exemplary teaching, and given the high exit rate from the profession, retention of distinguished educators is an important issue. Can recognition of exemplary teaching by novice teachers make a difference? How might recognition motivate or influence novice teachers regarding the profession?

Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977) addresses perceived self-competence. When a person's self-efficacy is high, it has far-reaching consequences. High self-efficacy makes people feel that they can cope with challenging situations and positively affects how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles. "Efficacy beliefs contribute significantly to the level of motivation and performance," (Bandura & Locke, 2003). Can recognition for excellence increase novice teachers' self-efficacy and therefore their motivation to persevere in the profession?

There are few studies on the influence of awards upon novice P-12 teachers. This study explores the influence of an award for excellence upon novice teachers in a mid-western state. It attempts to understand whether recognition for excellence has an influence upon their teaching, personal lives, schools, or communities; whether winning the award motivates them in any way; and whether they remain committed to the profession. In sum, it tries to understand award-winning educators, including their personal, professional, and organizational experiences and

understandings. What are their perceptions about the influence of receiving an award for excellence in teaching as a novice teacher?

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to investigate how the winners of a teaching award given to novice teachers perceive its influence, in some cases several years, after receiving the recognition. This study focuses on the Kansas Horizon Award winners from 2003, when the award was first granted, to 2011. It explores how the winners of the Kansas Horizon Award perceive the influence of the award personally, professionally, and organizationally.

The study examines five questions focusing upon teachers who had received the Horizon Award for excellence in teaching as novice teachers:

1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award has ***motivated*** them in any way?
2. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***personally*** (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?
3. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***professionally*** (that is, upon their teaching)?
4. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their ***commitment to the profession of education?***
5. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***organizationally*** (that is, upon their school and/or community)?

Significance of the Study

Given the interest in exemplary teachers, the findings from this study should be of interest to local school administrators, leaders in higher education units that prepare teachers, and state education leaders and policy makers. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE),

which developed the Horizon Award and is responsible for its continued facilitation, supports this research project. KSDE should find the results useful in making decisions about the use of awards to recognize excellence in teaching.

Because most research regarding workplace-related awards has been done in the business world or in higher education settings, this study will provide a unique look at the influence of teaching awards at the P-12 levels of education. The writer believes it should contribute to the empirical literature and be of value to researchers and educational leaders interested in how recognition motivates teachers and influences excellence in teaching.

Scope of the Study

The Unit of Analysis is the Horizon Award winners from 2003-2011. While the more recent winners had less time to recognize and reflect upon any impact, benefits, or other influences from winning the award, their memories could be fresher regarding the application process. Earlier winners may have more insight regarding the long-term influence of the award.

The research questions for this study are analyzed using quantitative research methods, specifically an exploratory factor analysis and analysis of variance. The research focuses on whether or not winning the Horizon Award has had any kind of influence upon the winners personally, professionally, and organizationally. Data were collected using an on-line survey instrument that directed the Horizon Award winners to respond to 15 items using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

In order to seek clarification and deeper insight into the respondents' answers, three open-ended questions followed the Likert items. These focus upon the influence the award had upon the recipients personally, professionally, and organizationally. The data from the open-

ended questions were examined to discover categories and/or patterns related to teaching and motivation; other obvious categories that emerged were also recognized.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are first, the use of on-line survey. There was no face-to-face contact with respondents. Some respondents chose not to participate and some completed only part of the survey. Those who do not enjoy taking on-line surveys had no other way to respond; perhaps they would have been more likely to respond to a face-to-face interview. Others may have been busy and simply felt they did not have the time to complete the survey.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was confined by a number of delimitations, which “address how the study will be narrowed in scope” (Creswell, 1994, p. 110) – the delimitations are like the borders. This study is delimited, or narrowed, by the fact that the sample includes only teachers from Kansas. The next delimitation is that it includes only teachers who have won the Horizon Award. Such teachers have been identified as exemplary. Surely there are other teachers across the state of Kansas who are also exemplary, however, this study solicits the perceptions of only one category of exemplary teachers – those who are recipients of the Horizon Award. In addition, the study is delimited by the fact that the Horizon Award, a relatively new award, has been granted only since 2003. Another delimitation is that only novice teachers receive the award.

Although the response rate to the questionnaire was over 60%, it was not possible to contact all Horizon Award recipients since the Kansas State Department of Education has lost contact with some of them. Although an attempt was made by the researcher to find missing contact information, this was only partially successful. The teaching status of those recipients is not known.

Since this study focused upon award-winning teachers, the findings are not generalizable to the entire population of teachers in the USA, nor even to the state of Kansas. In addition, the findings could be open to other interpretations.

Definition of Terms

Awards

According to the Oxford Dictionary on-line, the definition of *award* is: “a prize or other mark of recognition given in honour of an achievement.” The teaching award examined for this study meets the criteria of this definition. The Horizon Award is given as recognition to honor achievement. There is some discussion in the literature of the use of the term *award* vs. *reward*, especially since much of the literature about recognition in the workplace has been conducted in the field of business, which typically uses the term *reward*. Such rewards are often given as incentives, with the hope that the behavior that occurred to get such rewards will continue. Since the teaching awards for this study are not given as incentives, and the word *award* tends to be used in the educational realm, *award* will be the term used to describe the recognition given to exemplary teachers.

Exemplary Teachers

The KSDE website states that the mission of the Horizon Award is to “recognize exemplary first year teachers who perform in such a way that distinguishes them as outstanding.” For the purpose of this study, exemplary teachers are those who are perceived as outstanding or distinguished because they have performed in such a way that sets them apart from other teachers. Charlotte Danielson’s widely-used research-based Framework for Teaching (2007) for the identification of high quality teaching provides an example of the use of the term

distinguished to describe exemplary performance of teachers. The various levels of performance categories for her framework are unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, and distinguished.

Horizon Award

The mission of the Kansas Horizon Award Program is
to recognize exemplary first-year teachers who perform in a way
that distinguishes them as outstanding (KSDE website)

Established and sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education, the Horizon Award specifically recognizes full-time preK-12 novice teachers who have had a successful first year of teaching. Four elementary teachers and four secondary teachers in each of Kansas' four congressional districts (for a total of 32 teachers) may receive the award in any given year. Horizon Award winners are invited to become life-long members of the Kansas Network of Exemplary Educators (KEEN).

Influences of the Award: Personal, Professional, and Organizational

Influence is “the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself” (Oxford Dictionary on-line). Winning an award for excellence in teaching has influences upon teachers personally, professionally, and organizationally. Such influences may be positive or negative.

How awards influence teachers **personally** refers to the teachers’ private lives, separate from their identities as educators. According to Bandura’s theory of self-efficacy, success in one area breeds self-confidence in general. This means winning an award could possibly affect the recipients in far-reaching ways unrelated to their job or career. This also could include influences the award had upon the recipient’s family or other elements outside of education.

How awards influence teachers **professionally** refers to the teachers’ jobs or careers. Winning an award could inspire or motivate teachers in some way – to be greater risk-takers, for

example. An award may give teachers different career-related expectations. Perhaps teachers are offered certain leadership opportunities or asked to take on certain tasks as a result of being recognized for excellence in teaching. In addition, a teaching award may influence teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

How awards influence teachers **organizationally** refers to the teachers' schools and communities. An award for individual teacher excellence could in turn have an influence on the recipient's department, school, and/or community. This could be as a result of publicity of the award through venues such as a school-wide assembly or local community media.

Motivation

According to the Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary, motivation is a need or desire that causes a person to take action. Motivation is the force that drives people to achieve their goals and remain committed to them.

Abraham Maslow's work focused on a five-level hierarchy of needs, and how the fulfillment of those needs is motivating. As each level of needs is fulfilled, the individual is motivated to meet the next level of needs. It is not until the fourth level that the focus of this study is addressed: how recognition relates to the issues of self-confidence and self-worth, which are addressed by this study through recognition and awards.

Novice Teachers

For the purposes of this study, the term *novice teachers* refers to teachers within the first or second year of teaching. The Horizon Award winners are nominated at the end of their first year of teaching and receive the award during their second year of teaching.

Perception

According to the Oxford Dictionary on-line, the word perception refers “to the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted.”

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy has to do with how people perceive their own competence. It is not simply recognizing that one has good or bad self-esteem. Bandura states that “perceived self-efficacy is not a measure of the skills one has but a belief about what can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possess,” (p.37, 1997). Self-efficacy has far-reaching effects. Additionally, when people feel competent in one area of their life, it leads them to believe that they will also be successful in undertaking new tasks unrelated to that first area. This means that teachers who receive an award for excellence in teaching may find that it affects areas of their lives unrelated to their jobs or careers in education.

Summary

Given the interest of both educators and society in excellence in teaching, this study seeks to provide insight as to the implications of receiving an award early in one’s teaching career. What influence does recognition for excellence have upon novice teachers? Does recognition for excellence early in their career make them more committed to the profession? If so, does such recognition make them more committed to classroom teaching? Does recognition open other doors for advancement? Does recognition provide leadership opportunities? Is it motivating to be recognized for excellence so early in their career? Does it increase confidence and encourage risk-taking? Does it have any influence upon the teachers’ schools and communities? How does winning an award as a novice teacher influence winners personally, professionally, and organizationally?

The findings from this study may raise awareness regarding the influence of awards upon various stakeholders and/or policymakers. The findings may influence those who give awards to revise how awards are given, how many are given, what kinds of recognition are given, and how winners are chosen.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Theories of motivation and self-efficacy frame this study of recognition and awards for excellence in teaching and the kinds of influence awards may have upon novice teachers personally, professionally, and organizationally. The first section of this chapter will describe the purpose of teaching awards and more specifically, explain the Horizon Award. The second section of this chapter will include a discussion of motivation: definition and theories of motivation, and motivation and self-efficacy. A discussion of the benefits and disadvantages of awards follows.

Awards

“Appreciation is a wonderful thing:
It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”
Voltaire

There are many awards for teachers. An internet search reveals that some are given at the national, state, regional, or district level; some are level-specific, such as elementary, secondary, or higher education. Other awards are given to teachers who excel in specific content areas such as math, science, social studies, English and language arts, family and consumer sciences, character education, technology, and special education (teacherscount.org, National Council of Teachers of English website, Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching website).

While criteria, ceremonies, prizes, expectations and opportunities vary among awards, the general purpose of teaching awards is to focus positive attention on education by recognizing excellent teachers. It is not within the scope of this study to present an exhaustive review of

teaching awards; therefore, nine examples of national and Kansas teaching awards are chosen for inclusion in Table 2.1. They are examined for commonalities regarding their *raison d'être* – reason for existence. The adjectives and verbs used connote positive aspects related to the mission, purpose, or goals of each award. Three adjectives occur most often: *excellence*, *exemplary*, and *outstanding*. The verbs include: *celebrate*, *elevate*, *motivate*, *inspire*, and *uplift*.

Table 2.1 Examples of National and State-Level Teaching Awards – Mission, Purpose, Goals

Name of Award	Mission/Purpose/Goals
National Teacher of the Year (NTOY)	To focus “public attention on excellence in teaching” (CCSSO.org).
Kansas Teacher of the Year (KTOY)	“To build and utilize a network of exemplary teachers who are leaders in the improvement of schools, student performance, and the teaching profession” (KSDE.org).
Milken Educator Award	“To celebrate, elevate, and activate exemplary K-12 educators” (www.mff.org/mea)
National Teachers Hall of Fame	“Recognizing exceptional teachers motivates other teachers, inspires young adults to consider a career in teaching, and honors those who have positively influenced the lives of their students” (http://www.nthf.org/support-nthf/)
The Great American Teacher Awards	To “uplift and inspire educators with a passion for learning that is contagious so that they will create classrooms and schools that are full of academic rigor, enthusiasm, and purpose” (http://www.greatamericanteacherawards.com)
The Kennedy Center/Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards	To “recognize the contributions of specific teachers and reward them for their dedication and service. By spotlighting the extraordinary impact teachers have on the lives of their students, the Awards celebrate the teaching profession, the important role of teachers in society and seeks to inspire others to pursue this noble profession” (http://www.kennedy-center.org/programs/awards/sondheim/faq.cfm)
The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching	To “exemplify the highest standards of mathematics and science teaching” (http://www.nsf.gov/awards/presidential.jsp)
Sallie Mae First Class Teacher Award	To recognize “outstanding performance by new elementary and secondary teachers nationwide” (<i>Skretta, 2009, p. 51</i>)
Kansas Horizon Award	“To recognize exemplary first-year teachers who perform in a way that distinguishes them as outstanding” (http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=2233)

There are four main elements common to most teaching awards: mission, purpose, and/or goals; criteria; ceremonies and prizes; and expectations and opportunities. These elements will be examined regarding the Kansas Horizon Award in the next section.

The Kansas Horizon Award

Uniqueness of the Horizon Award. The Kansas Horizon Award, initiated in 2003, is unique in that it is a state-level award given to recognize novice teachers for excellence in teaching. Most, if not all, of the awards mentioned in Table 2.1 seek to recognize the long-term accomplishments of proven educators. For instance, candidates for the National Teacher of the Year award must have taught for at least five years (CCSSO.org).

In telephone calls by the investigator to personnel in state departments of education of the states surrounding Kansas – Missouri, Nebraska, Colorado, and Oklahoma – only one other state has a similar award recognizing novice teachers. The Oklahoma Rising Star Award is an award for teachers who have taught in the classroom for less than ten years.

The Horizon Award was developed by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) in 2003 to replace the now defunct national-level Sallie May First Class Teacher Award which-recognized first-year teachers (Gast – personal interview, 2009). A corporation that funds and provides servicing support for education loans, Sallie Mae annually sponsored an award to recognize “outstanding performance by new elementary and secondary teachers nationwide” – one from each state and the District of Columbia (Skretta, 2009, p. 51).

Similarly, the Kansas Horizon Award seeks to “recognize exemplary first-year teachers who perform in a way that distinguishes them as outstanding” (KSDE website).

In 2012 for the first time, the Horizon Award had a corporate sponsor and the official name changed to the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award. According to the

KSDE website, the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association is again sponsoring the award for 2013. However, for the years of the award addressed in this study, 2003-2011, the name was simply the Kansas Horizon Award.

Nomination and Application Process. Nominations for the Horizon Award are made at the end of the teachers' first year of teaching. Nominees are chosen by their school district superintendents and building principals. Similar to other teaching award programs, such as the National and Kansas Teacher of the Year awards, nominees must complete an application process that includes the following:

- three letters of support from administrators, colleagues, parents, students, professors or cooperating teachers.
- nomination form with all appropriate signatures.
- responses to two essay questions: "What instructional strategies are you using in your classroom?" and "After successfully completing your first year of teaching, what advice would you give a beginning teacher?"

In addition, two essays must be submitted by an administrator, colleague, parent and/or student regarding the teachers' (1) interaction with students and (2) effective communication with parents. A third essay must be submitted by an administrator regarding what distinguishes this teacher as outstanding (CCSSO.org & KSDE.org).

Selection process for the Kansas Horizon Award. The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) appoints regional selection committees to review the nomination materials of the Horizon nominees. These committees select eight winners from each congressional district. Winners are notified during the fall semester of their second year of teaching (KSDE.org).

Criteria for the Horizon Award. The criteria for the Horizon Award state that nominees must be full-time teachers in prekindergarten through 12th grade in a school accredited by the Kansas State Board of Education. They must be responsible for assessing, grading, and lesson planning; participate in parent-teacher conferences; take care of classroom discipline and attendance; and “will have performed in a way that distinguishes him or her from other novice teachers” (KSDE.org).

Ceremony and prizes for the Kansas Horizon Award. Many teacher award programs have some kind of formal ceremony where they recognize the winners and give prizes. For example, the national Teacher of the Year program recognizes the winners from each state at a special ceremony in Washington, DC. State winners have the opportunity to meet the President of the United States and have their photo taken with the president – usually in the oval office (CCSSO website).

Kansas Horizon Award winners are recognized at a luncheon during the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) conference at the state capital city in the spring semester of their second year of teaching. KEEN is composed of Kansas educators “who have been formally recognized for exemplary performance” (KSDE.org). Examples include the current and former Kansas Teachers of the Year, Milken award educators, Nationally Board Certified teachers, and Horizon Award winners. Also included for recognition at the respective annual KEEN conference are two Teachers of Promise from each of the colleges and departments of teacher education from across the state of Kansas. The participation of the new Horizon Award winners is welcomed at the KEEN conference during which they are recognized and they are invited to become lifelong members of KEEN. Also, they “receive a framed certificate

commemorating the award from the Commissioner of Education" (KSDE website) and each winner receives small cash award (2012 e-mail from Miller, KSDE).

Expectations and opportunities for Kansas Horizon Award winners. Some teaching award programs expect winning teachers to perform certain responsibilities while other programs give teacher awardees opportunities for leadership and service. As a spokesperson and advocate for education, the National Teacher of the Year is given release time from the classroom to travel nationally and internationally representing teachers at various events and speaking engagements (CCSSO.org). Similarly, the winner of the Kansas Teacher of the Year (KTOY) is given release time from the classroom during the second semester of the school year (KSDE.org) in order to serve as a spokesperson for teachers and education in the state. The opportunity provided to the Horizon Award winners is that they are eligible for life-time membership in the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN). Membership is free and is renewable every three years. There are no required state-level obligations nor responsibilities expected of the Horizon Award recipients (KSDE website & 2012 telephone conversation with T. Miller).

Summary

There are four main elements common to most teaching awards: mission, purpose, and/or goals; criteria; ceremonies and prizes; and expectations and opportunities. Those pertinent to the Kansas Horizon Award were examined in this section and comparisons were made with the National and Kansas Teacher of the Year awards.

When examining the missions, purposes and goals in Table 2.1, it is obvious that a major reason for recognizing excellence in teaching is to honor those who do an outstanding job. Another reason; however, is to inspire and motivate both the recipients and others. The next

section of this chapter will discuss what the literature has to say about motivation and its role in encouraging excellence.

Theories of Motivation

Because motivation drives people to achieve goals and remain committed to them, motivation theories help frame this study regarding awards recognizing novice teachers for excellence. The following section examines some dominant theories of motivation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

One of the most dominant theories of motivation is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970). He asserts that individuals have basic levels of needs. The five levels contributing to the foundation of the model are: physiological; safety and security; belonging and love; esteem; and self-actualization. His five-level hierarchy starts with the most basic needs of human beings and progresses in a manner that builds upon each level until the topmost tier is reached – that of self-actualization. Maslow does not claim that the lower needs must be completely satisfied before higher needs become activated (Maslow, 1954).

When the most basic needs of physical survival such hunger, thirst, sleep, and sex are satisfied, new needs are manifested. When one level of our needs is gratified, we are motivated to satisfy other needs. The second level of needs are those associated with safety, including physical safety, freedom from fear, economic security, need for structure and order. When these needs are met, the third need, a social need for belongingness and love emerges. People need to feel like they are wanted and are part of a group. They want contact with other people and yearn for togetherness.

The fourth need is that of esteem, which perhaps has the most significance for this study focusing on teacher recognition. Maslow maintains that these esteem needs can be divided into

two subsets: the first is “the desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery and competence, confidence in the face of the world, and independence and freedom” and the second is “the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation” (Maslow, 1970, p.21). The satisfaction of these needs brings self-confidence and a sense of worth to the individual. When these needs are not met, feelings of inferiority, weakness, and helplessness manifest themselves. Maslow (1970) notes that the most stable and healthy sense of self-esteem is based upon deserved respect, not from external fame or celebrity.

The final need is that of self-actualization, the need for self-fulfillment. Everyone must do what they are fitted for as individuals. Artists must paint, singers must sing, writers must write, and teachers must teach, if they are to be at peace with themselves. “What humans *can* be, they *must* be. They must be true to their own nature” (Maslow, 1970, p. 22). Although self-actualization is the highest level of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, it may not be true that self-actualization is the highest need for everyone. Indeed, Trusty and Sergiovanni (1966) explored Maslow’s theory in an educational setting and found that the greatest “deficiencies for professional educators were satisfying esteem and self-actualization needs” (p. 47). Twenty years later a study by Anderson & Iwanicki (1984) found that for teachers, a lack of self-esteem was their biggest deficiency.

Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Most of the research regarding motivation and jobs has been conducted in business settings. One of the best-known researchers in this area is Frederick Herzberg, who conducted seminal research on this topic as far back as the 1950s and 1960s. He discovered that “the things that make people satisfied and motivated on the job are different in kind from the things that

make them dissatisfied” (Herzberg, 2003, p.87). His motivation-hygiene theory (also called two-factor theory) of job attitudes states that “the opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction, but rather, *no* job satisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but *no* job dissatisfaction” (Herzberg, 2003, p. 91).

In a 2007 study of teachers in Ireland, researchers found that “the *absence* of positive experiences undermines commitment and efficacy rather than the *occurrence* of negative events” (Morgan, Ludlow, Kitching, O’Leary, & Clarke, 2007). Additionally, their study supports Herzberg’s research in that they found rather than positive and negative happenings being mirror images of each other, “the presence or absence of positively framed events is a much stronger contributor to teachers’ commitment and efficacy than is the case with negative experiences” (p. 200).

Herzberg notes that people have two kinds of needs: (1) biological and (2) the ability to achieve and desire to experience growth. He refers to the biological needs as *hygiene factors*. They include: job security, salary, status, fringe benefits, and work conditions. Herzberg says these are not motivators. The growth or *motivator factors* are: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement. Herzberg found that too often businesses try to motivate through hygiene factors, which include: “company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security” (Herzberg, 2003, p. 92). In his research, Herzberg discovered that out of all the things that contribute to job satisfaction, 81% were factors from the motivators list. And 69% of the things that made employees dissatisfied came from the list of hygiene factors.

Herzberg’s research suggests that-individuals need *job enrichment*, which gives them opportunities to grow psychologically. When the Harvard Business Review reprinted Herzberg’s

1968 article “How Do You Motivate Employees?” in 2003 (p. 93), the information in Table 2.2 was included. The table includes a list of principles of vertical job loading and the motivators involved. Motivators listed include: responsibility, achievement, recognition, growth, learning, and advancement.

Table 2.2 Principles of Vertical Job Loading

Principle	Motivators Involved
A. Removing some controls while retaining accountability	Responsibility and personal achievement
B. Increasing the accountability of individuals for own work	Responsibility and recognition
C. Giving a person a complete natural unit of work (module, division, area, and so on)	Responsibility, achievement, and recognition
D. Granting additional authority to employees in their activity; job freedom	Responsibility, achievement, and recognition
E. Making periodic reports directly available to the workers themselves rather than to supervisors	Internal recognition
F. Introduction new and more difficult tasks not previously handled	Growth and learning
G. Assigning individuals specific or specialized tasks, enabling them to become experts	Responsibility, growth, and advancement

Several of the motivators involved identify the factor of recognition. Many contemporary books on management and human resources continue to cite Herzberg’s research. One such publication is written by Doug Jensen along two other top level executives from The Hay Group, a consulting firm. In *The Manager’s Guide to Rewards* (2006), Jensen notes that according to Herzberg, compensation may, at best, help employees be less dissatisfied with their work environment, but that recognition satisfies.

Bassett-Jones & Lloyd’s research (2005) verified Herzberg’s conclusion that money does not motivate beyond a minimum threshold. Their research showed that neither money nor recognition seem to motivate when trying to stimulate employees to contribute ideas. However,

“in line with Herzberg’s predictions, factors associated with intrinsic satisfaction play a more important part” (p. 929). Their findings show that after more than 50 years, Herzberg’s two-factor theory still has value. Note, however, that Bassett-Jones & Lloyd’s research applies to stimulating employees to contribute ideas; whether it is generalizable to other kinds of motivation in business is not clear.

Does recognition contribute to motivation? Jensen describes recognition as a powerful motivator and believes that recognition of improved performance will reinforce it. As further evidence, he cites how *Fortune* magazine annually lists America’s Most Admired companies and that “recognition often delivers gains beyond expectation” (p. 218). Jensen also observes that many recognition programs do not cost a cent – “that’s because employees often value a simple, personal gesture from the company’s senior leaders” (p. 221).

Comparing Maslow and Herzberg’s Theories of Motivation

It is interesting to compare the work of Herzberg and Maslow. While Herzberg’s research focused on the business world, Maslow’s research has widely been accepted as being generalizable to the general public, although he has his detractors.

In a study conducted by members of the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (TCLP), the researchers examined both the research of Herzberg and Maslow regarding teachers. Their research showed that teachers in the career ladder program that included three levels of teachers did not match the behavior of those persons employed in business (Gawel, 1997). In a study by Weld on cash awards for secondary level science teachers, he found that “the factors that motivate teachers appear to be different from the factors that satisfy them” (1998). Cash bonuses as awards are usually more important to teachers in a symbolic way rather than for economic reasons. When teachers receive monetary rewards, they tend to view them as validation that they

are valued by society and as a source of recognition by the community (Murnane & Cohen, 1986). The implied distinction is that “the motivating force is recognition and appreciation, not the award itself” (Weld, 1998).

The researchers for the TCLP program found evidence that novice teachers, or Level 1 participants, were equally influenced by motivation and hygiene factors, contrary to Herzberg’s conclusions about hygiene factors not being very motivating. Interestingly, teachers at all three levels thought salary was a strong motivator. Of Herzberg’s motivational factors, achievement was ranked highest, but “the teachers perceived the amount of salary increase to be tied to achievement and the other motivation factors” (p. 44, Gawel).

The teachers in the TLCP study also differed from Maslow’s findings in his research on motivation. At all three levels, teachers were more dissatisfied regarding their personal achievement of esteem, which Maslow would say is an intermediate level need, than they are with their achievement of self-actualization. The researchers concluded that “self-actualization is a proponent for self-esteem” (Gawel, p. 44). They proposed two reasons for this: “First, self-actualization provides the basis for *self-esteem*. Second, this self-actualized performance is also the bases for *reputation, the esteem of others*” (p. 44) Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that administrators focus on self-esteem needs of teachers so that so many teachers would not be lost to other professions. Since self-esteem issues are found to be important to educators, further exploration of this aspect of motivation in relation to the theory of self-efficacy follows. It will show how self-efficacy can contribute to motivation, in fact, according to Pervin, Cervone, and Oliver (2005) motivation is directly related to self-efficacy.

Bandura – Self-Efficacy

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory on self-efficacy addresses people's perceived self-competence. He postulates that one way self-efficacy is enhanced is when people experience the sense of accomplishment through performance (1977). Self-efficacy has to do with the expectation one has about his or her ability to be successful in certain situations. The strength of their beliefs in their ability can affect whether people will make an attempt to cope with certain situations. Self-efficacy not only affects how much effort people will put into something, it also affects how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles. The stronger people perceive their self-efficacy to be, the more active their efforts will be. What is really interesting is that once people perceive efficacy established in one situation, it "tends to generalize to other situations" (p. 195) and to activities substantially different from the one in which they sense accomplishment. In addition, people who have strong self-efficacy expectancies will persevere and cope better in spite of adversity.

Self-Efficacy and Motivation. Bandura (1977) suggests that when people perform well, their performance elicits the kinds of experiences which reinforce expectations of self-competency. In a 2003 paper on the effects of self-efficacy by Bandura and Locke, it is observed that whatever factors guide and motivate people, they are ingrained in the belief that people have the power to create the desired effects themselves. They can change circumstances and situations. The evidence from their research shows that "efficacy beliefs contribute significantly to the level of motivation and performance" (p. 87).

In a 2011 study, Ahmad explored how teacher efficacy affects teacher motivation. He examined both Teaching Efficacy (TE) and Personal Efficacy (PE) and how they interact to affect teacher motivation. TE refers to how teachers evaluate their own ability to bring about

“positive change in student engagement and learning” (p. 36), while PE is how teachers think about their pupils being teachable despite their backgrounds. Efficacy affects how much effort teachers put into their work. It influences their enthusiasm and their level of motivation (Allinder, 1994; Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1991, p. 36).

In a 2009 interview with the investigator, Bob Gast, former Director of Communications for the Kansas State Department of Education, stated his perception that the process of applying for and winning an award such as the Horizon Award can change the way novice teachers feel about themselves. As nominees make lists of their accomplishments in the classroom and reflect upon their first year in the essays they write, they gain a better sense of who they are and what they have done and can do. “Teachers say (that through the process) they felt empowered,” which is important to self-direction. Gast contends that it does not take much for a teacher to feel appreciated: “You get a lot of return for a small investment. Teachers will cry over fifty dollars.” Gast believes that money is not highly motivating for teachers; rather, award programs need to be growth opportunities for teachers. He sees the Horizon Award as part of a teacher’s continuum of learning and believes that “a growth opportunity is forever.” In addition, Gast observed that even when nominees do not win the Horizon Award, it is a morale builder because just being a candidate is an honor. Teachers realize that their administrators think highly of them. Gast’s thoughts appear to be consistent with Weld’s 1998 study of award-winning science teachers. Weld found that while the winners were minimally motivated by money, they were highly motivated by the recognition they received.

Self-Efficacy and Implications for Performance. Efficacy expectations vary along several dimensions and thus have implications upon one’s performance. The first way in which efficacy expectations differ is in *magnitude* or *difficulty* – people have varying expectations depending

upon the perceived simplicity or difficulty of the task. The second way efficacy expectations differ is in *generality* – some situations require mastery of a specific skill, while others “instill a more generalized sense of efficacy that extends well beyond the specific treatment situation” (Bandura, 1977, p. 194). The third way expectancies differ is in *strength*. Weak self-efficacy expectancies can be snuffed out by situations that disconfirm them. People who have strong self-efficacy expectancies, however, will persevere and cope better in spite of adversity.

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is based upon four sources:

1. Performance accomplishments – this source is especially effective because of its personal nature. Strong self-efficacy expectations develop over time through repeated success; occasional failures have less negative impact. This source of self-efficacy is the one most strongly aligned with this research study.
2. Vicarious experience – when people observe others’ success, they may realize that they too can improve if they try hard and persist in their efforts. Although not specifically aligned with this study, this source aligns with the purposes of the awards identified in Table 2.1
3. Verbal persuasion – being persuaded by others is a less effective means of developing self-efficacy than that which occurs through one’s own accomplishments. Since it is based upon no authentic experience, such self-efficacy may be extinguished when facing disconfirming experiences.
4. Physiological states – emotional states also affect perceived self-efficacy when facing threatening situations. High arousal can be debilitating; people who are anxious and tense are not likely to expect success when faced with fearful situations.

Self-Efficacy and Generalized Effects. In a 1997 study of firefighters who won awards from the National Fire Agency for their research, Clark examined the effects upon the winners and

discovered that the awards not only affected them professionally, but also personally and to a much-lesser extent, organizationally. Personally, the winners felt increased self-confidence, pride, honor, and surprise. Professionally, they sensed that their professional status grew and was recognized by others, and they received increased opportunities. In addition, the award-winning firefighters perceived that the award increased the reputation of their organization and were gratified when their research was implemented. Some winners hoped that the award would inspire others to strive for excellence and felt that it had set a new standard for others to meet or exceed.

Because, according to Bandura, the experiences of self-efficacy become generalized, enabling a person to feel more competent in more ways, the investigator is interested in how teacher awardees perceive the influence a teaching award has had upon them not only professionally, but also personally and organizationally – that is, how the award affected their schools and communities.

Self-Efficacy and Teacher Motivation. The theory of self-efficacy may have special significance in this study focusing on novice teachers receiving awards for excellence in teaching. Since the Horizon Award is performance-based, that would lead, according to Bandura, to task involvement (Bandura, 1986). Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (1986), note how teachers' self-efficacy beliefs relate to their actions and achievements. "Self-efficacy beliefs can . . . become self-fulfilling prophecies, validating beliefs either of capability or of incapacity" (p. 3). They point out that when efficacy beliefs are raised because teachers perceive their performance to be a success, their expectations lead them to expect that future performances are also likely to be competent. In another study (2001), Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy point out how resilience and self-efficacy are related concepts – when people have high levels of self-

efficacy, they are more resilient. A senior associate for a health and human development organization, Benard has conducted research about and has given presentations on resiliency, especially in children and youth. She concludes that self-efficacy is a characteristic of resilient people (2004).

Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy observe that self-efficacy is a “motivational construct based on self-perception of competence rather than *actual* level of competence” (p. 5, 2007). When teachers feel self-efficacious, they are motivated to take more effort and to persist despite adversity, which will help them to effectively employ the skills and abilities they have (Bandura, 1997).

Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy found that beliefs regarding efficacy are most pliable early in one’s learning, suggesting that early in one’s career might be the time when an award for excellence may have the most importance (2007 & 2010; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). In addition, once established, the teachers’ self-efficacy is somewhat resistant to change (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 1990).

This idea that an award may be most important early in one’s career is also addressed in a 2009 study conducted in the United Kingdom by Kitching, Morgan, & O’Leary. They looked at how teachers’ motivation and resiliency are affected by small, everyday events in the classroom. One finding was that novice teachers may be in a time of “relatively developing or reduced sense of efficacy” (p. 45).

Glickman and Tamashiro (1982) in their study of first-year, fifth year, and former teachers found that those who leave the profession have considerably lower self-efficacy beliefs than those teachers who remain. As Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy discovered, for novice teachers, “satisfaction with professional performance was related to support from parents and the

community” (p. 21). Kitching, et al. also found that in regards to novice teachers’ motivation, “a major factor in loss of commitment is not that negative things happen, but rather the absence of positive experiences” (p. 52). Receiving an award for excellence would be a positive experience, perhaps off-setting some of the negative experiences.

As previously reported, Bob Gast, former Director of Communications for KSDE, believes that money does not seem to be that important as a motivator to educators. His belief is consistent with a comment made by one of the 1998 Milken award winners who had just received a check for \$25,000. The report noted that while all the teacher awardees seemed excited to have won the money, they seemed more excited about being able to attend the conference held in conjunction with the award ceremony. “‘What it does is kind of elevate your thoughts about what you are doing,’ Edward Silver Jr., an elementary school teacher from Millington, Maryland [said]. ‘It just gets you excited about doing some things that you haven’t done before. I feel more motivated’” (Hill, 1998). Elevation, excitement, motivation – all intrinsic rather than extrinsic – are what Mr. Silver felt were most important.

The concept of elevation has been around as far back as the time of Thomas Jefferson, who argued that when one surrounds himself with moral exemplars, it fosters one’s own moral development by eliciting strong and beneficial emotions. When people observe others engaged in admirable acts, it stirs them, making them think that they, too, could accomplish great things. So awards affect more than the winners, they also affect colleagues and family (Vianello, Galliani & Haidt, 2010). In Clark’s study on the impact of awards, he cites the following from the National Fire Academy’s annually published award book: “When individuals are recognized as outstanding, the entire culture benefits because our ability is pushed to the outer limits of what is possible and imaginable” (p. 2, 1997, rev. 1998). The implication is that when an award is given,

it can have far-reaching effects, beyond the individual, touching family, colleagues, and the community.

Benefits of Awards for Teachers

In his study of the effects of an economics teaching award upon teachers, Dawson (1970) found a number of benefits identified by the winners: (1) 90% felt that their teaching improved after receiving the award, (2) 60% were sought out for advice more often, (3) 51% received new employment opportunities (writing, editing, consulting), and (4) 88% received some kind of official recognition from their administrators. Many of the recipients thought that the recognition was more meaningful than anything else, such as promotional opportunities or financial rewards. Some noted that it was the first time in their careers they had ever been recognized or noticed.

In Weld's 1998 study of secondary science teachers who received cash rewards, the teachers noted the following benefits: (1) more than half agreed that receiving the award made it more likely that they would teach until retirement while about one-third felt it made no difference; (2) slightly more than half thought that receiving the award made them more effective as teachers and that it had motivated them to increase their teaching skills; (3) almost 80% thought the award made it more likely that they would lead presentations and professional development opportunities; (4) more than half thought that professional relationships with administrators were strengthened, and (5) more than 95% thought that such awards elevate the teaching profession in the eyes of the public. The major recurring theme Weld found was: "Mere appreciation and acknowledgement of a job well done is often reported to be the single greatest benefit of awards; this act imparting many subtle manifestations upon recipients, like steeling their commitment to teaching as a profession, sharing their ideas with colleagues, seeking ways to improve" (p. 96).

In interviews with Pulitzer prize winners, in 1991, Tim Larimer found that all winners felt validated in what they do. Most felt that they plodded away every day with little recognition, and the Pulitzer prize said that someone finally noticed what they were doing.

Disadvantages of Awards

In interviews with Pulitzer prize winners in 1992, Tim Larimer reported that winners felt pressure from increased expectations – from their supervisors, colleagues, and from themselves. This caused lots of stress and pressure, which was mostly kept inside, because the winners did not feel like they could talk to anyone about their insecurities. They also experienced some jealousy from colleagues, and felt that even innocent comments were sometimes taken as “proof of a swelled head” (1st paragraph, The Ego Factor).

In his study of award-winning science teachers, Weld (1998) found that teachers felt increased expectations, both personally and from colleagues. In some cases, winners were stressed by an increased workload. The teachers from his study also encountered jealousy; in fact, he found the vast majority of the teachers in his study ran into resentment among both colleagues and administrators. Clark, in his study of award-winning firefighters, also found that some recipients encountered jealousy, and some were disappointed at the lack of recognition they received after being given the award.

Summary

Motivation has been shown to be a powerful influence. Motivation can prod people into taking action to meet perceived needs and can influence whether people feel satisfied or dissatisfied in their careers. Recognition can be a powerful motivator. Since teachers may have greater needs for self-esteem than for self-actualization than people in other careers, recognition and awards be great influences. When teachers perceive that they are competent as educators,

they may experience self-efficacy in other areas of their lives. Since one of the major sources of self-efficacy is performance accomplishments, teachers may appreciate awards that recognize their success in the classroom. While cash awards are appreciated, the recognition means more than the money to teachers who are awarded for excellence in teaching. They may find that their teaching improves, they are sought out for advice, and they may receive offers of employment. Teachers may find that their relationship with principals is improved and also appreciate recognition from the principal for work performed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter addresses the methodology used in the study, and describes the research design and instrumentation used in the study. The sampling procedures and data collection procedures and analyses are also presented.

Questions for the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore whether a recognition program, specifically the Horizon Award, which is given for excellence in teaching to novice teachers, has any perceived positive influence upon teacher recipients. The questions focused on whether teachers perceived that the award was motivating in any way; if the award was a positive influence upon the teachers personally, professionally, and organizationally; and if it influenced their commitment to the profession of education.

The study looked for answers to the following questions:

1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award has ***motivated*** them in any way?
2. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***personally*** (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?
3. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***professionally*** (that is, upon their teaching)?
4. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their ***commitment to the profession of education?***

5. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***organizationally*** (that is, upon their school and/or community)?

Research Design

Survey Research

Surveys are a method of studying populations by asking questions of subjects. Some kind of measurement procedure is applied to quantify the answers. There are two kinds of surveys: questionnaires and interviews (Krathwohl, 1997; Research Methods Knowledge Base website). While questionnaires are completed by the respondent, the interviewer completes the interviews based upon what the respondent says. Questionnaires may be mailed or administered electronically and completed by an individual. Questionnaires may also be administered to a group. There are also group interviews, during which people listen to each others' comments and answer questions. The difference is that questionnaires are answered by an individual. The questionnaire type of survey was chosen for this study.

One benefit of using the survey method is that people are familiar with surveys and it can be assumed that most respondents will have taken a survey before. While there are several kinds of surveys, the choice of an on-line survey for this study was based upon several factors including the fact the responses are relatively easy to analyze due in part to the availability of the computer software for data entry and tabulation (Waltonick, 1997-2004).

Other benefits specific to the use of on-line surveys:

- Respondents have more control over how long they want to take to respond to question (versus a survey conducted face-to-face or by telephone) (Australian Government, 2004).
- On-line surveys can provide privacy (Australian Government).

- On-line surveys are more cost-effective than face-to-face interviews, especially when covering a large geographic area (such as the entire state of Kansas) and when the sample size is large (Walonick, 1997-2004).
- Response time can be quick for on-line surveys; the respondents can sign on the very day they receive the request and the results of many people can be in the researcher's hands almost immediately (Writing@CSU).
- On-line surveys can help reduce bias since there is no face-to-face contact. Interviewees are not influenced by voice, eye-contact, or gestures (Duffy, Smith, Terhanian, & Bremer, 2005).
- On-line surveys are less intrusive than face-to-face or telephone contact (Walonick).
- It is assumed that the convenience of on-line surveys will affect the response rate in a favorable way (Schaefer & Dillman, 1998).
- Compared to pencil-and-paper surveys, responses to open-ended questions may be more complete for on-line surveys since respondents' use of a keyboard may be easier than writing by hand (Schaefer & Dillman).

The researcher is cognizant of the following disadvantages regarding the use of on-line surveys:

- There may be a low response rate, which can affect confidence in the results (Walonick).
- Since there is no contact with the respondent, there is no opportunity to probe responses (Walonick).
- Because there is no face-to-face contact, and 90% of all communication is visual, the "lack of personal contact will have different effects depending on the type of

information being requested” (Walonick, Disadvantages of Written Questionnaires section).

- There is no guarantee that the person who receives an on-line survey will be the one who answered it (Walonick).
- Some people do not like any type of surveys and are turned off by them (Walonick).
- Respondents’ computer skills vary; while some are competent, others feel intimidated, contributing to non-response errors (Dillman, Tortora, & Bowker, 1999).

This survey research was conducted via the Axio survey system through the Kansas State University web system. It solicited information about the experiences and opinions of the Horizon Award Winners from 2003-2011.

Survey Design

The principal data gathering instrument was designed to collect quantitative data and also some qualitative data. Quantitative research is a systematic way of conducting research objectively, while qualitative research seeks to examine the *how* and *why* of a question. In this case, the survey instrument was designed to collect data about the perceptions of teachers regarding the influence of winning the Horizon award personally, professionally, and organizationally.

The survey instrument had three parts. The first section consisted of 15 items which directed the subjects to respond to a five-point Likert scale ranging from number 1 representing “strongly disagree” to number 5 for “strongly agree. The second section of the instrument had three open-ended questions focusing on the personal, professional and organizational influences of the award. The last section asked for demographic information and included a final open-ended question allowing further comments. The purpose of the open-ended questions was to gain

qualitative data that would perhaps provide a further look into respondents' thoughts regarding how they perceived the Horizon award had influenced their lives and also to allow them some personal expression in response to the award and/or to the survey.

Likert Scale

The Likert Scale is the most widely-used rating scale to elicit opinions for various kinds of studies (McLeod, 2008 and Dumas, 1999). The scale assumes that the strength or intensity of an experience may be measured in a linear way on a continuum. Respondents are asked to reply to a series of items on a specific topic regarding how much they agree or not with each item. Items may focus on both the cognitive and affective aspects of the respondents' attitudes regarding the topic. The Likert scale can measure attitudes, preferences, and subjective reactions (McLoed 2008, and Usability First website). "Likert Scales have the **advantage** that they do not expect a simple yes / no answer from the respondent, but rather allow for degrees of opinion, and even no opinion at all. Therefore quantitative data are obtained, which means that the data can be analyzed with relative ease" (McLeod, 7th para). In addition, Dyer (1995) notes that "attitude scales do not need to be factually accurate - they simply need to reflect one possible perception of the truth." Rather than trying to be factually accurate, respondents will respond to "the feelings which the item triggers in them" (Dyer, 3rd para. Reliability and Validity section). Since this study sought the perceptions of Horizon Award winners regarding the influence the award has had upon them, using Likert scale items was an appropriate means of gathering data.

According to Page-Bucci (2003), some of the advantages to using the Likert scale are that (1) they are easy to construct; (2) each item has the same value, "so respondents are scored rather than items" (Likert scale section); (3) it is likely that the results will be highly reliable; and (4) "they are easy to read and complete". On the other hand, some of the disadvantages are that (1)

results may be difficult to reproduce, (2) there is an “absence of one-dimensionality or homogeneity”, and (3) “validity may be difficult to demonstrate” (Page-Bucci, Likert scale section). One caution about using the Likert scale is that respondents may not be entirely truthful in order to put themselves in a more positive light. Offering anonymity reduced the occurrence of this problem for the survey.

Section 1 – Likert Items

These items had a five-point scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.

1. I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.
2. Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.
3. Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon my teaching.
4. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally).
5. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence as a teacher.
6. Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (*e.g.*, to try new strategies or tackle new projects).
7. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).
8. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations as a teacher.
9. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my colleagues to live up to higher expectations as a teacher.
10. Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom.
11. Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator.
12. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me personally.
13. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me professionally.

14. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my school.
15. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on my community.

Section 2 – Open-ended Questions

In addition to the 15 Likert items, four open-ended questions were provided, asking for short responses of one-to-two sentences in length. These questions focused on the personal, professional, and organizational influences of the award. The four questions were:

- 1. What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you personally?**
Think about the influence upon yourself as a person separate from your identity as a teacher. It could include your family or other elements of your life outside of education.
- 2. What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you professionally?**
Think about the influence upon your job/career as a teacher and educator.
- 3. Two-part question: What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you organizationally?**

Think about the influence upon your school.

Think about the influence upon your community.

Section 3 – Demographics

The final section of the survey asked for demographic information specifically focusing on six items that would be used as variables to examine if there was any significance regarding how the various categories of people responded to the survey. These six items asked for information regarding (1) the first school-year of teaching for the participants (from which the year of the award could be ascertained), (2) age of participants when they won the Horizon Award, (3) gender, (4) grade level taught during the first year of teaching – either elementary or secondary, (5) location of the school during the first year of teaching – urban, suburban, or rural, and (6) whether the participants were still teaching or not (and if they were not, additional questions asked what they were now doing and when their last year of teaching was). Although

participants were also asked if they had received any other awards, this information was not used in this study. A final open-ended question asked: **Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Horizon Award?**

The survey started out with a question designed to “hook” the respondents, making them want to continue answering the questions. Not only should the first question stimulate interest in the survey, but it should verify the respondent’s impression that the survey is worthwhile. In addition, the first question indicates to the respondent whether or not the survey will be easy to take or if it will be difficult (Dillman, et.al., 1991). Walonick (1997-2004) notes that some researchers suggest putting general questions ahead of the more specific ones for this very reason. Demographic questions are delegated to the end of the survey because they are less interesting for the respondent.

Pilot Study

The survey was piloted by three teachers before being disseminated to the Horizon Award winners. One teacher who had won a teaching award (not the Horizon Award) and two novice teachers completed the questionnaire. They were asked to not only complete the questionnaire, but to provide feedback regarding clarity and sense and also how much time it took to finish. All three teachers responded with positive comments regarding clarity and sense; they perceived that the survey was easy to understand and to complete. All completed the survey in under 15 minutes.

Sample

The population and the sample are one and the same for this study, as they consisted of the Horizon Award winners from 2003-2011. The subjects were the winning teachers chosen for exemplary teaching during their first year on the job. Not only are these teachers a subset of all

teachers in Kansas, but they have been identified as exemplary teachers and given further opportunities not available to other teachers because of it.

The Horizon award is a regional competition based upon Kansas' four U.S. congressional districts. Each year a total of 32 teachers may be chosen from among the many nominees, including four elementary and four secondary teachers per district, however this number varies from year-to-year since not all districts submit eight candidates every year. This means that while the potential sample size could have been as many as 288 teachers from across the state of Kansas, the actual number was fewer. Taking into fact that the Kansas State Department of Education has lost contact with quite a number of Horizon Award winners over the years, the number of teachers in the sample was 182. One hundred sixteen Horizon Award winners responded to the survey (63.7%).

According to Table 3.1, the number of years the teachers had taught ranged from two-and-a-half to ten-and-a-half years at the time they completed the questionnaire in Spring 2012. The first teachers would have taught during the 2001-2002 school year, would have been nominated in the fall of the 2002-2003 school year, and would have received the award in February of 2003. The teachers in this study would have first taught in the years identified in the chart below and would have received the Horizon Award the following year. The third column in Table 3.1 shows how many years teachers would have taught as of January 2012 if they had continued to teach throughout that time.

Table 3.1 *Teaching Experience of Horizon Award Winners Participating in the 2012 Survey*

First Year of Teaching	Year of Award (February or Second Year of Teaching)	Number of Years Taught (As of January 2012)
2001-2002	2003	10.5
2002-2003	2004	9.5
2003-2004	2005	8.5
2004-2005	2006	7.5
2005-2006	2007	6.5
2006-2007	2008	5.5
2007-2008	2009	4.5
2008-2009	2010	3.5
2009-2010	2011	2.5

Instrumentation

The researcher designed a questionnaire to collect the data using the Axio survey system via the Kansas State University web system. Some of the questions were suggested by personnel in the Department of Communications at the Kansas State Department of Education in Topeka, while additional questions were generated after a face-to-face interview with Bob Gast, former Director of Communications for KSDE. Mr. Gast was instrumental in initiating the Horizon Award in 2003. Finally, other questions arose from the literature review. The alignment of the survey instrument questions with the major research questions are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Alignment of Survey Instrument Questions with Research Questions

Guiding Categories	Research Questions	Survey Items & Questions
Receiving the Horizon Award has a motivating influence upon the recipient personally .	1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award motivates them in any way? 2. Do teachers who receive the Horizon Award perceive that the award has a positive influence personally (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?	(2) Award was motivating (4) Award increased self-confidence (7) Pressure from self – higher expectations (12) Winning had positive influence personally Open-ended question 1 – personal influence
Receiving the Horizon Award has a positive influence upon the recipient professionally .	1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award motivates them in any way? 3. Do teachers who receive the Horizon Award perceive that the award has a positive influence professionally (that is, upon their teaching)?	(1) Recipient gained positive insights (3) Award was motivating & had positive effect on teaching (5) Award increased self-confidence as teacher (6) More willing to take risks and tackle new projects (8) Felt pressure from self & higher expectations re: teaching (9) Felt pressure from colleagues & higher expectations re: teaching (13) Overall positive effect professionally Open-ended question 2 – professional influence
	4. Do teachers who receive the Horizon Award perceive that the award has a positive influence upon their commitment to the profession of education ?	(10) Ten years from now they expect to still be teaching in the classroom (11) Ten years from now they may not be in the classroom, but will still be involved in education
Receiving the Horizon Award has a positive influence upon the recipients' organization (school & community).	5. Do teachers who receive the Horizon Award perceive that the award has a positive influence organizationally (that is, upon their school and/or community)?	(8) Felt pressure from themselves to live up to higher expectations (9) Felt pressure from colleagues to live up to higher expectations (14) Positive effect upon school (15) Positive effect upon community Open-ended question 3 – organizational influence (school & community)

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Reliability considers how well a test – or any measuring procedure – is free from error and provides true test scores. A test for reliability for this study was conducted which revealed a Cronbach's alpha of .868. Cronbach's alpha is an indication of internal consistency (Santos, 1999). Alpha coefficients range from .000 to .100; Nunally's (1978) rule of thumb is that an alpha of .700 or higher is acceptable.

Regarding reliability the point is whether the results will be the same if the questionnaire is given over and over again under consistent conditions. While the questionnaire for this study was not offered multiple times, using the same instrument for the same unit should have yielded similar responses (Lincoln & Guba, 1990). Consistency was aided by the fact that everyone received exactly the same questions, offered in exactly the same way, with no vocal inflection to bias their answers. Since some of the survey questions are similar, similar responses were expected to such questions. In addition, one might expect that if one question is answered a certain way, then another question would be answered in a way that reinforces the answers of each – equivalency reliability (Writing@CSU website).

Validity

Both internal and external validity must be considered. While external validity refers to the results of the study being generalizable or transferable, internal validity is concerned with whether the study was designed to get the kind of information desired and whether the researcher took into consideration alternative explanations for the results (Writing @ CSU). Regarding internal validity, one way is to look at the evidence obtained by conducting an factor analysis (Krathwohl, 1997) – which was done for this study. The four factors created by the rotated

component matrix clearly showed how the various questions were affiliated with each factor, making it easy to identify the common category for each factor – see Appendix D.

Protection of Human Rights

The protection of human rights protocol for research was submitted to the Kansas State University committee responsible for approving research projects. All regulations required were followed during this research study. Every effort was made to ensure the anonymity of participants and they were allowed to quit responding to the survey at any time. In fact, the Axio survey system automatically keeps all responses anonymous; there is no way to connect any response to a specific name. Given the way the survey was administered, via a link in the e-mail invitation, there was no way for the researcher to tell who had responded and who had not responded.

Data Collection

Data were collected from the on-line survey on the Kansas State University website. All 182 subjects were contacted via an e-mail message sent via the Axio survey system through the Kansas State University web system. A copy of the e-mail invitation for participation is included in Appendix B. Subjects were informed that anonymity would be ensured and that there was no way anyone could link their name to any of the information provided. A link was provided in the e-mail that took participants directly to the questionnaire. Two follow-up e-mails were sent by the investigator as reminders to the subjects. A second invitation was sent several weeks later with one follow-up e-mail. It included a thank-you to those who had already participated and invited participation by those who had not yet responded.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed in a variety of ways. Descriptive statistics were analyzed for the demographic variables and the Likert items. Means, modes, and percentages were analyzed and the Likert items were ranked accordingly. These statistics were also compared to the statistics generated by the exploratory factor analysis, which examined how each Likert item related to every other Likert item. A rotated component matrix showed how the various items were aligned with each other by the four factors created by the matrix. An analysis of variance procedure was conducted showing how the teachers in each of the demographic variables responded to the factors generated from the Likert items.

Stages of Data Analysis

Data analysis took place in several stages:

1. Tests were conducted for frequency tables and descriptive statistics for both the Likert items and for the six demographic items.
2. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted of the 15 Likert items in section 1 of the survey. The factor analysis compared each Likert item with every other Likert item, from which four factors emerged. The purpose of the exploratory factor analysis is to use a multivariate technique to identify “whether the correlations between a set of observed variables stem from their relationship to one or more *latent variables* in the data, each of which takes the form of a *linear model*” (Field, 2009, p. 786 – *italics his*). A rotated component matrix was used because it looks at the pairing of everything and is more robust than a simple factor analysis. The task of the factor analysis was to identify which items clustered together, showing a similar underlying dimension. These dimensions are the factors. According to Field (2009), “factor analysis achieves parsimony by explaining

the maximum amount of common variance in a correlation matrix using the smallest number of explanatory constructs” (p. 629).

The four factors which emerged from this factor analysis were later used in the analysis of variance. The factor analysis shows how (1) the responses to item 1 differ from items 2-15, then (2) how the responses to item 2 differ from items 1 and 3-15, then (3), how the responses to item 3 differ from items 1-2 and 4-15, and so on.

3. A test for homogeneity of variances was conducted to see if there were significant differences between the six demographic variables. If there were any questions regarding significance that appeared from the homogeneity of variances test, a Welch test for equality of means was conducted. If the Welch showed significance in any of the areas, a Tukey test for multiple comparisons was conducted.
4. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted using the four factors that emerged from the exploratory factor analysis and the six demographic traits: (1) year of award, (2) age of winner at time of award, (3) level taught (elementary or secondary), (4) location of school (urban, suburban, rural), (5) gender of winner, and (6) whether or not the winner was still teaching at the time of the survey. Variance examines the way people respond to different questions and items.
5. Finally, the four open-ended questions were examined for common categories and patterns. The four questions were:
 - (1) **What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you personally?** Think about the influence upon yourself as a person separate from your identity as a teacher. It could include your family or other elements of your life outside of education.
 - (2) **What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you professionally?** Think about the influence upon your job/career as a teacher and educator.

(3) Two-part question: What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you organizationally?

Think about the influence upon your school.

Think about the influence upon your community.

(4) Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Horizon Award?

The examination of the narrative data looked for commonalities and outliers. Common phrases and terms helped to identify categories. Creswell (1994) notes that the rules are flexible regarding how one goes about this. However, it is clear that categories of information are identified and labeled in some way; qualitative researchers refer to these labels as codes. This information helps form an emerging story. While this study does not attempt to develop a systematic system of codes for the narrative data, major categories were observed and are described in chapter four and discussed in chapter five.

Summary

This quantitative research study used data from an on-line survey consisting of 15 items with a five-point Likert-type scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree), four open-ended questions, and demographic data to assess Horizon Award winners' perceptions about how the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally. The population included teachers from across the state of Kansas who won the Horizon Award from 2003-2011. The survey was administered electronically through the Kansas State University web system. Data were analyzed using frequency distributions, factor analysis, analysis of variance, and through open coding of the narrative data to reveal common themes.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This study examined the perceptions of the Horizon Award winning teachers from 2003-2011 regarding how the award has influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally. It addressed five research questions:

1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award has ***motivated*** them in any way?
2. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***personally*** (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?
3. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***professionally*** (that is, upon their teaching)?
4. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their ***commitment to the profession of education?***
5. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence ***organizationally*** (that is, upon their school and/or community)?

This chapter starts with a description of the research design, explaining the type of study, population, and instrumentation. The quantitative data analysis section describes the results of the various statistical tests. The next section describes the qualitative data, identifying major categories that emerged from the responses to the open-ended questions. The final section is a summary of the chapter.

Type of Study

This quantitative study describes the perceptions of the Horizon Award winners regarding how the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally. When an exploratory factor analysis was conducted of the 15 Likert items, four factors emerged: Internal Influences, Expectations, External Influences, and Commitment to the Profession. These four factors were used to compare the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding six demographic variables: (1) year of the award; (2) age of the winner at the time of the award; (3) level taught – elementary or secondary; (4) location of school – urban, suburban, or rural; (5) gender; and (6) whether the winner was still teaching or not at the time of participating in the survey. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were reported for the 15 Likert items and the six variables mentioned above. An analysis of variance procedure was conducted to find relationships between the 15 Likert items and the six demographic variables. A qualitative component for the open-ended questions is also included, identifying major categories.

Population

The population and the sample are one and the same – the Horizon Award winners from 2003-2011. These are teachers who were recognized for excellence for their first year of teaching. While the possible number of participants was 288, the actual number of teachers invited to participate in the study was 182. One reason for the discrepancy is that although it is possible to have 32 winners every year, not all regions nominate a teacher each year. Also the Kansas State Department of Education has lost track of awardees who have failed to report new addresses when they relocated. The investigator made an attempt to call schools and track down this information – it was somewhat successful, leading to the final number of 182 usable e-mail

addresses. Out of 182 teachers invited to participate in the study, 116 teachers responded to the survey.

Invitations to complete the survey were sent twice to the 182 Horizon Award winners. The first invitation had two follow-up reminders. The second invitation had one follow-up reminder. This resulted in 116 surveys being at least partially completed. In the first invitation nine subjects opted out before starting, 91 completed the survey, and 11 dropped out after completing the 15 Likert items, leaving the open-ended questions and demographic information incomplete. In the second invitation, 14 subjects completed the survey. This means that of the 182 invited participants, 116 completed at least the Likert items, giving a 63.7% response rate. The response rate of those who completed the entire survey was 104 or 57.1%.

Of the 104 respondents who completed the entire survey, 23 were male (22%) and 81 were female (78%). Regarding level taught, 47 were elementary teachers (46%) and 56 were secondary (54%). Ages ranged from the early twenties to the early forties, with 86 or 83% of teachers in their twenties, 10 or 9.6% in their thirties, and 8 or 7.7% in their forties.

Outliers

Three people's scores tended to be low across the board for the Likert responses, which was an anomaly when compared with all other respondents' answers. When compared with their narrative answers, for two of the subjects it was apparent from their very positive comments, that they had switched the order and put 1's for 5's and 2's for 4's. For these two people, their scores were switched accordingly before the data were analyzed. For the third person, a relationship could not be ascertained between the Likert items and the narrative responses – they did not readily match with the opposite scores as did the former two respondents. The data from this

respondent were discarded. This reduced the total number of surveys that were at least partially completed to 115.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to collect the data was an on-line questionnaire consisting of 15 items that subjects responded to using a 5-point Likert scale, four open-ended questions, demographic information, and a final open-ended question allowing subjects to give feedback or make comments about either the survey or the award. The items for the questionnaire were developed from discussions with current and past personnel in the Kansas State Department of Education and from a review of related literature. The Likert items and open-ended questions asked about subjects' perceptions regarding how the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally. See Appendix C for the entire questionnaire.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis

When the exploratory factor analysis was conducted four factors emerged from the rotated component matrix, generated by the principal component analysis. The rotation method used was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. The Varimax rotation method strives to minimize the number of variables loaded into each factor.

The next task was to identify which items clustered together and what these items had in common. Each of the 15 Likert items was represented in each of the four columns, and the statistics were examined to see which statistics in each factor were greater than .50. Only those items with statistics greater than .50 were declared to be loading onto that factor. The rotated component matrix for the exploratory factor analysis is illustrated in Appendix D.

The four factors – Internal Influence, Expectations, External Influence, Commitment to the Profession – and their clusters are shown in Table 4.1 along with the corresponding items from the survey. Of the four factors, Factor 1 – Internal Influence, has the greatest number of items with statistics above .50. These are items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, and 13. Factor 2 – Expectations, has three affiliated items: 7, 8, and 9. Factor 3- External Factors has two affiliated items: 14 and 15. Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession has two affiliated items: 10 and 11. The fourth column in the table shows the percentage of variance accounted for by each factor. According to Table 4.1, 68.84% of the variance can be explained by the four factors.

Table 4.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis Showing Significant Statistics for the Four Factors

Factor	Category	Corresponding Survey Items with Statistics from the Rotated Component	% of Variance
Factor 1	Internal Influences	Matrix	
		1 = .506	27.32
		2 = .842	
		3 = .660	
		4 = .759	
		5 = .738	
		6 = .572	
		12 = .744	
Factor 2	Expectations	13 = .683	
		7 = .848	17.14
		8 = .822	
		9 = .734	
Factor 3	External Influences	14 = .900	13.66
		15 = .875	
Factor 4	Commitment to the Profession	10 = -.880	10.73
		11 = .848	
Total			68.84

It must be noted that the only negative statistic from the factor analysis comes in Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, regarding item 10 and the teachers' perceived dedication to remaining in the classroom for the next 10 years. When statistics have a negative load in the

factor analysis, it is because the item was negatively-oriented to the factor. When this statistic is compared with that of item 11, the teachers' perceived commitment to still be involved in the profession for the next 10 years can be observed. So while they may not expect to still be teaching in the classroom, the teachers do expect to still be involved in education.

Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.9 show how the items rank in significance for each factor. Table 4.2, focusing on **Factor 1 – Internal Influence**, shows three significant statistics having to do with the *personal* realm of influence: items 2, 4, and 12 have statistics of .842, .759, and .744, respectively and are ranked 1, 2, and 3. The remaining five items for this factor have to do with the *professional* realm of influence; their rank and statistics are as follows: item 5 (.738), item 13 (.683), item 3 (.660), item 6, (.572), and item 1 (.506).

Table 4.2 Factor 1: Internal Influence – Showing Rank from Highest to Lowest of Items from Horizon Award Survey

Rank	Statistics from Factor Analysis	Items from Horizon Award Survey
1	.842	2. Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me <u>personally</u> .
2	.759	4. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (<u>personally</u>).
3	.744	12. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me <u>personally</u> .
4	.738	5. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence <u>as a teacher</u> .
5	.683	13. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me <u>professionally</u> .
6	.660	3. Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon <u>my teaching</u> .
7	.572	6. Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (e.g., to try new strategies or tackle new projects).
8	.506	1. I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.

Table 4.3 shows the ranking of the items for **Factor 2 – Expectations**. There were three items of significance for Factor 2. Of these three, item 7 has the greatest significance for this factor. It focuses on the *personal* realm of influence with a statistic of .848, while the remaining two items are *professional* in nature. The rank and statistics for each of the Factor 2 items are: item 7, focusing upon pressure from oneself to live up to higher expectations personally (.848); item 8, focusing upon pressure from oneself to live up to higher expectations as a teacher (.822); and item 9, focusing upon pressure from colleagues to live up to higher expectations as a teacher (.734).

Table 4.3 Factor 2: Expectations – Showing Rank from Highest to Lowest of Items from Horizon Award Survey

Rank	Statistics from Factor Analysis	Items from Horizon Award Survey
1	.848	7. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from <u>myself</u> to live up to higher expectations (<u>personally</u>).
2	.822	8. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from <u>myself</u> to live up to higher expectations <u>as a teacher</u> .
3	.734	9. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my <u>colleagues</u> to live up to higher expectations <u>as a teacher</u> .

Table 4.4 shows the ranking of the two items for **Factor 3 – External Influence**. It shows that teachers perceive that the award has a stronger influence upon the teachers' schools than upon their communities. Item 14, focusing upon the *school*, has a statistic of .900 – which has the highest significance in the entire factor analysis. Item 15, focusing upon the *community*, also has a very high statistic of .875.

Table 4.4 Factor 3: External Influences – Showing Rank from Highest to Lowest of Items from Horizon Award Survey

Rank	Statistics from Factor Analysis	Items from Horizon Award Survey
1	.900	14. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my <u>school</u> .
2	.875	15. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on my <u>community</u> .

Table 4.5 shows the ranking for **Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession**. This table shows that the respondents perceive that they expect to either be teaching or somehow involved in the profession of education for the next 10 years. Item 10 has a statistic of -.880. Item 11 has a statistic of .848. These items had a balancing effect upon each other, since respondents may have answered in one direction regarding whether they thought they would still be teaching in ten

years, versus the next question, which asked if they would still be involved in education in some way even if they were not still in the classroom.

Table 4.5 Factor 4: Commitment to the Profession – Showing Rank from Highest to Lowest of Items from Horizon Award Survey

Rank	Statistics from Factor Analysis	Items from Horizon Award Survey
1	-.880	10. Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom.
2	.848	11. Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator.

Descriptive Statistics for Likert Items

Table 4.6 displays the descriptive statistics for the four factors, which focused upon the 15 Likert items. Table 4.7 displays the descriptive statistics for the 15 Likert items and shows the ranks for the means and the percentages. Table 4.7 also includes the statistics and ranking of the items from the exploratory factor analysis.

All of the items in **Factor 1 – Internal Influences** refer to elements such as positive insights regarding the award, personal and professional motivation, increased personal and professional self-confidence, and personal and professional positive influences. In every case, for these eight items, the respondents chose either 4-agree or 5-strongly agree as their answers as shown in Table 4.6. In fact, the mode for Factor 1 is 5, the highest possible score. According to Table 4.7, the item with the highest percentage (94.7%) of fours and fives is item 5, regarding a perceived increase in confidence in teaching. The item with the highest mean score (4.63), is item 2, which addresses whether or not the winners perceive that the award was motivating for them personally.

Factor 2 addresses the **increased expectations** winners perceive both from within themselves and from colleagues. Two of these three items focus on the winners' perceptions regarding increased expectations of themselves personally and professionally, while the third focuses on colleague's increased expectations upon the winners. Again the bulk of the answers are fours and fives. According to Table 4.7, winners indicate 4-agree and 5-strongly agree, 61.7% of the time regarding increased expectations in their personal life. They indicate 4-agree and 5-strongly agree, 78.3% of the time regarding feeling increased expectations of themselves as teachers. They indicate 4-agree and 5-strongly agree, 47.8% of the time regarding increased expectations in their teaching by colleagues.

Factor 3 addresses the **external factors** of the items about how the award influenced the winners organizationally – the influence it has had upon their schools and communities. For the item focusing on the schools, the respondents report a four or five 81.7% of the time. For the item focusing on communities, the respondents report a four or five 59.1% of the time. The influence of the award appears to be more moderate for this factor than for factors 1 and 2.

Factor 4 addresses the issue **of commitment to the profession**. For the item related to plans for teaching for the next 10 years, 53% report a 4 or 5. As far as still being involved in education even if they were not still in the classroom, 53% also report a 4 or 5. Table 4.6 shows the frequencies and descriptive statistics for all four factors.

Table 4.6 Descriptive Statistics for the Four Factors: Internal Influence, External Influence, Expectations, and Commitment to the Profession

Descriptive Statistics		Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	Factor 4: Commitment to Profession
N	Valid	N = 111	N = 115	N = 115	N = 115
	Missing	N = 4	N = 0	N = 0	N = 0
Mean		4.72	4.12	4.03	3.72
Std. Error of Mean		.049	.082	.089	.065
Median		5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Mode		5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		.52	.89	.96	.71
Range		2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00
Minimum		3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Maximum		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Table 4.7 Ranks, Means, Modes, Factor Analysis Statistics, and Percentages for Each Likert Item on the Horizon Award Survey

Horizon Award Survey Item	Rank by Mean	Mean	Mode	Rank by Factor Analysis Statistic	Factor Analysis Statistic	% of Likert Scores of 4 or 5	Rank by %
1. I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.	7	4.23	4.0	15	.506	88.7	7
2. Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally .	1	4.63	5.0	6	.852	93.9	2 (tie)
3. Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon my teaching .	5	4.43	5.0	13	.660	91.2	5
4. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally).	6	4.41	5.0	8	.759	89.5	6
5. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence as a teacher .	3	4.50	5.0	10	.738	94.7	1
6. Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (e.g., to try new strategies or tackle new projects).	10	4.00	4.0	14	.572	72.2	10
7. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).	11	3.77	5.0	4 (tie)	.848	61.7	11
8. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations as a teacher .	9	4.12	5.0	7	.822	78.3	9
9. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my colleagues to live up to higher expectations as a teacher .	15	3.37	3.0	11	.734	47.8	15

10. Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom.	14	3.50	4.0	2	-.880	53.0	13 (tie)
11. Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator.	13	3.51	5.0	4 (tie)	.848	53.0	13 (tie)
12. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me personally .	4	4.49	5.0	9	.744	93.0	4
13. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me professionally .	2	4.57	5.0	12	.683	93.9	2 (tie)
14. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my school .	8	4.16	5.0	1	.900	81.7	8
15. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on my community .	12	3.74	4.0	3	.875	59.1	12

Global Scores. Before conducting the analysis of variance, a global score was calculated.

It was determined that a score of 4 or above for the 15 Likert items would signify a perceived positive influence, so the target score was set at 60 or above. The global perceived scores are tallied according to the following scale: a score of 3 is considered moderate, a score of 4 is high, and a score of 5 is very high.

Factor 1 – Perceived Internal Influence. Table 4.8 shows that 84 of the 111 respondents perceive that the award had a **very high** perceived internal influence, indicated by a score of 5. There were 107 respondents who perceive that the award has had a **high or very high** perceived internal influence with a score of 4 or 5. There were 111 respondents who perceive that the award has had a **moderate, high, or very high** internal influence with a score of 3, 4, or 5. No

respondents assigned scores of 1 or 2 for this factor. According to Table 4.8, for all three ratings – moderate, high, and very high – the total mean is 61.64, which is 1.64 points above the target global score of 60 – indicating a positive perceived internal influence.

Table 4.8 Global Scores for Factor 1 – Perceived Internal Influence

Descriptive Statistics	Moderate (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Total N = 111
	N = 4	N = 23	N = 84	
Mean	43.75	53.35	64.76	61.64
Standard Deviation	3.77	4.35	4.93	7.48
Minimum	40	44	51	40
Maximum	47	63	74	74
				Sig. .00

Factor 2 – Perceived Expectations. Perception of respondents' expectations is shown in Table 4.9. Forty-four of 111 respondents perceive that the award had **very high** external influence, 44 rate it as **high**, 18 rate it as **moderate**, and 5 rate it as **low**. The mean for all four ratings – low, moderate, high, and very high – is 61.64, which is 1.64 points above the target global score of 60 – a positive perception regarding the expectations the teachers hold of themselves and the expectations colleagues have of them. This is exactly the same mean as for Factor 1 – Internal Influence.

Table 4.9 Global Scores for Factor 2 – Perceived Expectations

Descriptive Statistics	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Total N = 111
N	N = 5	N = 18	N = 44	N = 44	
Mean	50.20	56.16	60.27	66.54	61.64
Standard Deviation	4.55	8.11	5.81	5.22	7.48
Minimum	44	40	46	47	40
Maximum	55	66	71	74	74
					Sig. .00

Factor 3 – Perceived External Influence. Respondents' perceptions regarding external influence are shown in Table 4.10. Forty-three respondents out of 111 perceive that the expectations they had of themselves and that colleagues held of them were **very high**, while 39 rate this aspect **high**, 19 rate it **moderate**, and 10 rate it **low**. According to Table 4.10, the mean for all four ratings – low, moderate, high, and very high – is 61.64, which is 1.64 points above the target global score of 60 – indicating a positive perception regarding the influence of the award upon schools and communities. This is exactly the same mean as for Factors 1 and 2.

Table 4.10 Global Scores for Factor 3 – Perceived External Commitment

Descriptive Statistics	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Total
N	N = 10	N = 19	N = 39	N = 43	N = 111
Mean	47.70	57.73	60.77	67.40	61.64
Standard Deviation	5.81	4.61	4.61	4.83	7.48
Minimum	40	51	52	47	40
Maximum	60	65	68	74	74
				Sig. .00	

Factor 4 – Perceived Commitment to the Profession. Respondents' perceptions regarding commitment to the profession are shown in Table 4.11. Twelve respondents perceive that they have a **very high** commitment to the profession, 63 rate their commitment as **high**, 33 rate their commitment as **moderate**, and three rate it as **low**. According to Table 4.11, the mean for all four ratings – low, moderate, high, and very high – is 61.64, which is 1.64 points above the target global score of 60 – indicating a positive perception of commitment to the profession. This is exactly the same mean as for Factors 1, 2, and 3.

Table 4.11 *Global Scores for Factor 4 – Perceived Commitment to the Profession*

	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)	Very High (5)	Total
N	N = 3	N = 33	N = 63	N = 12	N = 111
Mean	56.33	57.64	62.49	69.50	61.64
Standard Deviation	12.50	7.35	6.43	3.73	7.48
Minimum	44	40	47	63	40
Maximum	69	69	73	74	74
				Sig. .00	

Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables

The demographics focus upon six variables: (1) year of the award; (2) age of participants when they won the Horizon Award; (3) gender; (4) grade level taught during the first year of teaching – either elementary or secondary; (5) location of the school during the first year of teaching – urban, suburban, or rural; and (6) whether the participants were still teaching at the time of the survey. Because 11 respondents quit the survey before addressing the demographics, this part of the survey has only 104 valid results.

Variable 1 – Year of Award. This research project focuses on the years from 2003, the year in which the award was first given, to 2011. These are described as early winners (2003-2005), middle winners (2006-2008), and recent winners (2009-2011). According to Table 4.12, approximately twice as many recent winners responded to the survey as did early winners. For Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.73 on a 5-point scale. The recent winners have the highest mean (4.84) on a scale from one to five. The middle winners have a mean of 4.62, and the early winners have a mean of 4.58. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.14. The recent winners have the highest mean (4.32). The middle winners and early winners both have means of 4.00. For Factor 3 – External Expectations, the total mean is 4.01. Recent winners have the highest mean (4.30). Early winners have a mean of 3.81, while middle winners have a

mean of 3.78. For Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, the total mean is 3.75. Recent winners have the highest mean (3.87). Early winners have a mean of 3.68, while middle winners have a mean of 3.64.

Table 4.12 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 1: Year of Award

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound				
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	2003-2005	22	4.68	.57	.12	4.43	4.93	3.00	5.00	
	2006-2008	35	4.62	.55	.09	4.44	4.81	3.00	5.00	
	2009-2011	44	4.84	.48	.07	4.70	4.99	3.00	5.00	
	Total	101	4.73	.53	.05	4.62	4.83	3.00	5.00	
	2003-2005	22	4.00	.87	.19	3.61	4.39	2.00	5.00	
	Expectations	2006-2008	36	4.00	.89	.15	3.70	4.30	2.00	5.00
Factor 2: Perceived External Influence	2009-2011	46	4.32	.92	.14	4.05	4.60	1.00	5.00	
	Total	104	4.14	.91	.09	3.97	4.32	1.00	5.00	
	2003-2005	22	3.81	.91	.19	3.41	4.22	2.00	5.00	
	External	2006-2008	36	3.78	1.07	.18	3.41	4.14	2.00	5.00
	2009-2011	46	4.30	.89	.13	4.04	4.57	2.00	5.00	
	Total	104	4.01	.99	.10	3.82	4.21	2.00	5.00	
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	2003-2005	22	3.68	.48	.10	3.47	3.90	3.00	4.00	
	2006-2008	36	3.64	.72	.12	3.39	3.88	2.00	5.00	
	2009-2011	46	3.87	.75	.11	3.65	4.09	2.00	5.00	
	Total	104	3.75	.69	.07	3.61	3.88	2.00	5.00	

Variable 2 – Age of Respondent. The ages of the winners at the time they received the award range from the early twenties to early forties. These are condensed into three groups: twenties, thirties, and forties. As demonstrated by Table 4.13, the highest percentage of respondents are in their twenties 83, or 82.7%. Ten respondents are in their thirties (9.6%). The lowest percentage of respondents are in their forties (7.7%) and only eight responded to the survey. Fourteen of the respondents (9.6%) did not complete the demographic section of this survey. Table 4.13 shows that for Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.73 on a five-point scale. Those in their forties have the highest mean (4.88). Those in their twenties have a mean of 4.76, and those in their thirties have a mean of 4.40. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.12. Those in their forties again have the highest mean (4.5), while those in their thirties have a mean of 4.30 and those in their twenties have a mean of 4.09. For Factor 3 – External Influence, the total mean is 4.02. Those in their twenties have the highest mean (4.06). Those in their forties have a mean of 3.86, and those in their thirties have a mean of 3.80. For Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, the total mean is 3.75. Those in their twenties have the highest mean (3.75). Those in their forties have a mean of 3.75, while those in their thirties have a mean of 3.60.

Table 4.13 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 2: Age of Respondents

Factor	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	20-29	83	4.76	.51	.06	4.65	4.87	3.00	5.00
	30-39	10	4.40	.70	.2	3.90	4.90	3.00	5.00
	40-49	8	4.88	.36	.13	4.58	5.17	4.00	5.00
	Total	101	4.73	.53	.05	4.62	4.84	3.00	5.00
Factor 2: Expectations	20-29	86	4.09	.92	.10	3.90	4.29	1.00	5.00
	30-39	10	4.30	.95	.30	3.62	4.98	2.00	5.00
	40-49	8	4.50	.76	.27	3.87	5.13	3.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.12	.91	.09	3.97	4.32	1.00	5.00
Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	20-29	86	4.06	.95	.10	3.89	4.26	2.00	5.00
	30-39	10	3.80	1.23	.39	2.92	4.68	2.00	5.00
	40-49	8	3.86	1.13	.40	2.93	4.81	2.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.02	.98514	.10	3.82	4.21	2.00	5.00
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	20-29	86	3.77	.70	.08	3.61	3.92	2.00	5.00
	30-39	10	3.60	.70	.22	3.10	4.10	2.00	4.00
	40-49	8	3.75	.71	.26	3.16	4.34	3.00	5.00
	Total	104	3.75	.69	.07	3.61	3.88	2.00	5.00

Variable 3 – Grade Level Taught. The grade levels taught by winners are divided into two groups: elementary and secondary. More of the respondents who were teaching at the secondary level responded (54.4%), compared with those teaching at the elementary level (40.9%). Table 4.14 shows that for Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.75 on a five-point scale. The means between the two levels are extremely close: secondary teachers have a mean of 4.75, while the elementary teachers have a mean of 4.74. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.13. Elementary teachers have a mean of 4.19, while secondary teachers have a mean of 4.09. For Factor 3 – External Influence, the total mean is 4.04. Secondary teachers have a mean of 4.14, while elementary teachers have a mean of 3.91. For Factor 4 – Commitment to

the Profession, the total mean is 3.75. Elementary teachers have a mean of 3.79, while secondary teachers have a mean of 3.71.

Table 4.14 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 3: Level Taught

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Mini-mum	Maxi-mum	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Elementary	47	4.74	.530	.08	4.59	4.90	3.00	5.00
	Secondary	53	4.75	.48	.07	4.62	4.89	3.00	5.00
	Total	100	4.75	.50	.05	4.65	4.85	3.00	5.00
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Elementary	47	4.19	.92	.13	3.92	4.46	2.00	5.00
	Secondary	56	4.09	.90	.12	3.85	4.33	1.00	5.00
	Total	103	4.13	.91	.09	3.96	4.31	1.00	5.00
Factor 3: External Influence	Elementary	47	3.91	1.02	.14	3.61	4.21	2.00	5.00
	Secondary	56	4.14	.92	.12	3.90	4.39	2.00	5.00
	Total	103	4.04	.97	.10	3.85	4.23	2.00	5.00
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	Elementary	47	3.79	.51	.07	3.64	3.93	3.00	5.00
	Secondary	56	3.71	.82	.11	3.50	3.94	2.00	5.00
	Total	103	3.75	.70	.07	3.61	3.88	2.00	5.00

Variable 4 – Location of School. The respondents were asked where their schools were located – in rural, suburban, or urban settings. No criteria for these locations were given; it was left up to the respondents to decide how to describe the locations of their schools. More respondents identified their schools as being suburban rather than being rural or urban as shown in Table 4.15. For Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.73 on a five-point scale. The teachers from urban schools have the highest mean (4.80). Those from rural and suburban schools have the same mean: 4.72. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.16. The teachers from urban schools have the highest mean (4.80). Those from rural schools have a mean of 4.16, while those from suburban schools have a mean of 4.04. For Factor 3 – External

Influence, the total mean is 4.02. The teachers from urban schools have the highest mean (4.60).

Those from rural schools have a mean of 4.08, while those from suburban schools have a mean of 3.88. For Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, the total mean is 3.75. The teachers from rural schools have the highest mean (3.81). Those from urban schools have a mean of 3.80, while those from suburban schools have a mean of 3.70.

Table 4.15 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 4: Location of School

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minim-um	Maxi-mum	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Rural	36	4.72	.51	.09	4.55	4.90	3.00	5.00
	Suburban	54	4.72	.56	.08	4.57	4.88	3.00	5.00
	Urban	10	4.80	.42	.13	4.50	5.10	4.00	5.00
	Total	100	4.73	.53	.05	4.62	4.84	3.00	5.00
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Rural	36	4.16	.85	.14	3.88	4.45	2.00	5.00
	Suburban	57	4.04	.96	.13	3.78	4.29	1.00	5.00
	Urban	10	4.80	.42	.13	4.50	5.10	4.00	5.00
	Total	103	4.16	.90	.09	3.98	4.33	1.00	5.00
Factor 3: External Influence	Rural	36	4.08	.94	.16	3.77	4.40	2.00	5.00
	Suburban	57	3.88	1.02	.13	3.60	4.15	2.00	5.00
	Urban	10	4.60	.84	.27	4.00	5.20	3.00	5.00
	Total	103	4.02	.99	.10	3.82	4.21	2.00	5.00
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	Rural	36	3.81	.71	.11	3.57	4.05	2.00	5.00
	Suburban	57	3.70	.71	.09	3.51	3.89	2.00	5.00
	Urban	10	3.80	.63	.20	3.3	4.25	3.00	5.00
	Total	103	3.75	.70	.07	3.61	3.89	2.00	5.00

Variable 5 – Gender. The next category of demographics is gender – either male or female. Many more women completed the survey than did men: 70.4% are women, and 20.0% are men. Table 4.16 shows the means for gender and the four factors. For all factors, women have higher means than the men do. For Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.73. The

mean for women is 4.78, while the mean for men is 4.56. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.14. The mean for women is 4.19, while the mean for men is 4.00. For Factor 3 – External Influence, the total mean is 4.02. The mean for women is 4.04, while the mean for the men is 3.97. For Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, the total mean is 3.75. The mean for women is 3.83, while the mean for men is 3.48.

Table 4.16 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 5: Gender of Respondent

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minim-um	Maxi-mum	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Male	23	4.56	.66	.14	4.28	4.85	3.00	5.00
	Female	78	4.78	.47	.05	4.68	4.89	3.00	5.00
	Total	101	4.73	.53	.05	4.63	4.83	3.00	5.00
Factor 2: Expectations	Male	23	4.00	.90	.19	3.61	4.39	2.00	5.00
	Female	81	4.19	.91	.10	3.99	4.39	1.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.14	.91	.09	3.97	4.32	1.00	5.00
Factor 3: External Influence	Male	23	3.97	1.14	.24	3.46	4.45	2.00	5.00
	Female	81	4.04	.94	.10	3.83	4.24	2.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.02	.99	.10	3.83	4.21	2.00	5.00
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	Male	23	3.48	.73	.15	3.16	3.80	2.00	5.00
	Female	81	3.83	.67	.07	3.68	3.97	2.00	5.00
	Total	104	3.75	.70	.07	3.61	3.88	2.00	5.00

Variable 6 – Teaching Status. This category is concerned with whether respondents are still teaching or not. The vast majority of respondents to this survey are still teaching in the classroom: 96%. Only 7.0% indicate that they are no longer in the classroom. The data for this variable are shown in Table 4.17. For Factor 1 – Internal Influence, the total mean is 4.73. Those teachers who are no longer in the classroom have a mean of 4.75, while those still teaching have a mean of 4.73. For Factor 2 – Expectations, the total mean is 4.14. Those teachers who are no

longer in the classroom have a mean of 4.25 while those still teaching have a mean of 4.13. For Factor 3 – External Influence, the total mean is 4.02. Those teachers who are no longer in the classroom have a mean of 4.37, while those still teaching have a mean of 3.99. For Factor 4 – External Influence, the total mean is 3.76. Those teachers who are still teaching have a mean of 3.76, while those who are no longer in the classroom have a mean of 3.62.

Table 4.17 Descriptive Statistics for Factors 1-4 vs. Variable 6:Teaching Status

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minim-	Maxi-	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Still Teaching	93	4.73	.53	.06	4.62	4.84	3.00	5.00
	Not Teaching	8	4.75	.46	.16	4.36	5.14	4.00	5.00
	Total	101	4.73	.53	.05	4.63	4.84	3.00	5.00
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Still Teaching	96	4.13	.94	.10	3.95	4.33	1.00	5.00
	Not Teaching	8	4.25	.46	.16	3.86	4.64	4.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.14	.91	.09	3.97	4.32	1.00	5.00
Factor 3: External Influence	Still Teaching	96	3.99	1.01	.10	3.79	4.19	2.00	5.00
	Not Teaching	8	4.37	.52	.18	3.94	4.81	4.00	5.00
	Total	104	4.02	.99	.10	3.83	4.21	2.00	5.00
Factor 4: Commitment to Profession	Still Teaching	96	3.76	.71	.07	3.62	3.90	2.00	5.00
	Not Teaching	8	3.62	.52	.18	3.19	4.06	3.00	4.00
	Total	104	3.76	.69	.07	3.62	3.88	2.00	5.00

Out of all the respondents, only eight have left the classroom. Their last years of teaching are shown in Table 4.18: one person left in 2008, one person left in 2009, three people left 2010 and three people left in 2011.

Table 4.18 *Last Year of Teaching for Respondents Who Are No Longer in the Classroom*

Last Year in the Classroom	Number of Respondents
2008	1
2009	1
2010	3
2011	3

The respondents give various reasons for leaving the classroom. One person is a stay-at-home parent who volunteers with Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) and is initiating a special needs ministry at church. Some respondents have acquired other positions, such as the assistant principal/principal of a high school, while another became a counselor at an elementary school within the same district. Some have accepted other education-related positions such as District Curriculum Coordinator for World Languages and ELL Services. One respondent reports running a small foundation called PLaiD – Pediatric Liver Aid, while another is working in the home with students who have autism. One teacher recently married and resigned to move with her spouse. She reports that she is currently interviewing for teaching jobs in a new community.

Statistics from these six demographic areas were used to conduct an analysis of variance procedure.

Analysis of Variance

The respondents in this study were asked to provide demographic information for six areas. The statistics from the six variables in the demographic information produced an *F*-ratio to “test the overall fit of a linear model” (Field, p. 781). The resulting linear model “tends to be defined in terms of group means and the resulting ANOVA is therefore an overall test of whether group means differ” (Field, p. 781).

When conducting an analysis of variance, it is assumed that the variance between the groups being compared is similar. The homogeneity of variance test tested for violations to this

assumption. If a significance value was greater than .05, then the assumption was accepted. However, four groups did not meet this assumption. In those cases the Welch test, showing robust tests of equality of means was used, and then, if needed, a Tukey test for multiple comparisons was conducted.

Analysis of Variance for Factors and Demographics. An analysis of variance procedure was conducted to compare how the various demographic groups answered each of the 15 Likert items in the survey. In addition, a second analysis of variance procedure was used to compare the four factors and the demographic groups, which is a more parsimonious way of analyzing the data. The data comparing the four factors and demographics follow.

Factors 1-4 and year of award. In Table 4.19, the four factors are shown in relation to the year of the award. The respondents were put into three groups: 2003-2005 – early winners, 2006-2008 – middle winners, and 2009-2011 – recent winners. The analysis of variance for each of the factors and year of award is: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(2, 98) = .174$, $p = .18$), Factor 2 – Expectations ($F(2, 101) = 3.64$, $p = .03$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(2, 101) = 1.68$, $p = .19$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(2, 101) = 1.26$, $p = .29$).

A Levene's test for homogeneity of variance showed that a possible significant difference might exist between Factor 2 – Expectations and year of award ($p = .03$). A Welch test of equality of means supported that assumption with $p = .03$, so a Tukey test of multiple comparisons was conducted. The Tukey showed a significance of $p = .04$ regarding expectations between the most recent (2009-2011) recipients of the Horizon Award and those who won the award during the middle years (2006-2008) regarding the influence of the award upon expectations. The recent recipients have a higher mean of 4.30, vs. the middle recipients, who have a mean of 3.78.

Table 4.19 *Analysis of Variance for Four Factors Related to Award Influence and Year of Award*

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Between Groups	.95	2	.48	1.74 .18
	Within Groups	26.83	98	.27	
	Total	27.78	100		
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Between Groups	6.72	2	3.36	3.64 .03
	Within Groups	93.23	101	.92	
	Total	99.96	103		
Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	Between Groups	2.78	2	1.36	1.68 .19
	Within Groups	82.11	101	.81	
	Total	84.8	103		
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	Between Groups	1.20	2	.60	1.26 .29
	Within Groups	48.29	101	.48	
	Total	49.50	103		

Factors 1-4 and age of recipient. As shown in Table 4.20, this test compared Factors 1-4 and the age of the recipients at the time of the award. This table shows the results, which tested how the respondents from the three age groups differ in their answers. The three age groups are 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49. There is no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way analysis of variance: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(2, 98) = 2.46, p = .09$), Factor 2 – Expectations ($F(2, 101) = .40, p = .67$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(2, 101) = .90, p = .41$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(2, 101) = .26, p = .77$). A Levene's test for homogeneity of variance showed that a possible significant difference might exist between Factor 1 – Internal Influence and age ($p = .04$). A Welch test of equality of means did not support the assumption that a possible significant difference might exist ($p = .227$).

Table 4.20 *Analysis of Variance for Four Factors Related to Award Influence and Age of the Recipient*

Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Between Groups	1.32	2	.66	2.46	.09
	Within Groups	26.46	98	.27		
	Total	27.78	100			
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Between Groups	.78	2	.39	.40	.67
	Within Groups	99.18	101	.98		
	Total	99.96	103			
Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	Between Groups	1.48	2	.74	.90	.41
	Within Groups	83.36	101	.83		
	Total	84.83	103			
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	Between Groups	.25	2	.13	.26	.77
	Within Groups	49.25	101	.49		
	Total	49.50	103			

Factors 1-4 and level taught. As shown in Table 4.21, the results of this test indicate how the respondents from elementary vs. secondary schools differ in their answers. There is no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way analysis of variance: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(1, 98) = .01, p = .92$), Factor 2 – Expectations, ($F(1, 101) = 1.42, p = .24$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(1, 101) = .32, p = .57$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(1, 101) = .28, p = .60$). A Levene's test for homogeneity of variance showed that a possible significant difference might exist between Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession and level taught ($p = .00$). A Welch test of equality of means did not support that assumption ($p = .584$).

Table 4.21 *Analysis of Variance for Four Factors Related to Award Influence and Level Taught*

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	.003 Between Groups Within Groups Total	1 24.75 24.75	.00 98 99	.01	.92
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	1.33 Between Groups Within Groups Total	1 94.52 95.85	1.33 .94	1.42	.24
Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	.27 Between Groups Within Groups Total	1 83.83 84.10	.27 .83	.32	.57
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	.14 Between Groups Within Groups Total	1 49.30 49.44	.14 .49	.28	.60

Factors 1-4 and location of school. According to Table 4.22, this test compares Factors 1-4 and the location of the school where the teacher was teaching at the time of the award. This table shows how the respondents from rural, suburban, and urban schools differ in their answers. There is no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way analysis of variance except for Factor 3 – External Influence. The analysis of variance for each of the factors and location of school is: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(2, 97) = .10, p = .91$), Factor 2 – Expectations ($F(2, 100) = 2.45, p = .09$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(2, 100) = .3.17, p = .05$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(2, 100) = .27, p = .76$). While a Levene's test for homogeneity of variance did not show any significance for Factor 3 – External Influence and location of school ($p = .15$), a Welch test of equality of means supported that assumption ($p = .00$). A Tukey test of multiple comparisons was conducted. The Tukey procedure showed a significance of $p = .04$ between suburban and urban schools. The urban schools have a mean of 4.80, while the suburban schools have a mean of 4.04, showing that teachers from urban schools

perceive that the Horizon Award has had a greater influence upon external influence than those from suburban schools.

Table 4.22 Analysis of Variance for Four Factors Related to Influence of Award and Location of School (Rural, Suburban, or Urban)

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Between Groups .05	2	.03	.10	.91
	Within Groups 27.66	97	.29		
	Total 27.71	99			
Factor 2: Perceived Expectations	Between Groups 4.67	2	2.34	2.45	.09
	Within Groups 95.29	100	.95		
	Total 99.96	102			
Factor 3: Perceived External Influence	Between Groups 4.99	2	2.49	3.17	.05
	Within Groups 78.53	100	.79		
	Total 83.51	102			
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	Between Groups .27	2	.13	.27	.76
	Within Groups 49.17	100	.49		
	Total 49.44	102			

Factors 1-4 and gender. According to Table 4.23, this test compares Factors 1-4 and the gender of the recipients. The results show how male and female respondents differ in their answers. There is no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way analysis of variance except possibly for Factor 4: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(1, 99) = 3.07, p = .08$), Factor 2 – Expectations, ($F(1, 102) = .12, p = .73$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(1, 102) = .74, p = .39$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(1, 102) = 4.7, p = .03$). The Levene's test showed that a possible significant difference might exist between Factor 1 – Internal Influence and gender ($p = .01$) and also for Factor 2 – Expectations and gender ($p = .04$). A Welch test of equality of means did not support the assumption for Factor 1 and gender or Factor

2 and gender. While the Levene's test for homogeneity of variance did not show any significance for Factor 4 ($p = .184$), the Welch test did show a significant difference between males and females for Factor 4 – Commitment and gender ($p = .05$). Females have a mean of 3.83, while males have a mean of 3.50.

Table 4.23 *Analysis of Variance for Four Factors Related to Award Influence and Gender*

Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Between Groups	.84	1	.84	3.07	.08
	Within Groups	26.95	99	.27		
	Total	27.78	100			
Factor 2: Perceived External Influence	Between Groups	.12	1	.116	.12	.73
	Within Groups	99.85	102	.979		
	Total	99.96	103			
Factor 3: Perceived Expectations	Between Groups	.61	1	.61	.74	.39
	Within Groups	84.22	102	.87		
	Total	84.84	103			
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	Between Groups	2.18	1	2.181	4.70	.03
	Within Groups	47.32	102	.464		
	Total	49.50	103			

Factors 1-4 and teaching status. Table 4.24 shows how this test compares Factors 1-4 and teaching status – whether teachers were still teaching in the classroom or not at the time of the survey. The results show how the respondents who were still teaching differ in their answers from those no longer teaching. There is no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way analysis of variance: Factor 1 – Internal Influence ($F(1, 99) = .01, p = .92$), Factor 2 – Expectations ($F(1, 102) = 1.13, p = .29$), Factor 3 – External Influence ($F(1, 102) = .12, p = .73$), and Factor 4 – Commitment ($F(1, 102) = .28, p = .60$). A Levene's test of

homogeneity of variance did not show any possible significant differences, meaning that the use of the Welch test for equality of means was not necessary in this case.

Table 4.24 Analysis of Variance Showing Four Factors Related to Award Influence and Teaching Status

Factors		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F ratio	p
Factor 1: Perceived Internal Influence	Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.009	.92
	Within Groups	27.780	99	.281		
	Total	27.782	100			
Factor 2: Perceived External Influence	Between Groups	1.097	1	1.097	1.132	.29
	Within Groups	98.865	102	.969		
	Total	99.962	103			
Factor 3: Perceived Expectations	Between Groups	.097	1	.097	.117	.73
	Within Groups	84.740	102	.831		
	Total	84.837	103			
Factor 4: Perceived Commitment to Profession	Between Groups	.135	1	.135	.280	.60
	Within Groups	49.365	102	.484		
	Total	49.500	103			

In summary, according to the analysis of variance tests, respondents agree that the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon them regarding the four factors – internal influence, expectations, external influence, and commitment to the profession. The only significant differences are as follows:

1. Factor 2 – Expectations vs. Year of Award ($p = .03$). The most recent teachers (2009-2011) perceive more influence from the award regarding expectations compared to the teachers from the middle years (2006-2008).

2. Factor 3 – External influence vs. Location of School ($p = .05$). Urban teachers perceive more influence from the award upon their schools and communities compared to the teachers from suburban schools.
3. Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession vs. Gender ($p = .03$). Compared to males, the females perceive that the award has had a higher influence regarding their commitment to the profession of education.

The variables regarding age, level taught (elementary or secondary), and teaching status show no significant differences in perception of the influence of the award and the four factors.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The final section of this chapter discusses the narrative data. This examination of the narrative data looked for commonalities and outliers but was not the systematic in-depth analysis commonly used with large qualitative studies. A word search was conducted of all the narrative data for words or units of meaning appearing frequently (or for outliers) – see Appendices E and F. These findings were then grouped into two broad categories and then subdivided into several smaller ones. The discussion of this analysis includes verbatim quotes to illustrate the common understandings as well as some of the unique comments made by only a few individuals.

All participant quotes used to illustrate the commonalities and unique understandings provide descriptive evidence relating to the scores of the 15 Likert items. The alignment of the Likert items with the open-ended questions is shown in the third column of Table 3.2. In addition to the responses to the open-ended questions from the main part of the survey, examples used in the following section may come from the final question of the survey: **Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Horizon Award?**

The two major understandings or commonalities that were immediately evident are that the respondents identify (1) positive benefits attributed with winning the award (see Appendix E, and (2) the importance of relationships, as evidenced by the naming of various people groups who were important to the winners in some way (see Appendix F). While both categories are further divided into subgroups, the relationships group embraces everyone mentioned in the study. There are few negative comments; these will be described at the end of this section.

Many of the comments are so rich in details that they could be used in more than one instance. Minor typographical errors and misspellings in the participants' examples were corrected for readability.

Positive Benefits of the Horizon Award

Many intangible benefits are associated with winning the Horizon Award. These are discussed in the sections below and the words used are shown in italics. Words are used in various forms, for example, both *proud* and *pride*, and *recognize* and *recognition* are used, but may not be mentioned separately.

Honor and pride. The first benefit that that will be discussed is regarding the positive feelings evoked by winning the award. Over and over participants mention that winning the award has been a *positive* experience. They felt *honored* and were *proud* to be recognized. Some examples:

“Winning the Horizon Award provided me with a confident outlook on the way I do things. It made me proud and I realized I could do anything I wanted to. I came into teaching from a non-traditional background, so it helped me to believe in myself.”

“Winning the Horizon Award has definitely been a highlight of my career – a huge honor.”

Confidence. *Self-confidence* and *confidence* are two of the terms used most often in the narrative sections. Many respondents mention how tough the first year of teaching was. They put in long hours and wondered if anyone noticed the great effort it took just to get through the year; to be singled out for excellence was a real *boost* – another word used fairly often.

“Winning the Horizon Award was a confidence booster for me. As a recipient of the award, I was both proud and humbled. Also, my family was proud of my accomplishment.”

“It made me feel more confident all around, even outside of the classroom.”

“It gave me more self confidence as a teacher. I was willing to take more risks and try new things in the class. It challenged me to be better teacher and make every minute in the classroom count!”

Challenges. Along with the increases in self-confidence came increased *challenges*, in the form of increased *expectations* and the willingness to *take on risks*. The challenges range from avoiding stagnation in teaching, to taking on new leadership roles, to dealing with the jealousy of colleagues – the latter two of these are addressed later in this section.

The increased expectations came from within the winners themselves and from colleagues. Some examples:

“After winning the Horizon Award I became focused at always creating the best lessons and activities for my classroom. It has pushed me to do my best in each and everything I teach and it has not allowed me to settle for anything less than my best.”

“Professionally, winning the Horizon award has increased my expectations and the expectations of my colleagues. Often I will be reminded that I am a hard worker BECAUSE I won the Horizon Award. Although I see this as somewhat presumptive on the part of people who say such things, I respond to it and try to contribute more to my profession because of such comments.”

Along with increased expectations, in some cases, teachers perceive that they became more willing to be *risk-takers*, both within and outside of the classroom. Some examples:

“I felt assured that I was in the right profession and I was also willing to take risks and try new things outside of the classroom because of my increased self-confidence.”

“Because of this process I am more willing to take risks by trying new things in the classroom.”

Motivation and inspiration. Some winners feel that they were more motivated to try new strategies and methods in the classroom. One quote does not actually use the word *motivation*, but it is obvious that that is what has happened to him/her:

“Professionally, winning the Horizon Award has made me less afraid to fail. The award process enabled conversation between myself and coworkers about me and my teaching abilities.”

The increase in *confidence* and *motivation* made some winners feel *inspired* to be a better teacher.

“It encouraged me to go forward to get National Board Certified.”

“The Horizon Award inspired me to do more. After attending the conferences I saw KTOY nominees, MILKEN educators, Nationally Board Certified teachers and it makes me realize that I have so much more to strive for. Winning the award allowed me to be surrounded by highly inspiring educators from all areas of the state and all age groups. The award reminds me each day that I need to do what is best for each child and live up to the award I was selected to receive.”

One person mentions that winning the award was *motivating* for the entire building, which is related to the influence the award had upon the winners’ organizations:

“I think receiving the award was a positive experience for the staff in my building because it improved camaraderie, boosted morale, and was motivating for the entire building to know the state does recognize the good work that teachers do.”

Winners also mention that the award made other people take them more *seriously* or that their *credibility* was increased in the eyes of their colleagues. Examples of this are shown below in the section on professional relationships.

Empowerment. Winners also feel that the award was empowering, although that exact word is used only once. The words they tend to use are *validation* and *affirmation*. As noted above, many respondents mention how grueling the first year of teaching was, often using the term *hard work*. Some examples:

“I feel that winning the Horizon Award made me better realize the potential that I have. I've always been a hard worker and winning this award made me realize that people notice and it is truly worth the effort. . . . This confidence and positive outlook carried over into my personal life and relationships!”

“Winning the Horizon Award felt like validation for all of the hard work I put into my daily life. . . . It was that ‘pat on the back’ that all of us love to have from time to time. It has stayed with me and pushes me to continue to strive for excellence.”

“It was such a compliment. Winning the award affirmed me in many ways. It made me feel like all of my hard work paid off and has pushed me to do even better as I grow in my knowledge of child development and teaching.”

Respect and value. Another category was that of *respect*, which was brought about because of the increased *recognition* and *attention* the winners received. Winners perceive more respect from veteran teachers and other colleagues and even from their families. This brought about the perception of being *valued*.

“Being nominated and selected for the Horizon's Award was wonderful personally. It left me feeling like a valued part of my community and state and boosted my confidence. It also helped me develop my ability to accept compliments and words of congratulation with grace.”

“Winning the Horizon Award established a respect for me as new teacher from veteran teachers, students, and parents.”

“Winning the award brought me immediate respect from older colleagues and gave me the ability to share my knowledge with the people I worked with on a much more regular basis.”

Some winners received a lot of *recognition*, making them feel excited *appreciated*. Many mention that they had a sense that no one was aware of the hard work they had put in that first

year. They are gratified to know that what they had done was *valued*. This example perhaps captures this concept best of all:

“Actors have awards ceremonies in excess and this, plus their box office numbers, fans and media/critics give them tons of pats on the back. In education, generally you have a few parents who are incredibly thoughtful and write hand-written cards or send e-mails sharing how much they appreciate you, but there definitely aren't as many pats on the back from parents and formal awards help to validate what you are doing.”

Leadership Opportunities. Another significant concept is that of leadership – both being a leader and being offered new leadership opportunities. Sometimes the leadership is less formal, as in being more willing to interact with other teachers and share ideas. Other times, winners perceive that leadership opportunities have been either offered as the result of the award, or winners have been willing to actively seek them for themselves. Some examples:

“The Horizon Award gave me more credibility and people in my building and district looked to me in leadership roles. I immediately became a leader within my building and the principal took my ideas and suggestions more seriously than maybe she would have without winning the award.”

“I have become more involved in more committees, clubs, and leadership roles!”

“I have been assigned to district committees, named a department head, and been seen as a leader when tough questions have needed answered.”

“As I said before it helped with my confidence. Professionally I felt like people would take what I said more seriously. Attending the KEEN conference helped me find my voice. I was able to present to my own faculty, and since then I have completed my National Board Certification, was nominated for KTOY, lobbied at a national level on behalf of the National Writing Project. I don't know that I would have had as much confidence in myself as a classroom teacher because of this opportunity when I began teaching.”

Professional Development. One of the benefits that winners most value is the opportunity to become a member of the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN). In fact, many respondents maintain that being able to attend the KEEN conference – and the opportunities that have come about because of it – has been the best thing about the Horizon

Award. Most teachers perceive that attending KEEN is motivating and inspiring. They also appreciate the benefits of the connections they have made with outstanding educators from across the state. A few comments:

“As an educator, it was a rewarding and empowering award. The link to KEEN and the conference was the most beneficial aspect of the award; it allows you to continue to network and have ongoing professional development. If the award were just a certificate with no long-term professional development, I would not see it as such a valuable and positive experience.”

“I was no longer seen as a ‘newbie,’ but as a competent teacher with great ideas. Attending the KEEN conferences has opened up many new avenues for my career and introduced me to many professional colleagues that I would not have had the opportunity to meet otherwise.”

“I think the other big influence of the Horizon award is the KEEN membership. Being able to meet other teachers and network in a community that believes in dedication and hard work really energizes me. It helps me to continue being an innovative teacher.”

Professional Benefits. Besides the added opportunities for professional development and networking with other educators through KEEN, winners are aware that having the Horizon Award is beneficial to their future in education in other ways. Some mention that it is a plus when applying for new jobs.

“It helped me as I was interviewing for a new position at a high school; however, when I interviewed at a college they had never heard of the award.”

“I married and moved to Omaha and winning the Horizon Award put me ahead of the pack when looking for a new job. I was able to talk about the award and implications of it and I was able to take my pick from multiple job offers!”

“Well, I actually got a different job that I was more excited about for the next school year right after I won, and I feel like the award really helped make that happen.”

At least one person mentions that the award has had an effect on commitment to the profession:

“I believe winning the award helped other educators in my building to see me as a leader in the teaching field, which opened up many conversations about new teaching practices with practitioners who have been in the field for many years. It has also given me the opportunity to serve as a mentor for many new professionals since the award, and help retain quality teachers in our building. Overall, I think it did great influence my teaching and willingness to stay in this stressful occupation.”

Organizational Benefits – School and Community. Winners perceive that winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon their schools and communities. Winning the award brings positive recognition not only to the winning teachers, but also to their schools and communities. Interestingly, many more of the comments in this section are perception-based with few real examples. Many comments are prefaced with words like “I think . . .” or “I felt . . .”

“My receiving this award was a huge pump for my school, as well as my district. My school building previously had not been much in the news of our district, and this brought positive attention that was very welcome.”

“Winning the Horizon Award has made my school and my school district looked upon with greater distinction.”

“The school district has never had anyone win the award before, so they used it for positive publicity which was nice for them. It helps their reputation in the community, especially during a time of cutbacks.”

“Communities want to know that their students are receiving a superior education. I think that the community may benefit from having reassurances that their schools have state recognized teachers. When I received the award, there was plenty of media coverage on the event. Both the local paper and radio station reported on the event. With this exposure, I feel that the community's view of the schools had a ‘bump’ in favorably. This is essential in winning over community support for school/district initiatives.”

It must be noted that there was some confusion and misunderstanding in a few cases when winners responded to this two-part question. Several made comments about being neat and organized at school or trying to help others be organized, which has nothing to do with the point of the question. One person stated that he/she is not a member of any organization.

Relationships and the Horizon Award

Winners frequently mention both personal and professional relationships in relation to the award. Family and friends are most often mentioned in the response to the personal influence of the award, while colleagues are mentioned in the responses to the professional and organizational questions.

Personal Relationships. The words *family, husband, wife, parents, sister, children, friend, and church* are mentioned as important relationships. These are the people who matter in the personal lives of the teachers. Some winners have parents or family members who were also teachers, and awardees perceive increased bonds between them. Some of the comments made regarding personal relationships:

“Since my family is made up of many educators, it was a proud moment for all of us.”

“My family and my husband's family are all educators and I was honored to share the spotlight with those people who inspired me to teach.”

Sometimes the winners perceive that the award validated them or brought them more prestige in the eyes of those close to them. Some winners keenly sensed the effects of the long hours spent away from family during that first year of teaching. One topic mentioned over and over in the comments is how tough that first year of teaching had been. Winning the award seems to provide some justification for all the hard work.

“What the Horizon award meant to me personally was simply an award for my wife, and many others who supported me. I went to school for 4 years in the evenings, and it was because of the support from home, church, and the school that I still work in today that I was able to accomplish getting my degree to become a teacher.”

“Personally, winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on me personally. I felt that the time and work that I had placed into my first year of teaching was vindicated. This led to positive feedback from my family, who I

spend time away from to place extra effort in the classroom. Winning the award reaffirmed my passion for teaching and made my family proud.”

“For me, winning the Horizon Award validated my decision to leave Corporate America and become a teacher. My family questioned my motives to take such a pay cut, but winning this award proved why teaching was the right profession for me.”

Professional Relationships. Winners mention a wide variety of professional relationships: *fellow teachers close in age, veteran teachers, administrators, principals, and superintendents*. Winners also mention their *students and students' parents*. A few examples:

“Professionally I was proud of the recognition the award brought to our school. Our students felt very proud along with me, and I truly feel in debt to the principal that I work for. Many teachers that I talk to do not get the same support in their buildings that myself and the other teachers that I work with have. I am truly blessed as a professional to work in an environment that I consider my second family.”

“It really gave me credibility with parents.”

“Winning made me and my class a big deal at my school. It really gave me credibility with other teachers.”

Also important are the relationships developed through *KEEN*. Teachers perceive that the colleagues they met and friends they have made are important to them.

“I think it’s a great program! I have been involved with KEEN since I won the Horizon Award and have had the opportunity to learn from many different excellent educators because of this award!”

“I have been more willing to branch out and try new things. I also have made new personal friends through the Horizon Award program due to being a KEEN member.”

“Attending the KEEN conference and receiving my award did open my eyes to my profession and expose me to educators and opinions I might not have encountered otherwise. I think it is always positive to have that big picture outlook.”

Negative Comments

While most comments regarding the Horizon Award are positive, there are a few negative comments. These focus mainly upon (1) the lack of recognition some winners experienced after receiving the award, (2) some thoughts about being involved (or not) with KEEN, and in a very few cases, (3) jealousy or negative vibes from colleagues.

There is wide disparity in the ways winners were recognized after winning the award. Some winners were recognized in the media – TV, radio, and newspapers. Some winners received district-wide recognition in newsletters or have had their photograph posted on the wall in the district offices. Some winners received flowers, personal notes of congratulation, and got personal kudos from the community while shopping and running errands. Others were barely recognized in a faculty meeting; consider the experience of this teacher:

“There was really no influence on the school after me winning the Horizon Award. When my superintendent didn't even acknowledge to me that I had won or congratulate me, there's not going to be a big influence on the school.”

A very small number encountered some negativity from colleagues after winning the Horizon Award:

“Receiving the Horizon Award was also challenging personally because I felt some jealousy from same-age colleagues.”

“It also caused some negative effects from other teachers who didn't win (they weren't even eligible because they were not first year teachers.) They gave me dirty looks and asked what I had done to get this award. Overall, it was positive though.”

“Many other teachers from other schools expressed congratulations to me; but there were times that I received judgment for being ‘the Horizon Award teacher.’ Most people were proud of me – especially family, friends and those who knew me well; but there were some that expected me to know everything or treated me differently because they didn't think I deserved the recognition.”

It is important to remember that these negative comments are few among the many more positive comments.

Some winners do not feel like the award influenced them very much in personal or professional ways. Some report that they compartmentalize their lives to the extent that they perceive that the award influenced them professionally, but not personally. But these are definitely in the minority. And for some, while they initially felt that the award was meaningful, the influence dissipated over time.

“I feel like for a while it gave me some sense of self-worth. I felt confident in my personal life and my friends and family seemed to recognize me as an accomplished person. I would have to say though, that has since changed. I do not have the same friends I had when I won the award...many of the people I know now don't have any idea that I'm a Horizon Award winner.”

“I don't feel that winning the award has been that life changing personally. I think growing up, and going through the school district that I work in has only set the standard high for me. I feel that the community members that acknowledged this award were already friends of mine so the gratification wore off quickly.”

“Professionally, I really don't feel that that award has done anything for me. I am the same teacher I would have been regardless of the award.”

As for KEEN, while the experience for the respondents was an overwhelmingly positive one for most respondents, a few had negative experiences.

“At first it was very gratifying and exciting. But then, to be honest, I was extremely intimidated when I went to the state conference for award-winning teachers. I was still just getting my legs under me as a beginning teacher & here were all these people talking about the changes that needed to be made in education and how I was the future of those changes, etc. No one else from my school was at those conferences, and it was hard to get to know people (without being extremely intimidated by them). I never found a way to connect to that elite, award-winning teacher group, so I have pretty much stopped going to those conferences.”

This person also complains about the school not having money in their budget to pay for a substitute teacher so that he/she could go to “a FREE conference – I had to start taking personal

days to go.” In addition, this person feels that there is no effort to get teachers connected with other teachers in his/her field “to talk about practical classroom ideas and strategies rather than lofty goals of education overall.” Some respondents took the opportunity to vent about various issues and some have suggestions about the Horizon Award or KEEN. These are presented in Chapter 5 along with other suggestions that have arisen through this study and are listed in Appendix G .

Conclusions and Summary

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the quantitative analyses conducted , the following conclusions relate to the five research questions.

1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award has *motivated* them in any way?

This question is closely aligned with Factor 1 – Internal Influence. Any statistic above .500 is considered to be loaded onto that factor. As demonstrated by the factor analysis procedure, recipients respond to item two very positively: “Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me *personally*.” This item has a higher level of significance than the rest of the Factor 1 items (.842). In addition, this item had the highest mean score (4.64). Item three, relative to professional influence, had a Factor 1 statistic of .660: “Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence *upon my teaching*.”

According to the descriptive statistics procedure, the mode for Factor 1 – Internal Influence is a 5, which is the highest possible score. The analysis of variance procedure does not indicate any significant statistical differences in responses among the six demographic variables and Factor 1.

Respondents provide narrative evidence for motivation as seen in the qualitative analysis section of this study. Teachers perceive that the Horizon Award is motivating and inspiring. From these examples, it may be concluded that respondents perceive that the Horizon Award is motivating.

2. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence *personally* (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?

This question, like question one, is also closely aligned with Factor 1 – Internal Influence. Any statistic above .500 is considered to be loaded into that factor. As in question 1, the item with the highest level of significance in the factor analysis (.842) is item 2, which also has the highest mean score (4.64): “Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.” Respondents rate item 4 highly with a Factor 1 statistic of .759: “Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally).” Item 12 has a Factor 1 statistic of .744: “Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me personally.” Item seven, from Factor 2 – Expectations, has a factor statistic of .848: “After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).”

According to the descriptive statistics, the mode for Factor 1 – Internal Influence is a 5, which is the highest possible score. The analysis of variance does not indicate any significant statistical difference in responses among the six demographic variables and Factor 1.

Respondents provide narrative evidence for influence personally as seen in the qualitative analysis section. Teachers perceive that the Horizon Award is important to their families and friends. The winners feel proud and honored to have won the award. They perceive that the confidence and positive outlook gained from the award has carried over into their personal lives

and relationships. From these examples, it may be concluded that respondents perceive that the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon them personally.

3. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence *professionally* (that is, upon their teaching)?

This question is also closely aligned with Factor 1 – Internal Influence. Any statistic above .500 is considered loaded into that factor. Out of all the items in Factor 1 regarding influence *professionally*, item 5 has the highest level of significance, with a statistic of .738: “Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence *as a teacher*.” This item also has the highest percentage (94.7%) of fours and fives. Item 6 has a Factor 1 statistic of .572: “Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (*e.g.*, to try new strategies or tackle new projects).” Item 13 has a Factor 1 statistic of .683: “Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me *professionally*.” Item 13 also has a high mean (4.57). Item 1 has a Factor 1 statistic of .506: “I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.” The mean for item 13 is 4.23.

Factor 2 – Expectations also has some items aligned with this question. Item 8: “After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from *myself* to live up to higher *expectations as a teacher*,” has a Factor 2 statistic of .848 and a mode of 5. Item 9: “After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my *colleagues* to live up to higher expectations *as a teacher*” has a Factor 2 statistic of .734.

According to the descriptive statistics, item 3: “Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon *my teaching*,” has a mean of 4.42 and a mode of 5 – which is the

highest score possible. Item five: “Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence *as a teacher*,” has a mean of 4.50 and, like item 3, it has a mode of 5.

The analysis of variance also shows significance between Factor 2 – Expectations and year of award ($p = .03$). The significance is shown regarding the perception of the most recent recipients of the award (2009-2011) with a mean of 4.30, and with those who won during the middle years (2006-2008) with a mean of 3.78. This shows that the most recent winners sense that the award has more influence upon perceived expectations than do those who won the award during the middle years.

Respondents provide narrative evidence for influence upon them professionally as seen in the qualitative analysis section. Teachers perceive that the Horizon Award has led to new challenges and opportunities for risk-taking in their teaching. They feel empowered and perceive that they have received increased respect and credibility from colleagues. The teachers perceive that they gained leadership opportunities and benefitted from professional development opportunities that are not offered to other teachers. From these examples it may be concluded that the winners perceive that the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon their professional lives.

4. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their *commitment to the profession of education*?

Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession is closely aligned to this question. Any statistic above .500 is considered to be loaded onto that factor. Item 10: “Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom,” had a Factor 4 statistic of -.880. It has a mode of 4 out of a possible 5. Item 11: “Ten years from now I may no longer be in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator,” has a Factor 4 statistic of .848 and a mode of

5. This indicates a perception on the part of the respondents that they will still be involved in education 10 years from now. The analysis of variance also shows a significant difference between males and females for Factor 4 – Commitment and gender ($p = .05$). Females have a mean of 3.83, while males have a mean of 3.50, showing that females perceive that the award has had more positive influence upon commitment to the profession than do males.

Respondents provided narrative evidence for influence regarding commitment to the profession of education as seen in the qualitative analysis section. Examples include being inspired to rise to leadership opportunities, pursuing graduate degrees and National Board Certification, and accepting new jobs. In a few cases, winning the award was specifically mentioned regarding teachers' willingness to remain in what they perceive to be a stressful occupation. From these examples it may be concluded that the winners perceive that the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon their commitment to the profession of education.

5. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence *organizationally* (that is, upon their school and/or community)?

This question is closely aligned with Factor 3 – External Influence. Any statistic above .500 is considered to be loaded onto that factor. This question was addressed by item 14: “Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my *school*,” and item 15: “Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my *community*.”

In the descriptive statistics, both items have significant modes: a 5 for item 14, and a 4 for item 15. The analysis of variance shows significance regarding the perception of teachers of urban schools ($p = .05$) vs. those from suburban schools. The urban schools have a mean of 4.80, while the suburban schools have a mean of 4.04, showing that teachers from urban schools

perceive that the Horizon Award has had a greater positive influence upon their schools and communities than those from suburban schools.

Respondents provide narrative evidence regarding the influence of the award upon their schools and communities as seen in the qualitative analysis section. They perceive that the award brought positive recognition not only to the winning teachers, but also to their schools and communities. From these examples it may be concluded that the winners perceive that the Horizon Award has had a positive influence organizationally, upon their schools and communities.

Summary

This chapter began with a description of the research design, which used the following quantitative analysis procedures: exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, and analysis of variance. In addition, there is a qualitative element that includes comments to the open-ended questions. The population is the Horizon Award winners from 2003-2011. These teachers won an award for excellence in teaching while they were still novice teachers. The instrumentation consisted of a survey of 15 Likert items, four open-ended questions, and selected demographic items. The study asked the teachers about their perceptions regarding how the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally.

The quantitative analysis was performed on data gathered from an exploratory factor analysis which compared each of the 15 Likert items with each other. The factor analysis identified four factors: internal influences, expectations, external influences, and commitment to the profession. These four factors were used for the analysis of variance, which compared the four factors and the six demographic variables of the survey: (1) year of the award, (2) age of winner at time of award, (3) level taught – elementary or secondary, (4) location of school –

urban, suburban, rural; (5) gender; and (6) whether or not the winner was still teaching. The analysis of variance shows that respondents from all the variables perceive that the award has had a positive influence for all four factors – internal influence, expectations, external influence, and commitment to the profession.

The qualitative data reveals two major categories centered around the five research questions. Two major categories emerged: positive benefits of the Horizon Award and the importance of relationships.

Regarding positive benefits, awardees report feeling proud and honored, having increased self-confidence, and feeling empowered and motivated. They have perceived greater respect from colleagues and in some cases, from family. They describe being involved in leadership and professional development opportunities as a result of winning the award. There have been professional benefits which helped winners in job searches. Respondents also report a perceived positive influence from the award upon their schools and communities.

Regarding the importance of relationships, two groups were revealed: personal and professional. For personal relationships, family (husband, wife, parents, sister, children) are perceived as most important. Also mentioned are friends and church. Professional relationships included other teachers, colleagues from the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN), administrators, principals, superintendents, and students and their parents.

A few negative comments emerged; these seem to focus mainly on disappointment with little or no recognition from significant others at the time of the award and afterward. It must be noted that there has been wide disparity in the amount of recognition winners received. Some received a lot, while others did not. There are a few negative comments focusing on perceptions

of jealousy on the part of colleagues. The final category of negative comments had to do with KEEN.

Overall, respondents perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon them personally, professionally, and organizationally. In addition, they perceive that the Horizon Award has motivated them in some way – either personally, professionally, or both; and that it has influenced their commitment to the profession.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The greater part of this chapter summarizes the findings of the study and discusses the implications. Recommendations for practice and suggestions for future research are included.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover whether a recognition program such as the Horizon Award, which is given for excellence in teaching to novice teachers has any perceived positive influence upon teacher recipients. The design used three lenses through which to observe the way the award influenced the teachers: personal, professional, and organizational. Overall, respondents perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon them in all three areas. In addition, they perceive that the Horizon Award has motivated them both personally and professionally, and that it has influenced their commitment to the profession.

Methodology

The principal data gathering instrument was designed to collect quantitative data and also some qualitative data. The on-line survey instrument had three parts. The first section consisted of 15 items which directed the subjects to respond on a five-point Likert scale with number 1 representing “strongly disagree” and number 5 representing “strongly agree.” The second section had three open-ended questions focusing on how the award influenced them personally, professionally, and organizationally. The third section asked for demographic information about the recipients of the award and ended with an open-ended question inviting further comments.

The population included teachers from across the state of Kansas who won the Horizon Award from 2003-2011. The survey was administered electronically through the Kansas State

University web system. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, and analysis of variance procedures. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed by open coding, which is only the initial stage of qualitative analysis – to reveal common categories in the narrative data. Appendices E and F show the lists of words and categories identified.

This study used an exploratory factor analysis to compare the answers from each Likert item with every other Likert item, from which four factors emerged. Descriptive statistics were conducted for the Likert items and also for the six demographic variables. An analysis of variance procedure was used to compare the factors identified by the factor analysis with the six demographic variables.

Summary of Results

The summary of results will focus upon the findings from the various statistical tests. The exploratory factor analysis revealed four factors: Factor 1 – Internal Influence, Factor 2 – Expectations, Factor 3 – External Influence, and Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession. Although the number of items affiliated with each factor varies, since any statistic above .500 is considered to be loaded onto a factor, there is evidence of statistical significance for each factor. There are only three instances in which the analysis of variance shows any significance; these are noted below in the summary of the factors.

1. Factor 1 - Internal Influence – The statistics for this factor ranged from .506 to .842, showing significance that the recipients perceive the Horizon Award has influenced them both personally and professionally (that is, internally) in a positive way. The highest-ranked item in this factor is item 2: “Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.” The analysis of variance shows no significance between this factor and any of the demographic variables.

2. Factor 2 - Expectations – The statistics for this factor range from .734 to .848, showing significance that the Horizon Award has influenced the recipients' perceptions regarding increased expectations both personally and professionally. The item with the greatest significance in this factor is item 7: “After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).” The analysis of variances shows a significance of $p = .03$ between this factor and year of award. The significance is shown between the most recent winners (2009-2011) and those who won during the middle years (2006-2008). Early winners have a mean of 4.80, while those from the middle years have a mean of 4.04.

3. Factor 3 - External Influence – The statistics from the exploratory factor analysis for this factor, which consists of only two items, ranges from .875 to .900. These statistics show significance regarding the respondents' perception of the influence of the Horizon Award upon external influence. The analysis of variance shows a significance of $p = .05$ regarding this factor vs. the location of the school. The most recent winners (2009-2011) have a mean of 4.30, while the middle winners (2006-2008) have a mean of 3.78.

4. Factor 4 - Commitment to the Profession – The statistics for this factor, which consists of only two items, ranged from .848 to -.880. These statistics show significance regarding the influence of the Horizon Award upon the recipients' perceptions of their commitment to the profession of education. The analysis of variance shows a significance of $p = .03$ regarding this factor vs. gender. Females have a mean score of 3.82, and males have a mean of 3.48.

Discussion of the Results

The summary of results will focus on the three main themes of how the award influenced Horizon Award winners personally, professionally, and organizationally.

Personal Influence

The theme of how the award influenced Horizon Award winners personally is addressed by the first two research questions, by four items from the survey and one of the open-ended questions. The first two research questions:

*Research Question 1. Do teachers perceive that winning the Horizon Award has **motivated** them in any way?*

*Research Question 2. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence **personally** (that is, upon their lives outside of teaching)?*

Two of the factors from the factor analysis are aligned with these two questions: Factor 1- Internal Influence and Factor 2 – Expectations. Four items from the survey address this theme of personal influence: 2, 4, 7, and 12.

The item with the greatest significance for Factor 1 (.869) is item 2: “Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.” Not only did the respondents perceive motivation personally, but they also perceive the pressure of increased expectations for themselves regarding their personal lives, because item 7, from Factor 2, has the next highest statistical significance (.856): “After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).” Item 12, “Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me personally” ranks next with a statistic of .796. Item 4, “Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally),” had a statistic of .785.

Since any item with a score of .5 or above is considered significant for the factor, the statistical evidence shows that there is perceived influence between these items and the concept of the Horizon Award having some kind of positive **internal influence** and an influence upon the winners’ **expectations for themselves**.

A comment must be made about item 2: “Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.” It is interesting that in every case for the factor statistics seen in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, the personal items rank higher than the professional items – and item 2 has the highest rank with a statistic of .869. While it might be expected that the influence of the Horizon Award would be strongest in its influence *professionally*, since it was given for excellence in teaching, winners perceive an even stronger influence *personally*. That the respondents perceive the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon them personally supports Bandura’s theory about how self-efficacy has far-reaching effects. That is, when people feel competent in one area of their lives, it leads them to believe that they will also be successful in undertaking new tasks unrelated to that first area. Teachers who receive an award for excellence in teaching may find that it affects areas of their lives unrelated to their jobs or careers in education.

Evidence for this is also shown in the comments to the first open-ended question:

1. **What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you personally?** Think about the influence upon yourself as a person separate from your identity as a teacher. It could include your family or other elements of your life outside of education.

Respondents’ comments indicate that they perceive influence upon them personally, such as when the gains in self-confidence “carried over into my personal life and relationships!” They recognize that their families are proud of them and that all the hard work and long hours from that first year of teaching were recognized as worthwhile by their families.

These results are similar to Clark’s (1997) findings in his study of firefighters who won awards from the National Fire Agency. They, too, perceived that the award had a influence upon them personally and reported increased self-confidence and pride.

Professional Influence

How the award influenced Horizon Award winners professionally is addressed by the third and fourth research questions and by Factors 1 and 2. The first research question for professional influence:

*Research Question 3. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence **professionally** (that is, upon their teaching)?*

Seven items, all with factor statistics of significance above .500, address this question. All seven items are affiliated with either Factor 1 – Internal Influence, or Factor 2 – Expectations. The items affiliated with Factor 1 indicate that the recipients perceive that the award has had a motivating and positive influence upon their teaching. Teachers indicate that they experienced increased self-confidence and were more willing to take risks, that is, to try new strategies or tackle new projects.

It was for Factor 2 – Expectations, that one of the few instances of significance from the analysis of variance shows up ($p = .05$). The recent winners (2009-2011) perceive higher influence regarding expectations – either from themselves or from colleagues – than do the winners from the middle years (2006-2008). Perhaps the influence of the award upon expectations diminishes over time.

The influence professionally is also shown in the comments to the second open-ended question:

- 2. What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you professionally?** Think about the influence upon your job/career as a teacher and educator.

The responses to this question are rich in detail, mentioning numerous kinds of influences: besides the growth in self-esteem, motivation, and increased respect from colleagues,

respondents also mention leadership opportunities, opportunities for professional development and networking – especially through KEEN – and how having the award on one's resume can be beneficial when searching for a new job. Some respondents also mention how the award has provided validation for their career choice.

These results are similar to Clark's (1997) findings in his study of firefighters who won awards from the National Fire Agency. They, too, perceived that the award had a influence upon them professionally and reported increased professional status. These results are also similar to Weld's (1998) findings; the recognition that award-winning science teachers received motivated them to increase their teaching skills. They also thought it would be more likely that they would be leaders in presenting professional development to other teachers. In addition, in Larimer's 1991 study of Pulitzer Prize winners, they perceived that the award made them feel validated in what they do. These results also support Bandura's theory of self-efficacy and one's perceived competence regarding performance – when people feel they have performed well, it elicits the kinds of experiences that reinforce expectations of self-competency. The respondents indicate that they not only have a perceived an increase in self-confidence regarding their teaching abilities, but that they are more willing to take risks, try new strategies, and tackle new projects.

The items affiliated with Factor 2 indicate that the teachers have sensed pressure to live up to higher expectations from both themselves and their colleagues regarding their teaching. It is interesting, but not surprising, that there is again a connection between the internal influence and expectation factors. As teachers sensed feelings of motivation and their self-confidence grew, so did their expectations of themselves as teachers – they also sensed an increase regarding expectations from their colleagues. As several winners mentioned in their narrative responses, they have received increased respect and credibility from colleagues, and many leadership

opportunities have come their way. These leadership opportunities, in turn, may have had some influence upon the way the respondents perceive their commitment to the profession of education. These results are similar to both Weld's 1998 study of science teachers and Larimer's 1992 study of Pulitzer Prize winners; some of their respondents perceived increased expectations from supervisors, colleagues, and from themselves.

Some of the Horizon awardees report negative responses regarding jealousy from colleagues. While few of the respondents in this study mention it, respondents from Clark's study of award-winning firefighters, Larimer's study of Pulitzer Prize winners, and Weld's study of award-winning science teachers mentioned that they encountered resentment and jealousy from colleagues and administrators.

Research Question 4. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their commitment to the profession of education?

Item 10, affiliated with Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, has a high level of significance with a factor statistic of .880: "Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom." Item 11: "Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator" is also affiliated with Factor 4 and also has a high level of significance, with a factor statistic of .844.

It is for Factor 4 – Commitment to the Profession, that one of the few instances of significance from the analysis of variance shows up, with $p = .03$. Females perceive more influence from the award regarding commitment to the profession than do males.

These results are similar to Weld's (1998) findings that the teachers in his study perceived that they were more likely to teach until retirement.

Organizational Influence

The issue of how the award influenced Horizon Award winners organizationally is addressed by the fifth research question and by two items from the survey (14 and 15).

*Research Question 5. Do teachers who received the Horizon Award perceive that the award has had a positive influence **organizationally** (that is, upon their school and/or community)?*

The two items from Factor 3 – External Influence, are affiliated with this theme of organizational influence. Item 14 – regarding the influence of the award upon the school – with a factor statistic of .892, ranks slightly higher than item 15 – regarding the influence of the award upon the community, which has a factor statistic of .877. Since any statistic higher than .500 is considered to be loaded onto a factor, these two items show a perception on the part of the respondents that the Horizon Award has a positive influence upon their schools and communities. Factor 3 – External Influence exhibits one of the few instances of significance from the analysis of variance. The teachers from urban schools perceive a greater influence organizationally upon their schools and communities than do the winners from suburban schools.

The influence organizationally is also shown in the comments to the third open-ended question with two parts:

3. **Part 1 - What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you organizationally?** Think about the influence upon your school.

Part 2 - What kind of influence has winning the Horizon Award had upon you organizationally? Think about the influence upon your community.

Responses to these questions show that recipients perceive that winning the award has had a positive influence upon their schools and districts. They sense that they have honored their school and made the people affiliated with it proud. One respondent mentions how delighted her school was to have its first Horizon Award winner and how happy her principal was. Awardees

perceive that winning the award has brought good PR to their schools. Others tell how they feel more connected with other staff members and have formed more positive relationships with parents and students.

While the statistical evidence shows a positive influence upon urban schools, according to the qualitative evidence, the award has also had a positive influence upon schools and communities of other sizes. One teacher says that the award has benefited the district and community, pointing out that the community mentions the Horizon Award to market their schools to potential residents. Others tell of being recognized while shopping or running errands. Perhaps the best comment for summing up what it means to a community when a local teacher wins an award can be summed up with this response:

“Winning this award in a small town was huge. Many people in the community say, ‘I know you, you were in the paper for that teaching award from the state of Kansas, etc.’ I just met a mom the other day who said, ‘I remember when they had a huge article about you and your picture. I know who you are.’ I had no idea people really ‘read’ the paper. I have had three other moms who told me I inspired them to return to school to get their education degree.”

Other awardees mention the influence they, as teachers, might have upon the community, highlighting the reciprocal nature of awards, in that what is good for teachers is good for schools and good for their communities. One respondent notes that winning the award “makes me want to do my very best for my community and children in it.”

These findings related to teachers’ perceptions of awards regarding perceived influence on the organization are not consistent with Clark’s award study of firefighters (1997). He found that the firefighters did not perceive awards had much influence organizationally. However, for this study, not only did the factor analysis show significance regarding organizational influence (Factor 3), the qualitative evidence supports this finding: teachers perceive that the award has had a positive influence upon their schools and communities. These results are similar to Weld’s

(1998) findings that more than 95% of the teachers in his study perceived that awards for excellence in teaching elevate the teaching profession in the eyes of the public.

Recommendations for Practice

- 1. Superintendents and principals must be aware of the Kansas Horizon Award and of the related benefits of recognition.* This study discovered that some school districts are represented by winners multiple times between the years of 2003-2011. However, many school districts across the state have never had a winner – and have perhaps never even nominated anyone for the award. Considering the influence the award can have upon teachers, their schools, and their communities, a hard look needs to be taken at the geographic representation of awardees; who participates – and who does not. As Bob Gast, former Director of Communications at KSDE noted, “You get a lot of bang for your buck” out of the Horizon Award. Those in district leadership could bring positive recognition to their schools and communities through the award process.

The professional aspect of the award is noteworthy, as teachers from this study report increases in self-esteem and willingness to try new teaching methods. However, administrators need to be aware of how recognition can affect their teachers also personally, having an overall affect upon them as individuals.

The Horizon Award is not what would be considered a major prize in the world’s eyes. For most, the recognition does not extend beyond their immediate communities. It includes only a small cash award. But for some of these teachers, it has been a life-changing event in that it provided recognition for what many will look back and call the most grueling year of their lives – the first year of teaching. They are gratified that

someone noticed not only the effort and long hours, but that they have performed their job with excellence.

2. *School administrators are encouraged to make the most of the opportunities for recognition and celebration when one of their teachers wins an award such as the Kansas Horizon Award.* The research from this study shows that the award has an influence not only upon teachers, but upon their schools and communities. Those teachers who were not recognized for their achievement did not perceive that the award was as valuable as those who were recognized both formally and informally – by local media, their colleagues, and their community. Those teachers who did receive recognition realized that the award was just as important for its positive influence upon their schools and the community as it was for them personally.

Some respondents to this survey report that it makes a difference on their resumes when they look for new positions. In addition, the research from this study indicates that the winners perceive a higher commitment to the profession of education after receiving the award. In light of the low retention rate of teachers within the first five years of teaching, administrators should be aware that recognition such as the Horizon Award could possibly make a difference regarding retention.

3. *Encourage principals and administrators to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of ALL teachers.* Because recognition can have such long-lasting and meaningful influence, administrators should seek ways to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of ALL teachers, not just award winners, in both formal and informal ways. Whether public or private, recognition can make teachers perceive that their hard work and dedication are noticed and appreciated.

4. *Consider allowing colleagues and parents to also nominate novice teachers for the Horizon Award.* Administrators are busy. As one respondent who has served on the state-level Horizon Award selection committee mentions, some administrators seem to use a kind of form letter over and over to nominate teachers for awards, detracting from the authenticity of the nomination. Opening nominations to a wider audience could produce more nominations; especially in those districts who so far have had few or no nominations for the Horizon Award.
5. *The planners for the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) Conference are encouraged to consider more ways to celebrate on behalf of Horizon Award winners.* As shown in the qualitative data, the ways in which Horizon Award winners are recognized varies – some teachers receive lots of attention, while others hardly receive any notice at all. Just as the winners of the state Teacher of the Year award have their photos taken with the president of the United States, KEEN planners could arrange for photos of Horizon Award winners to be taken with the state commissioner of education and/or the governor of Kansas. These photo sessions could be held at the KEEN conference, or perhaps at the governor’s office in the state capitol building.
6. *Planners of the KEEN Conference are encouraged to provide opportunities for Horizon Award winners to interact with, share, and be informally mentored by other teachers from their grade levels and subject areas.* According to the findings in this study, attending KEEN makes many teachers feel energized and powerful. Not everyone, however, has had the same kind of experience – some novice teachers find it daunting to be in the midst of so many teachers who have excelled in the profession. The conference leaders could make an effort to group novice teachers

with experienced teachers from their subject area or grade level and provide time for sharing ideas and informal mentoring. One respondent said it would be beneficial to “talk about practical classroom ideas and strategies rather than lofty goals of education overall,” suggesting that the format of the KEEN conference could be more practical than perhaps it has been in the past.

One respondent suggests pairing new Horizon Award winners with mentors from KEEN, and to select mentors who teach the same grade or subject who live in the same geographical area as the novice teachers. Not only would the novice teachers have the benefits of mentoring, but the ensuing relationship would enhance new attendees’ experiences in attending KEEN because they would have someone they know and could connect with at the conferences, making them feel less intimidated.

7. *Planners of the KEEN conference are encouraged to consider state testing dates and locations when scheduling the conference.* Some teachers do not often attend because the spring conference is held when they are involved with state testing in their classrooms. Others feel that that the conference is too far away and so do not attend, or attend infrequently.
8. *KSDE personnel may want to consider how to make the selection process more uniform across the state, and also take into account how many nominees are allowed from each school district.* One respondent expressed surprise upon moving to a new district and discovering that Horizon Award nominations are handled in a different manner than in his/her previous district. This person also mentioned that it seems unfair that all districts, regardless of size, are permitted to nominate the same number of novice teachers and suggests that the number of nominees might be based upon

population of students – similar to the electoral college for the election of the president of the United States.

9. *School administrators are encouraged to provide release time for teachers to attend the KEEN conference.* Personnel in school districts need to recognize the importance of this conference and willingly provide substitute teachers to cover classes so that teachers can attend. Some teachers in this study report that they do not attend because their administrators refuse to pay for substitute teachers. Considering how much the KEEN conference means to the award winners, administrators should make efforts to ensure that their teachers can attend the conference.
10. *KSDE personnel are encouraged to leave Horizon Award winners on the KEEN membership list regardless of attendance at one of the annual conferences, and maintain on-going communication with teachers between conferences.* What it takes to maintain membership in KEEN needs to be made clear to teachers. Some of the respondents in this study perceive that they have been dropped from the membership list because they have not been able to attend the conference due to circumstances beyond their control. However, since invitations to participate in the survey for this research study came from KEEN's membership list, that obviously is not so. This indicates some misunderstanding on the part of teachers of just what it takes to maintain membership in KEEN. Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) personnel have indicated that membership is renewable every three years at no charge. Increased communication between KSDE and Horizon awardees can help those who miss a conference to feel more connected and realize that they are still members.

KSDE personnel could be more diligent in following up with Horizon Award winners annually. They are advised to let the winners know when they are selected that they are expected to update their contact information and respond to the invitation to attend the KEEN conference every year whether they attend or not. Maintenance of the KEEN membership roster could be facilitated with an access point on the KSDE website where teachers could update their contact information.

11. Local school administrators and KSDE personnel are encouraged to continue to tap Horizon Award winners to take on local- and state-level leadership responsibilities.

Horizon Award winners report that one of the biggest benefits to winning the award is the leadership opportunities that come their way. These award-winning teachers have the potential to make valuable professional contributions to various state, regional, district, and school-level committees and teams.

12. Local school administrators, KSDE personnel, and teacher education institutions are encouraged to use recent Horizon Award winners to promote teacher education in various venues. Since Horizon Award winners are novice teachers at the time of the award, their first-year experiences are fresh in their minds. They know first-hand the rigors of the first year of teaching. The hard work and long hours they put in are a recurring theme throughout the narrative comments. They also are aware of the compensations of teaching. They would be great ambassadors for the profession as guest speakers in departments and colleges of education across the state. The awardees could share their thoughts about the challenges and successes of their first year of teaching. They could also speak at Kansas National Education Association events, especially for the student program, which is composed of pre-service teachers.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. *Conduct a study of administrators, asking why they nominate certain teachers for awards.* This study focused on the winners – the teachers. Another study could focus upon the administrators and their role in nominating teachers for awards. Awards such as the Kansas Horizon Award have vague criteria. What made the nominated teachers stand out? How do administrators determine that novice teachers are good candidates for an award? These findings could assist KSDE in refining the guidelines for nominations for the Horizon Award.
2. *Conduct a study of school districts across the state to explore why certain districts have so many winners and why so many districts never nominate any teachers for the Horizon Award.* A study could identify which districts and regions have the most and fewest winners. Further research would focus on school administrators, asking whether or not they have ever nominated any teachers for the Horizon Award and the reasons why or why not.
3. *Conduct a study of teachers who have won more than one award for excellence in teaching.* Some teachers seem to get lots of awards. Does winning the Horizon Award lead to more awards? What is it about such teachers that makes them candidates for awards? Do they seek awards, or are they surprised by the awards – or is it a mixture? A longitudinal study starting with novice teachers and following them for the next 10-20 years could explore how often they receive awards and why. In addition, a study could explore how many awards teachers tend to receive in a 20-year period, and which awards they receive. The study could also investigate the type of awards and the regions they come from – the district, region, state, or nation. It would also be

interesting to know how many Horizon Award winners go on to achieve National Board Certification.

4. *Conduct a study of those teachers serving in various leadership roles at state, regional, district, and at the school-level.* Many respondents mention leadership opportunities that have come their way as a result of winning the Horizon Award. It would be interesting to know just what these leadership opportunities are and whether they are district or state level. Along with this study a question might be asked of the Horizon Award winners regarding what types of leadership opportunities and responsibilities they would welcome; there might be some new ideas no one at the state level has considered.
5. *Conduct a qualitative study of Horizon Award winners.* While this study had a qualitative analysis element, a thorough qualitative study was not conducted with the narrative information. A more detailed look at the comments made by Horizon Award winners might reveal greater insights into their thoughts and perceptions than could be gleaned simply through the open coding done for this study.
6. *Conduct a study regarding teacher retention and award-winning teachers.* In the initial conversation this investigator had with Karla Denny, the then Director of Communications at the Kansas State Department of Education, she expressed interest in finding out whether the Horizon Award has any influence upon teachers regarding retention. Another study of Horizon Award winners could find and contact those teachers who did not respond to this study. The data for this study show that out of the 104 respondents who responded to the demographic questions, only six had left the classroom, and only one was not formally involved in education. However, it is

possible that many of those who have been lost from the KEEN membership roster, who could not be contacted for participation in this study, are no longer involved in education. In addition, it may be interesting to explore whether the winners of the Horizon Award who are missing from the KEEN roster are missing because they burned out at even faster rates than teachers who do not win such an award. As Ingersoll (1998 & 2002) discovered, it is often the most proficient teachers who are most likely to leave the profession.

7. *Conduct a study of the winners of state and national Teachers of the Year similar to this one, focusing on how they perceive the award influences them personally, professionally, and organizationally.* There are few studies focusing on awards for teachers. The literature shows that there might be similarities between what winners of awards in general experience – whether they are Pulitzer Prize winners, award-winning firefighters, or teachers. They may experience similar feelings of pride, perceive an increase in self-confidence that grows beyond the reason they received the award – and the increased competence that often accompanies an increase in self-efficacy, sense increased validation for their career choice, receive professional development opportunities not available to others, or encounter negative aspects such as professional envy and increased workloads. Such a study could possibly make findings such as those listed above more generalizable.
8. *Conduct a study to discover whether receiving an award for excellence in teaching has any influence upon student achievement.* Since student achievement has been such a hot topic in recent years and is likely to remain so indefinitely, it may be of interest to discover whether award-winning teachers are more effective than others in

increasing student achievement – and why. If they do have a stronger influence upon student achievement than other teachers, is it because they are bolder when it comes to taking risks? Do they have access to newer and better strategies because of their status as award-winners? Are they more highly motivated to seek new methods, discover new resources, and welcome opportunities for collaboration?

9. *Conduct a study to discover what other states have awards for novice teachers and how they perceive the influence of the award.* In the initial stages of this study, the investigator made telephone calls to personnel in all the state departments of education in the states surrounding Kansas – Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Colorado – to ask whether they have an award similar to the Kansas Horizon Award. None have such an award; the only state having a similar award is Oklahoma's Rising Stars Award, which is given to teachers within their first 10 years of teaching. Several state department of education personnel thought the Horizon Award sounded interesting and expressed vague interest in the study; one person said, “Maybe we need to do that.” Maybe they do.

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APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR THE HORIZON AWARD

Nominations

Each school district may nominate **one elementary classroom teacher and/or one secondary classroom teacher** for the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award Program.

All teachers should have an equal opportunity to be nominated for and selected as the district nominee. The local nomination and selection process should not be biased nor give the appearance of bias. You may consider getting input from parents, veteran teachers, etc. in making your selection. School principals and superintendents are encouraged to plan recognition ceremonies honoring the exemplary teachers.

Nominations should be made without regard to age, sex, race or religion.

General Qualifications

Novice teachers who have successfully completed their first year of teaching are eligible to be recognized. Applications will be postmarked by October 8 of **their second year of teaching**, and recognition will occur in February of their second year. The criteria for this award are:

- Nominee will have successfully completed his or her first year of teaching in a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 Kansas school accredited by the State Board of Education.
- Nominee will be a full-time classroom teacher.

- Nominee will be responsible for the assessment of students, assignment of grades, preparation of lesson plans, parent-teacher conferences, discipline, attendance, and other daily educational tasks.
- Nominee will have performed in a way that distinguishes him or her from other novice teachers.
- Nominee will be selected by the school district superintendent and building principal.

Selection Process

The Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award Program is a regional competition. The regions correspond to the state's four U.S. congressional districts.

The Kansas State Department of Education will appoint regional selection committees responsible for reviewing the nomination forms and selecting up to four elementary classroom teachers and four secondary classroom teachers per region for a possible total of 32 teachers.

Recognition

The possible 32 teachers, four elementary classroom teachers and four secondary classroom teachers from each region, will be individually recognized during a luncheon at the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) conference in Topeka on February 22, 2013. Also, they will be invited to participate as special guests in the two-day KEEN conference. The conference will be conducted in Topeka on February 21-22, 2013.

APPENDIX B

INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

March 2012

Dear _____:

You have been identified as a distinguished teacher by being a winner of the Kansas Horizon Award. Although just a novice teacher at the time, your outstanding teaching skills made you stand out among your peers. Your name and contact information were given to me by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) so that I could request your participation in a research study.

As a doctoral student in the College of Education at Kansas State University, I am interested in how winning an award for excellence influences novice teachers. With the hope of receiving honest and unbiased responses, the resulting data will be used only in a scientific manner and never as a means of identifying an individual. In fact, the online survey system does not provide such information.

Your participation in this project is important. However, it is purely voluntary. You are under no obligation to participate except that the information you provide could be of help in the future to other teachers, researchers, and district and state leaders. Of course, KSDE would appreciate your participation, and most off all, you would have my gratitude, from one teacher to another, for helping me with this research project.

The survey should take only about 10-15 minutes. If you have any concerns or questions please don't hesitate to contact me. ***Important information about accessing the survey is given below.*** Please respond no later than ***March 22.***

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

M. Jean Ballew

Doctoral Candidate in Curriculum & Instruction
bluejean@ksu.edu
(620) 245-0278

P.S. During a test of this survey, a warning screen came up saying that the website's security certificate could not be verified. It suggested that we not proceed to the website, but we did anyway. So be aware that if your security settings are set at a high level, you may also encounter the warning, but please go ahead and access the survey.

Reminder Message:

Hello! Would you do a favor for me? Please take a few minutes to complete the Horizon Award Survey. Your participation is very important, as it will help me collect the data I need to complete my dissertation - and may affect the future of awards for teachers in the state of Kansas. Others who have taken the survey finished it in less than 15 minutes, so it won't take long . . .

If I have more than one e-mail address for you, you may receive more than one invitation to respond to the survey. Please ignore multiple requests – I am just trying to reach everyone. I apologize in advance if that happens – if you've already completed the survey please ignore the reminder or click on the link saying you do not want to participate (because you already did) . . . and accept my gratitude for responding.

THANKS!

APPENDIX C

KANSAS HORIZON AWARD SURVEY 2012

This survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. It has three sections:

- **Section 1** asks general questions about how you think and feel about the Horizon Award and what kind of impact it has had on your life.
- **Section 2** asks for brief responses to three questions regarding how the award has had an impact upon you personally, professionally, and organizationally.
- **Section 3** requests demographic information.

Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

SECTION 1

Please respond to the following questions by indicating how much you **agree** or **disagree** with the item according to the following scale:

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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1. I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.
2. Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally.
3. Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon my teaching.
4. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally).
5. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence as a teacher.
6. Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (e.g., to try new strategies or tackle new projects).
7. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).
8. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations as a teacher.

9. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my colleagues to live up to higher expectations as a teacher.
 10. Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom.
 11. Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator.
 12. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me personally.
 13. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me professionally.
 14. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my school.
 15. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on my community.
-

SECTION 2

After reading the following three questions, please take a moment to reflect upon your responses before you start writing.

Think about the influence winning the Horizon Award has had upon you personally, professionally, and organizationally.

- **Personally** refers to the impact upon yourself as person separate from your identity as a teacher. It might include your family or other elements of your life outside of education.
- **Professionally** refers to the impact upon your job/career as a teacher and educator.
- **Organizationally** refers to the impact your winning the award has had upon your school and community.

Please write just one or two sentences about each area of influence. (You are welcome to expand your response and write more, if you wish.)

1. **What kind of impact has winning the Horizon Award had upon you personally?** Think about the impact upon yourself as a person separate from your identity as a teacher. It could include your family or other elements of your life outside of education.
2. **What kind of impact has winning the Horizon Award had upon you professionally?** Think about the impact upon your job/career as a teacher and educator.

3. What kind of impact has winning the Horizon Award had upon you organizationally?

Think about the impact upon your school and community.

School –

Community –

SECTION 3

1. When was your first year of teaching?

- 2001-2002
- 2002-2003
- 2003-2004
- 2004-2005
- 2005-2006
- 2006-2007
- 2007-2008
- 2008-2009
- 2009-2010

2. How old were you when you won the Horizon Award?

3. What is your gender? male female

4. What grade(s) were you teaching during your first year as a teacher?

If you are/were a secondary teacher, what subject area(s) were you teaching?

5. How would you describe the location of the school in which you were teaching during your first year?

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

6. Are you still teaching? yes no

If no, what was your last year to serve as a classroom teacher?

If no, what are you currently doing?

7. Have you received any other teaching awards? If so, please tell the name of the award and the year received.

8. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the Horizon Award?

APPENDIX D

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS WITH ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

Likert Items from Survey	Component			
	Factor 1 Internal Influence	Factor 2 Expectations	Factor 3 External Influence	Factor 4 Commitment to Profession
1. I gained positive insights about myself as a teacher while completing the application process for the Horizon Award.	.506	.329	.233	.029
2. Winning the Horizon Award was motivating for me personally .	.842	.059	.000	.013
3. Winning the Horizon Award had a motivating influence upon my teaching .	.660	.194	.128	.066
4. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence (personally).	.759	.193	.058	.087
5. Winning the Horizon Award increased my self-confidence as a teacher .	.738	.049	.145	.039
6. Winning the Horizon Award made me more willing to take risks as a teacher (e.g., to try new strategies or tackle new projects).	.572	.529	-.087	-.025
7. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations (personally).	.291	.848	.043	-.103
8. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from myself to live up to higher expectations as a teacher .	.240	.822	.143	.097
9. After winning the Horizon Award I felt pressure from my colleagues to live up to higher expectations as a teacher .	.044	.734	.173	.264
10. Ten years from now I expect to be teaching in the classroom.	.034	.015	.168	-.880
11. Ten years from now I may no longer be teaching in the classroom, but I expect to still be involved in the profession as an educator.	.112	.193	.158	.848

12. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me <u>personally</u> .	.744	.182	.278	-.085
13. Overall, winning the Horizon Award has had a positive influence upon me <u>professionally</u> .	.683	.260	.432	-.041
14. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence upon my <u>school</u> .	.182	.163	.900	.023
15. Winning the Horizon Award had a positive influence on my <u>community</u> .	.195	.060	.875	-.032

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

APPENDIX E

LIST OF WORDS USED BY RESPONDENTS TO DESCRIBE BENEFITS RELATED TO WINNING THE HORIZON AWARD

Category of Feelings	Words Used to Describe Feelings Regarding Winning the Horizon Award	Number of Times Word Appeared in Survey
Positive feelings	Pride	53
	Honor	25
	Positive	53
	Prestige	1
	Exciting	12
	Rewarding	10
	Recognition	70
	Delight	1
	Attention	6
Confidence	Confidence/self-confidence	77
	Boost	20
	Esteem/self-esteem	2
Personal & Professional Growth / Challenge	Expectations	17
	Risk-taking	5
	Challenge	11
	Reflecting/reflection	11
	Dealing with jealousy	2
Motivation and Inspiration	Motivating/motivation	25
	Inspiring/inspiration	10
	Passion	8
Empowerment	Validation	18
	Affirmation	13
	Credibility	5
	Serious(ly)	3
	Assurance	8
	Success/successful	15
	Support	19
	Sense of accomplishment	1
	Respect	12
	Value	13
Professional Benefits	Leadership	22
	KEEN	45
	Networking	18

APPENDIX F

PEOPLE NAMED BY HORIZON AWARD RECIPIENTS AS

HAVING SOME KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH RECIPIENT

IN REGARDS TO THE AWARD

Kind of Relationship	Person/People	Number of Times Mentioned
Family	Family	39
	Husband/wife/spouse	8
	Kids/children	13
	Parents/mother/father	12
	Siblings	1
Professional	Parents of students	16
	Students	51
	Colleagues	29
	Superintendent/administrator/principal	54
Other	Church	2
	Friends	18

APPENDIX G

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FROM RESPONDENTS TO THE HORIZON AWARD SURVEY

Overwhelmingly, respondents expressed appreciation for both the Horizon Award and the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN). Many positive comments were made regarding the influence of the award and the privilege they feel being members of KEEN. They greatly appreciate the professional development opportunities available because of KEEN and being able to meet and network with outstanding educators from across the state of Kansas. However, some recipients had some suggestions about how to make the Horizon Award or the KEEN conference even more beneficial. Phrases or sentences within quotation marks are direct quotes from the respondents.

Suggestions regarding the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network Conference (KEEN)

1. Although most recipients are excited about being invited to KEEN, several mention that they never attend because it is always held during “testing season.” Some teachers perceive that their administrators “frown upon attendance” since they are in the midst of preparing for state assessments. They would like KEEN to be held on different dates.
2. Some respondents would like to attend, but feel that the conferences are too far away. They would like KEEN to be held in different parts of the state.
3. Some respondents enjoy being members of KEEN, but “regret they do not continue to make efforts to keep their members active.” Some teachers perceive that, “After about two years post award, there is no longer any effort to invite members to any professional

development.” They would like to remain as members of KEEN regardless of attendance at the conference and to know that their membership is maintained by KSDE over the years.

4. Some respondents would like to be paired with a mentor through the KEEN network. They would like this person to be someone who lives in their area and teaches the same grade and/or subject. They would also like the mentor to come and visit their classroom periodically. At the very least, the teachers would appreciate occasional e-mails from their mentors. In addition to the mentoring, this person would be someone with whom they could connect when they attend the KEEN conference. As “newbies,” some recipients found the conference intimidating and felt “lost and anonymous.” They were of the opinion that these kinds of deliberate connections would make it more likely that they would remain long-time members of KEEN.
5. Some respondents would appreciate a format change regarding the KEEN conference. While they appreciate getting “the big picture view,” they also would like some specific time set aside to meet with other teachers from their grade levels and/or subject areas – to ask questions and share ideas informally. As one respondent mentioned, it would be beneficial “to talk about practical classroom ideas and strategies rather than lofty goals of education overall.” They would also like designated time for the Horizon Award winners to meet together and get to know each other.

Suggestions regarding the Horizon Award and Recognition

1. One respondent was surprised by what she learned upon moving to a new district about how candidates are selected for nomination by some districts compared with others. “It’s also interesting to note that each district only gets one recommendation, regardless of the

size of the district. I wish the recommendations would be based upon population of students (similar to the electoral college) because if a large district only gets one recommendation and a small district gets the same number of recommendations, it can seem that the large district does not have as many good teachers to the general public.”

2. One recipient shared that he/she, “was asked to score applications for this award a few years ago and upon seeing the scoring guidelines I thought about how random this award could really be.” Scores were given based upon letters from students, parents, and co-workers, and principals. This person perceived that the “student and parent letters may be more authentic, but as for principal and co-workers, I know of many that keep letters saved on their desktop and change to make the situation fit. Taking that into consideration, I wonder how many just 'fluff' up the letters so they can add one more name to the number of award winners in their district.” The implication perceived by the researcher is that the respondent would like letters to be truly representative of the nominee rather than form letters that are updated and recycled.
3. One respondent stated that he/she wished more teachers received recognition. He perceived that “winning the Horizon award had a lot to do with luck.” His wife started teaching the same year he did, and “worked just as hard, if not harder, than me and she has never been recognized. Both my parents have taught 30+ years and I've received more recognition than either of them. The sad truth is that I've already received more recognition than most teachers ever will and I most likely will not ever be recognized again.”