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ABSTRACT

Like most States, New Mexico's legislature grants not only basic foundation money for public schools but also a small percentage of additional discretionary funds. While the foundation money is almost always dispersed in light of a rigid formula, the discretionary funds present the opportunity for political bargaining. While hardly of as obvious importance as the foundation grants, these additional funds offer incentives for district superintendents to form coalitions with their local legislators to influence the fund distribution. This study examined the influence of interpersonal manipulative tendencies of political actors (legislators and superintendents) and/or longevity in the role on the distribution of certain additional State funds. (Author/JF)

POLITICAL MANIPULATION, LONGEVITY AND EDUCATIONAL FINANCE: SUPERINTENDENTS AND STATE LEGISLATORS IN A SINGLE STATE

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Introduction

Similar to most states, New Mexico's legislature grants not only basic foundation money for public schools but also a small percentage of additional discretionary funds. While the foundation money is almost always dispersed in light of a rigid formula, the discretionary funds present the opportunity for political bargaining. While not of the obvious importance of the foundation grants, these additional funds offer incentives for district superintendents to form coalitions with their local legislators to influence the distribution of these funds.

Examining structural correlates suggested by Iannaccone[1], one can classify New Mexico as a Type I, locally-based disparate state. The state's linkage pattern between the legislature and educational interest groups is highly localistic. Iannoccone suggested localism was a critical variable in Type I states noting that:

> . . . the participants . . . , both legislators and schoolmen (but in particular the schoolmen), represent their school district first of all. Localism implies the existence of geographic bases and districts as essential subunits in the associational system of schoolmen influencing legislation.[2]

In such a state, the key linkage point between political actors would be personal interaction. In these situations, superintendents might urge local legislators to exert influence in the distribution of additional funds.

One would expect, then, that particularly clever superintendents and local legislators would be able to capture a disproportionate share of additional funds. Equally, it seems reasonable that experienced political actors (both superintendents and legislators) should be able to facilitate more funds for their local districts. Finally, high manipulative and high longevity political actors should be most profited by their abilities and experience in the struggle for discretionary funds. Hence, this study examined the following question: "Do interpersonal manipulative tendencies of political actors (legislators and superintendents) and/or longevity in the role influence the distribution of certain additional state funds?"

Procedure

Measurement of the Variables

Manipulation. Two social psychologists, Richard Christie and Florence Geis,[3] developed an instrument (Mach V) for assessing one personality behavioral tendency--interpersonal manipulation. These researchers define manipulation as the tendency of the respondent to view and influence others for his own purposes. The respondent's manipulative tendencies are measured by questionnaire responses based on themes of human nature and interaction described by Machiavelli in "The Prince" and in "The Discourses."[4] A computable measure of an individual's manipulative behavioral tendencies is reflected by responses to the Mach V instrument. Identifying situational parameters which included: (1) face-to-face interaction; (2) latitude for improvisation; and (3) irrelevant affect, these researchers explain:

> The primary difference between individuals who score higher on the Mach scale is the high scorer's greater emotional detachment . . . High Machs manipulate more, win more, are persuaded less, persuade others more, and otherwise differ significantly from low Machs as predicted in situations in which subjects interact face to face with others, when the situation provides latitude for improvisation and the subject must initiate responses as he can or will, and in situations in which affective involvement with details irrelevant to winning distracts low Machs.[5]

Seniority. As a variable potentially influencing a political actor's interpersonal behavioral tendencies, seniority was operationalized as the total number of years a political actor had served in his respective political role. Those incumbents with more than the mean years of service for their respective population were labeled high longevity. Inversely, those incumbents with less than the mean years of service for their respective population were labeled low longevity.

Additional State Funds. Financing of public education has long been a major state function in New Mexico. About 75 percent of all operational monies are state allocations. A state distribution formula reflecting a district's average daily membership serves as the primary means for distribution of state funds.

A school district may receive allocations in addition to the basic formula distribution. Two such sources for these discretionary monies are vocational education entitlements and supplemental distributions. Of the eighty-nine public school districts in the state, 59 or approximately 66 percent received allocations from these two sources.

Sample

The eighty-nine New Mexico public school districts for the year 1971-72 comprise the units of analysis for our study. Two groups, public

school superintendents (n = 89) and all elected state legislators (n = 112), make up the total population. Of the eighty-nine school districts, 59 received additional allocations from the examined sources.

Response for the two groups on the Mach V were as follows: superintendents, 70 of 89 (79 percent); legislators, 54 of 112 (48 percent). Comparison of both groups of respondents on longevity produced no significant differences.

On inspection, many legislators (n = 40) represent more than one school district. Further scrutiny of precinct boundaries disclosed that some legislators represent political subdivisions containing more than one school district, some of which received and some of which did not receive additional state monies. To analyze such occurrences fully, data were examined using three distinct approaches. Legislators were divided into: (1) those legislators representing only districts receiving money (+$), (2) legislators representing only districts not receiving money (-$), and (3) legislators representing districts, some of which received money and some of which did not receive money (±$ mixed).

Hypotheses Testing

The fundamental question asked was: Do interpersonal manipulative tendencies of political actors (legislators and superintendents) and/or longevity in the role, influence the distribution of certain additional state funds? This question generated seven major null hypotheses which were tested.

Presentation of Data. As shown in Table 1, the two populations scored much lower on the Mach V than the instruments' established mean score. Equally, the standard deviations for both populations was smaller

than the instruments' established standard deviation. On the other hand, these two groups looked remarkably similar.

TABLE 1

A Comparison of Group Means and Standard Deviations of this Study with Established Mach V Scores

Group	Mean	SD
Legislators	95.90	7.45
Superintendents	94.33	7.01
Established Score	100.00	11.17

The overall range of scores for both populations in this study was 83 to 116. Of the one hundred twenty-four respondents, only one score exceeded 112. Each group was positively skewed.

Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4. Because of uneven numbers of subjects, a calculated "t" for each comparison was necessary.[6] All four hypotheses were not rejected. Hence, no simple relationships were found. Tables 4, 6, 7, and 9 reflect an n = 3 for (-$) legislators. This response represents only 10 percent of the twenty-nine potential respondents. Each of the testable hypotheses subjected to the calculated "t" test follows.

H_1 There is no significant difference between the Mach V scores of superintendents in districts receiving additional state funding and the Mach V scores of superintendents in districts not receiving additional state funding.

TABLE 2

A Comparison of the Mean Mach V Scores
For Superintendents (+$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Mach V Score	t
+$ Supt.	45	7.43	94.33	
				.006
-$ Supt.	25	6.16	94.32	
				N.S.*

H_2 There is no significant difference between seniority of the superintendent in districts receiving additional state funding and longevity of the superintendent in districts not receiving additional state funding.

TABLE 3

A Comparison of the Mean Longevity Scores
For Superintendents (+$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Longevity	t
+$ Supt.	45	7.60	6.06	
				1.52
-$ Supt.	25	9.12	7.78	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

H_3 There is no significant difference between the Mach V scores of legislators representing districts receiving additional state funding and the Mach V scores of legislators representing districts not receiving additional state funding.

TABLE 4

A Comparison of Mean Mach V Scores For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Mach V Score	t
+$ Legislators	35	7.49	96.77	
				.70
-$ Legislators	3	9.86	92.66	
				N.S.*

TABLE 5

A Comparison of Mean Mach V Scores For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$) Plus (±$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Mach V Score	t
+$ Legislators	35	7.49	96.77	
				1.17
-$ Legislators and ±$ Mixed	19	7.30	94.31	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

TABLE 6

A Comparison of Mean Mach V Scores For Legislators (+$) Plus (±$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Mach V Score	t
+$ Legislators and ± Mixed	51	7.37	96.09	
				.59
-$ Legislators	3	9.86	92.66	
				N.S.*

H_4 There is no significant difference between longevity of the legislators representing districts receiving additional state monies and longevity of the legislators representing districts not receiving additional state monies.

TABLE 7

A Comparison of Mean Longevity Measures For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Longevity	t
+$ Legislators	35	2.80	4.17	
				.61
-$ Legislators	3	2.88	3.66	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

TABLE 8

A Comparison of Mean Longevity Measures For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$) Plus (±$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Longevity	t
+$ Legislators	35	2.80	4.71	
				.56
-$ Legislators and ±$ Mixed	19	5.08	5.42	N.S.*

TABLE 9

A Comparison of Mean Longevity Measures For Legislators (+$) Plus (±$) Versus (-$)

Group	Number	Standard Deviation	Mean Longevity	t
+$ Legislators and ±$ Mixed	51	3.78	5.03	
				.78
-$ Legislators	3	2.88	3.66	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7. Subjecting these data to a least-squares analysis of variance again failed to produce the rejection of any of the null hypotheses. Hypotheses subjected to a least-squares analysis of variance are presented below.

H_5 There is no significant difference between the Mach V scores and longevity of superintendents representing districts receiving additional state funding and the Mach V scores and longevity of superintendents representing districts not receiving additional state funding.

TABLE 10

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Superintendents (+$) Versus (-$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	5.29	1	5.29	.10
2. longevity	8.35	1	8.35	.16
3. interaction	1.73	1	1.73	.03
4. W. Cells	3297.92	70-4=66	49.96	
				N.S.*

Because of disparate legislator representation, the three approaches previously described were followed for analysis of H_6 and H_7.

H_6 There is no significant difference between the Mach V scores and longevity of legislators representing districts receiving additional state funding and the Mach V scores and longevity of legislators representing districts not receiving additional state funding.

*Significance level of .05.

TABLE 11

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	146.02	1	146.02	2.40
2. longevity	117.73	1	117.73	1.93
3. interaction	45.12	1	45.12	.74
4. W. Cells	2066.11	38-4=34	60.77	
				N.S.*

TABLE 12

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Legislators (+$) Versus (-$) Plus (±$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	96.36	1	96.36	1.67
2. longevity	14.83	1	14.83	.25
3. interaction	.39	1	.39	.006
4. W. Cells	2873.10	54-4=50	57.46	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

TABLE 13

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Legislators (+$) Plus (±$) Versus (-$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	56.73	1	56.73	.98
2. longevity	27.49	1	27.49	.47
3. interaction	27.65	1	27.65	.47
4. W. Cells	2885.49	54-4=50	57.70	
				N.S.*

H_7 There is no significant difference between the Mach V scores and longevity of superintendents and legislators representing districts receiving additional state funding and the Mach V scores and longevity of superintendents and legislators.

TABLE 14

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Superintendents and Legislators (+$)
Versus (-$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	38.46	1	38.46	.71
2. longevity	17.88	1	17.88	.33
3. interaction	1.86	1	1.86	.03
4. W. Cells	5561.95	108-4=104	53.48	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

TABLE 15

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Superintendents and Legislators (+$)
Versus (-$) Plus (±$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	33.09	1	33.09	.62
2. longevity	.39	1	.39	.007
3. interaction	4.88	1	4.88	.09
4. W. Cells	6325.12	124-4=120	52.70	
				N.S.*

TABLE 16

Least-Squares Analysis of Variance Table
For Superintendents and Legislators (+$)
Plus (±$) Versus (-$)

Source	SS	df	MS	F
1. ±$	26.87	1	26.87	.50
2. longevity	2.37	1	2.37	.04
3. interaction	8.36	1	8.36	.15
4. W. Cells	6329.29	124-4=120	52.74	
				N.S.*

*Significance level of .05.

Seven specific hypotheses were examined in an effort to determine an answer to the following question: "Do interpersonal manipulative tendencies of political actors and/or longevity in the role influence the distribution of certain additional state funds in a Type I, locally-based disparate state?" None of the hypothesized relationships was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level. Directionality at the .10 level was observed in only one instance. Table 11 presented an F ratio of 2.40 approaching significance at the .10 level (F = 2.80) when comparing receipt or non-receipt of monies among legislators with high or low longevity.

Interpretation

The Concept of "Localism"

Over 35 percent (40 of 112) of the New Mexico legislators represent more than one school district. Of the respondent group (n = 54), a total of 31, or 57 percent, represent more than one school district. It appears in New Mexico that a single legislator faces a single superintendent demanding additional funds for the local district approximately 65 percent of the time. Others, with a broader constitutency, might be able to achieve "satisficing" payoffs with competing superintendents instead of optimal payoffs with a single actor. Of importance is the fact that multiple legislators come from more populated districts.

Interpersonal Manipulation

Christie and Geis[7] have recognized the difficulty in selecting variables measurable in a real world setting, positing:

> . . . the problem of generalizing from the laboratory findings back to the real world is by no means a simple one. First, other variables exist in natural settings and we do not know the relative importance of the interaction between known and unknown variables . . . The same is undoubtedly true in the real world, and the problem of interpretation is confounded when known variables interact with others of unknown nature or strength.

Although the Mach V instrument provided a quantifiable means for measuring manipulative tendencies between two populations, the evidence of our efforts is not congruent with laboratory results.

From the superintendents' data, the distribution clearly indicates positive skewedness. With a return of 79 percent, it appears safe to assume that the superintendent samples for our study represented low Machs. This supports Christie and Geis' findings, that "Elementary and secondary school teachers . . . score considerably lower than most other occupational groups."[8] Although our efforts did not examine the total number of years each superintendent had served as a teacher, it appears that during the "teaching" years these superintendents prefer to be viewed as projecting socially desirable characteristics such as "what's best for the children." Additionally, these superintendents may have a tendency to spend much of their time engaging in defense of their own self-image or that of the school.[9]

In their model, Christie and Geis[10] suggest a linkage between manipulation as a personality variable and tactics employed by respondents in loosely structured situations. With primarily low Mach superintendents, our data suggest little tactical variety could be anticipated. Equally, the assumption of this study, that superintendents operate in a loosely

structured setting and therefore provide conditions for maximizing high Mach personal tendencies, may be fallacious. The situational determinants enveloping the superintendency as a political role facilitating or hindering manipulative tendencies, appear to offer a potential subject for consideration in similar studies.

From the legislators' data, the distribution indicates bimodal skewedness. Although only 48 percent of the legislators returned usable Mach V responses, these respondents were also predominately low Machs.

Additional State Funding

Although specific funding sources selected for our study provide examples of statutory ambiguity, the total dollar amount disbursed constitutes approximately 1 percent of the state's education operational budget. In a state that has traditionally ranked in the lower quartile as to accumulated wealth, our efforts assumed that even minute dollars would be sufficiently sensitive for observation. That assumption may have been too generous.

Conclusions

Our efforts have focused on the following question: "Do interpersonal manipulative tendencies of political actors (legislators and superintendents) and/or longevity in the role influence the distribution of certain additional state funds?" Arranging the study so as to examine seven testable hypotheses, we failed to reject any of the suspected relationships.

Discussion

Iannaccone's typology suggest that Type I states represent the "ruling elite" model. Dahl[11] has empirically examined such a model and criticized its ambiguity.

First, in a locally-disparate state, Iannaccone posits that the locus of accommodation between political actors will take place in the legislative chambers. Noting the scope of such influence as including all educational issues, Iannaccone fails to identify specific issues, e.g., educational finance issues, educational program issues, or educational personnel issues. Our efforts, in focusing on educationally specific funding sources, failed significantly to demonstrate that the hypothesized locus of accommodation between political actors actually occurred. Our data alludes to the ambiguity of Iannaccone's structural correlate of locus of accommodation.

Second, Dahl suggests that one "cannot compare the relative influence of two actors who always perform identical actions."[12] According to Iannaccone, in a locally-disparate state a primary responsibility for political actors is to accrue geographically specific educational payoffs. Again, Iannaccone's hypothesized payoffs were not measurably reflected in this study. Dahl addresses such a predicament saying:

> . . . one can test for differences in influence only when there are cases of differences in initial preferences. At one extreme, the difference may mean that one group prefers alternative A and another group prefers B, A and B being mutually exclusive. At the other extreme, it may mean that one group prefers alternative A to other alternatives, and another group is indifferent. If a political system displayed complete consensus at all times, we should find it impossible to construct a satisfactory direct test of the hypothesis that it was a ruling elite system, . . .[13]

Our study failed to detect educationally specific payoffs. Political actors, both superintendents and legislators, may opt for any geographically specific payoff and thus perform identical actions reflecting congruent perceived roles. Stated differently, political actors, both legislators and superintendents, may perceive their roles as that of representatives of the constituency at large. If both the legislator and superintendent perceive congruent roles, i.e. representative of all the public, it appears difficult as supported by our data, to detect educationally specific payoffs from general payoffs.

Dahl[14] further delineates that the potential for control and the potential for unity may influence political effectiveness. If political actors, although embracing a high potential for control, do not likewise subscribe to the notion of unity among actors, political effectiveness or ineffectiveness cannot be consistently measured by observable policy outcomes. One would assume that political actors, both legislators and superintendents, possess a high potential for control and that Iannaccone's Type I structural correlate of warm and paternalistic legislator sentiment toward educators would be reflected in observable policy outcomes. Examining F ratios for Tables 14, 15, and 16, the potential for control and the potential for unity as factors influencing political effectiveness between actors was not significantly mirrored in our study. Thus, the structural correlates embracing legislator sentiment toward educators in a Type I state was not supported by our efforts.

New Mexico has one of the lowest per capita incomes among the 50 states. Its financial position is even more noticeable when considering personal income per school-age child. In the former relationship,

New Mexico ranks forty-first. In the latter relationship, New Nexico ranks forty-ninth.[15] Because of these two financial realities, one can assume that even minute discretionary dollars would be clamored for by political actors. Our data does not support this notion. On the contrary, the relative insignificance of selected discretionary monies (less than 1 percent of total state educational budget) may force political actors to engage in influence strategies which will potentially reap larger returns.

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