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ABSTRACT

Conceptualizing militant behavior as a strategic choice involving collective action and occurring within a specific organizational context, this paper examines the impact of various organizational factors on elementary and secondary school teachers' willingness to engage in militant behavior. Teachers in 83 New York districts were surveyed as to the most severe measures they would approve of to influence the administration on four items of compensation and seven items of professional prerogative. Independent variables measured teachers' individual and positional attributes and organizational factors including rewards, bureaucratization, work demands, promotional structure, and union and professional identity. The results of the analysis strongly support the study's approach. First, differences in predictors between militancy over compensation issues and militancy over issues of professional prerogative reinforce the strategic choice aspect. Second, the importance of the organizational context is accentuated by the fact that each of the organizational factors predicted militancy and that different predictors emerged at elementary and secondary levels. Finally, differences between elementary and secondary school staffs also underscore the notion of militancy as a form of collective behavior. (Author/MJL)



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STRATEGIC CHOICE AND COLLECTIVE ACTION: ORGANIZATIONAL DETERMINANTS OF TEACHERS MILITANCY

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Abstract

Past research on militancy suffers from three limitations: it fails to take account of militancy as a conscious action; it has not focused on the organizational setting in which militancy occurs; and it has not been explicitly concerned with the collective aspects of militancy. To overcome these limitations, it is necessary to conceptualize militancy as a strategic choice of group behavior made within a specific organizational context. The research reported here applies this perspective to an examination of teachers militancy. The results of the study lend strong support to this approach, with differences between militancy over compensation issues and militancy over issues of professional perogative emphasizing strategic choice, the emergence of various organizational factors as predictors of militancy (e.g., work demands, bureaucratization, rewards, promotional structure, union and professional activity, and individual and positional attributes of the staff) showing the importance of organizational context, and differences between elementary and secondary schools lending support to the notion of militancy as collective action.



During the past twenty-five years, the rapid unionization and increased strike activities of public sector employees have absorbed the interests of numerous researchers. While their studies have succeeded in creating profiles of militant employees and have presented an array of potential explanations for increased militancy, they have tended to disregard three significant factors. First, militancy, whether measured in terms of attitudes or activities, is a matter of strategic choice. Researchers who have concentrated on the demographic/environmental determinants of militancy have de-emphasized the element of conscious choice in behavior. Second, conscious choices are never made in a vacuum; they are always made about issues and within the context of identifiable organizational settings. Third, union militancy is, by definition, collective behavior. The overemphasis on characteristics of individuals has tended to neglect the inherent collective nature of militancy. This study investigates the militancy of public school teachers from a perspective which takes account of these three factors. The orientation here emphasizes that militancy is a strategic choice made within an organizational context by individuals acting in concert.

Militancy as Strategic Choice

As Russel Schutt has recently noted , research to explain the emergence of militancy among public employees has tended to employ one of four sets of variables, which Schutt characterizes as distinct models of militancy. Two of these, the social background model and the political model, tend to emphasize the milieu in which militancy flourishes. The social background model is conceptually supported by the notion that demographic and social variations create predispositions toward militancy. The rationale of researchers in this model is that aspects of life will affect perceptions



of aspects of work. Thus, Coles 2 finds that Jews and Catholics are more militant than Protestants, and those from lower class families are more likely to be militant than those coming from upper class families. addition, young teachers are more militant than older teachers, and male teachers are more militant than female teachers. Like Coles, Fox and Wince and Alutto and Belasco note that younger teachers have a greater propensity toward militant behavior. Ziegler supports the notion that gender affects militancy, as do Fox and Wince. Tomkiewicz finds some support for the notion that less experienced teachers tend to be more militant than those with greater experience; however, he does not find that gender is significant. In addition to giving attention to these characteristics of individuals, others in the social background model have examined the effects of the larger society. Thus, Alutto 8 find that rural teachers are more militant than their urban counterparts, and Watkins relates such variables as community population size and unemployment level to strike incidence.

Like those of the social background model, writers in the political model relate environmental variables to militancy. In discussing the wider political context, Watkins 10 finds no significant relationship between the type of government or the political party in power and strike incidence. On the other hand, Weintraub and Thornton 11 find that increased strike activity can be expected with the enactment of permissive labor legislation. Coles 12 shows that there is some tendency for more Democrats than Republicans to support labor activities, and Zack 13 an experienced practitioner, includes the success of the civil rights and anti-war movements on his list of reasons for increased militancy. Moreover, other researchers who use this model have related the immediate political environment of the union to the militancy of its members.



There is a sense in which the work of the social background and political models provide a knowledge of the medium in which militancy will grow. Unfortunately, those who have taken this perspective have ignored the aspect of choice in militancy. Because they de-emphasize militancy as a strategy for attaining goals, they create a picture of a passive militant. From a perspective which emphasizes the strategic choice aspects of militancy, the individual is seen as an active militant. This does not mean that the findings of the research utilizing the social background and political model are unimportant. In terms of the social background model, an emphasis on strategic choice leads one to focus on the affect of such variables on the individuals perceptions, and their subsequent impact on decisions related to militancy. In this regard, we would expect our findings dealing with the affect of such individual and positional attributes as age, sex, and tenure on teachers militancy to be consistent with prior research. Thus our first hypothesis would be:

Hypothesis 1: In schools where the teaching staff are younger, predominantely male, and lacking in experience, there will be high levels of militancy. 14

While the social background model may influence perceptions, the political model, from our perspective, is better seen as an aspect of the context in which strategic choices are made. We will consider this in more detail in the next section.

The two other models Schutt 15 identifies support the concept that goals are an essential element of militancy. Those who have applied the economic model have been concerned with the peculiar budgetary, elastic, and monoposonistic characteristics of public sector employment, but they recognize that economic improvement is central to union militancy. In a private sector study, Kircher 16 found that ensuring better pay and improved



fringe benefits rank as the first two reasons why persons said they voted for the union, and as Kleingartner 17 states, salaried professionals in the public sector share with all employees a fundamental concern with satisfactory wages.

The fourth model of militancy, the professional model (Schutt's incongruity model), tends to be the most choice oriented. Liebermann argues that professionalism requires autonomy over decision-making. He says that because of their expert knowledge and skills, teachers require participation in the decision-making processes of their school. Corwin maintains that the conflict between their desire for professional autonomy and their positions as bureaucratic employees is the source of teachers' militancy. Such a conception of the militant professional is supported by a number of studies. Jessup finds that more militant teachers have a greater concern for educational issues than salary issues. Alutto and $\mathrm{Belasco}^{21}$ relate participation in decision-making to teacher satisfaction and find that less satisfied teachers are those who feel deprived of the ability to participate in decision-making. In addition, Alutto and Belasco note that the greater the career dissatisfaction among teachers, the less militant they appear, and their organizational commitment is also negatively related to militancy.

Both the economic and professional models attempt to explain militancy in terms of goals. Writers from these two groups view unions as instrumental organizations, and militancy, in its varying manifestations, is a strategy for attaining goals. From this perspective, militants are active, choice-makers, whose militancy can be explained in terms of their desired goals. In essence, both of these models argue that dissatisfaction with the rewards offered by the organization, either monetary or professional,



will lead to militancy in an effort to increase the level of rewards.

Drawing on this line of reasoning, our second hypothesis becomes:

Hypothesis 2: The greater the dissatisfaction with the level of rewards in an organization, the greater the level of militancy.

Although both the economic and the professional models attempt to explain militancy in terms of goals or rewards, it is important to realize that they are concerned with two different types of goals or rewards. From a perspective which views militancy as a matter of strategic choice, it is more accurate to consider these two models as delineating different issue areas in which distinct tactical decisions regarding militancy may be made.

The notion of militancy as involving a tactical decision implies that there are different alternative behaviors or forms of militancy to chose from. Although Schutt 22 differentiates between strikes and job actions, these distinctions do not do justice to the concept of militancy as strategic choice. In the often heated political context of bargaining in which such decisions are made, even giving in may be seen as a tactical concession and thus a form of militancy 23. The point is that in terms of strategic options in the political context of bargaining, militancy may involve not only strikes and job actions, but less severe behavior such as informal negotiations or concessions as well. Thus in examining militancy as a strategic choice, we are concerned with the type of behavior that is seen as appropriate in dealing with a specific type of issue. While we are interested in those factors which may lead to a specific choice (as in the deterministic models), our emphasis is on the active decision making process which underlies our view of militancy.

Choices Within A Context

Having maintained that militancy is strategic, it is necessary to consider the specific constraints which impinge on the selection of strategies.

The classification noted above between economic and professional issues



provides a general dichotimization of issue areas in which goals may be pursued. Past research has tended to focus on the economic, social, and historical conditions under which these general issues will arise (e.g., the political model). This does not, however, provide a sense of the specific constraints in which strategic choices are made. In this regard, we believe it is crucial to examine the impact of the organizational context on militancy. It is the structure and processes of the organization which create the specific context in which particular objectives will arise and in which militant strategic choices will be made. Thus it is the additional duty that is given to employees that may lead to militancy over compensation, or the lack of say over how they do their work that may lead to militancy over work related issues.

While the impact of organizational factors on militancy is an important consideration for all employees, it is particularly interesting with regard to professionals such as teachers. This is because of the inherent contradiction pointed out by various authors the professional ethos and bureaucratic structure. As one expects, professionals believe that they should have a high level of work autonomy, should serve as their own judges, and should have a high level of involvement in decision-making. On the other hand, management maintains that issues of work performance, the distribution of rewards, and decision making should be at management's discretion and not at the discretion of professionals who are employees of the organization.

While some research in organizational behavior has shown that professional norms and bureaucratic organization are not necessarily in conflict ²⁵, in the broadest sense there appears to exist a conflict between the professional ethos and the bureaucratic structure of organizational processes as reflected in the ethos of management ²⁶. As more and more professionals are employed



in large formal organizations, this conflict in ethos has become a stimuli for the growth of professional unions. Within the context of large organizations, unions become the main mechanisms through which professionals can have an impact on what they view to be constraining organizational structures and processes. While this conflict in ethos may partially explain the emergence of professional unions, it may also relate to the level of militancy observed in professional unions over different issues.

While the precise form of this conflict will depend upon the specific organizational context in which professionals are located, at least three aspects of the organizational context deserve special consideration. The first is the degree of bureaucratization of the workplace. In a bureaucracy, efforts are directed toward the creation of certainty through such mechanisms as the formalization and routinization of work. For teachers, the creation of certainty through bureaucratization represents an infringement on the autonomy which they expect as professionals. Thus we can hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: The greater the level of bureaucratization in a school, the higher the level of militancy, particularly over issues of professional perogative.

The second aspect of organizational context which deserves attention is the different sources of pressure brought to bear on teachers regarding their work responsibility. The greater the pressure brought to bear, the higher the level of work demands. To the degree that the nature of work demands are in conflict with the teachers' goal orientation as embodied in the professional ethos, we would expect that teachers will turn to militant behavior to rectify the situation. Therefore our fourth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 4: In schools with high levels of work demands, teachers will be more militant.



It should be noted that to the degree that teachers want to change the work demands, we would expect more militancy over issues of professional perogative. However, to the degree they would like to be compensated for these demands, we would expect more militancy over compensation issues.

The final aspect of the organizational context relates to the promotional structure in the school. The hierarchical structure of public school teaching is extraordinarily flat; teachers have few opportunities for promotion. They require high levels of certainty as to the foreseeable opportunities. Moreover, because the evaluation of teaching is somewhat uncertain, teachers are likely to demand participation in the establishment of criteria upon which promotions are based. Without a set of criteria for determining competence in teaching, promotion may be based upon favoritism or totally subjective indices. The teachers' professional ethos will demand that promotion be based upon established professional norms for competence. Thus,

Hypothesis 5: To the degree that the promotional process is viewed as uncertain and nonrational, teachers will be militant about issues of professional prerogative. We do not expect these variables to be related to issues of compensation.

Militancy as Inter-Group Behavior

Much of the previous research on militancy, particularly the deterministic models which focus on individual and positional attributes which predispose individuals to militancy, have utilized the individual as the unit of analysis. Even the economic and professional models, insofar as they focus on individual dissatisfaction, occur at the individual level. For example, Corwin's 27 research makes it clear that he views militancy as a characteristic of an individual. He measures militancy in terms of individual attitudes and individual confrontations. While such an approach explicitly recognizes the



fact that an individual must decide to rely on the union to address his or her grievances, it fails to account for the dramatic differences which arise when one shifts from an interpersonal (individual) to an intergroup form of behavior. 28

The fact is that militancy is a form of group behavior. It is not the individual per se who goes out on strike, it is the union. Militancy pits one group, the union, against another group, management. Despite the conceptual is equiffed and interest of a form of group behavior, few studies have empirited by the conceptual is into a scenat. Alutto and Belasho²⁹ when a study of artificity is and analyzed their data at the district ier care at least we see this and analyzed their data at the district ier care at least we see this and he have the whole supports the concept of endurantiations and form if advertup behavior, while also emphasizing that variations of our points of the care of gasiluations and not across totally discrete and invalid discrete less.

An award education differences between interpersonal and intergroup behavior also security as a continuous risk variety of groups to which an individual may belong. In the continuous to the security and teachers militancy, it is important to realize that for many reachers the idea of being a professional is antithetical to the litea of leving a union member. In other words, identifying cheself as a part of a reaffectional group may mean that one is unable to identify with the union—thus one can hypothesize:

hypothesis or in chools where teachers exhibit a higher degree of professional identity, their will be less militancy.

In summary, we view militancy as a strategic choice of group behavior made within a specific organizational context. The study reported here has been designed to apply this perspective in examining public school teachers militancy. First, to emphasize the strategic choice aspect of militancy, our dependent variable includes a wide range of tactical options. The use

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of these options in different bargaining areas (i.e., compensation and professional perogative) is also examined. Second, to take account of the specific organizational context in which these strategic choices are made, the independent variables utilized measure various aspects of organizational structure and process. Finally, in recognition of militancy as a form of intergroup behavior, the analysis is performed using the school as the unit of analysis. This also enables us to highlight the impact of organizational contraints on strategic choice by comparing elementary to secondary schools. It is our belief that this approach provides a more realistic view of militancy than previous research, and in so doing addresses many of the limit —as of earlier work on union militancy.

METHOD

Sample

This report is based on survey data collected in 83 school districts in New York State. These districts are a random sample stratified according to geographic location, size, wealth of the district, and district expenditures. Four regions in New York State were utilized for geographic location. The sample included 30 districts from the Binghamton-Elmira region; 14 districts in the Rochester region; 22 districts in the Syracuse region; and 17 districts in the Elmsford region. Average daily attendance in K-12 for each district was used as an indication of size. The average size of our sample is 3,128. The size of the districts ranges from a low of 277 to a high of 12,205. Assessed valuation was employed as a measure of district wealth. The average assessed valuation i: our sample is \$65,951,748; the range is from a low of \$1,904,589 to a high of \$379,246,706. Expenditures are indexed by the total general and federal aid expenditures for a district. The average for our sample is \$7,433,854. The range of expenditures goes from a low of \$630,968 to a high of \$28,308,727.



For most districts, teachers in the largest elementary and largest high school received questionnaires. In certain districts, teachers in middle schools or junior high schools also received surveys. Out of 3,200 teacher questionnaires sent out, 2,247 usable surveys were returned, for an overall response rate of 70%. In terms of district response rates, these ranged from 0 to 100%. Only those districts with a response rate of 30% or higher are included in our analysis (N = 48). The data employed in this study are aggregated to the school level, with districts which did not have an elementary and secondary school organization excluded from the analysis. The final sample employed contains 42 elementary school organizations and 45 secondary school organizations. In keeping with the early literature on school militancy and in line with our argument concerning the importance of organizational factors as determinants of militancy, we used a school level aggregation in order to capture the differences between elementary and secondary schools.

In this regard, it should be noted that for each of our dependent and independent variables, we used organizational scores based on mean scores of the responses of organizational members. This is especially relevant in this analysis given our argument for militancy as a collective phenomena. As such, the variance accounted for in this paper is across rather than within organizations.

Dependent Variable

When militancy is viewed as a tactical or strategic choice, then the possibility arises that not only are there different actions that may be taken that fall under the rubric of militancy, 32 but that different actions will be taken in response to different issues. In order to capture the affect of the type of issue on militancy, following Bacharach and Mitchell 33, we utilize



two distinct issue areas: traditional issues of compensation and issues of professional perogative.

Teachers were asked "For each issue below, please indicate the most severe means you would be willing to approve of to influence the administration." There followed a list of areas, each of which was to be rated on the following scale: 1 (strike), 2 (some type of job action), 3 (continue work with formal negotiations), 4 (continue work with informal negotiations), and 5 (give in). The issue areas included are drawn from Bacharach and Mitchell and consist of four items of compensation and seven items of professional perogative. The means, ranges, and standard deviations of the dependent variables and a list of the issue areas are presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Independent Variables

A. Individual and Positional Attributes: Four items are used to characterize the individual and positional attributes of a school's teaching force. Two of the items are taken from secondary data obtained from the New York State Department of Education's Basic Educational Data System. The first is the percent of teachers in the school who are below 40 years of age. The second is the percent of teachers in the school who are males.

The third and fourth items are based on survey responses. The first, number of years in the district, is based on responses to the question "How long have you worked in this district?" The second, number of years in position, is based on responses to the question "How long have you been in your present position in this district?"

B. Rewards: Three measures of alternative rewards were employed. 35



The first is based on a question which asked teachers how satisfied they are with their salary. Responses were coded on a 1 = very satisfied to 4 = very dissatisfied scale.

The second variable measures teachers decisional deprivation. Respondents were asked to indicate which of 23 different decision areas that had influence and which areas they should have influence over. Decisional deprivation was computed as the difference between the total influence teachers felt they should have over the 23 issue areas and the total influence they believed they actually had over the same issues.

Professionals in organizations may be rewarded financially or symbolically. The adequacy of the financial r ward structure is tapped by the measure of satisfaction with salary. By incorporating teachers into decision-making, one is placing value on their professional judgement and rewarding their expertise. Our measure of decisional deprivation captures the adequacy of this form of symbolic rewards. In essence, these two types of rewards parallel the two issue areas tapped by our dependent variables. Although our hypothesis did not differentiate between types of rewards and issue specific militancy, it seems likely that dissatisfaction with monetary rewards will predict to militancy over compensation, while decisional deprivation will predict to militancy over issues of professional perogative.

The final reward variable is based on a five item scale measuring job involvement. ³⁶ All of the items are scored from 1 (very true) to 7 (very false), and the scale has an alpha of .75.

Both salary and participation in decision-making are extrinsic rewards, i.e., they are something that the organization can do to recognize the professional's performance and expertise. Neither of these capture the intrinsic rewards, i.e., the sense of competence or personal satisfaction that a professional may receive from a job. Job involvement taps the adequacy



of the intrinsic rewards which the professionals receive from their job. That is, job involvement measures the degree to which the teacher sees the work itself as the primary source of satisfaction and identification. Therefore, to the degree that teachers are intrinsically rewarded, i.e., there is high job involvement, we would expect that teachers would be less militant.

C. Bureaucratization: Two items were used as indices of bureaucratization. The first is a four item scale drawn from Bacharach and Aiken³⁷ which measures the degree of autonomy on the job. The items are scored from 1 (definitely true) to 4 (definitely false) and the scale has an alpha of .74.

The second variable is a seven item scale measuring role conflict. ³⁸ Cronbach's alpha for this scale is .89, with the items being scored on a scale of 1 (very true) to 7 (very false).

In terms of the conflict between bureaucratic and professional ethos, these two variables are critical. Autonomy and role conflict tap the degree to which the work activities of teachers is bureaucratized. Autonomy is a measure of independence in the work process, while role conflict is a measure of the degree of consensus in the expectations for behavior in the role. In terms of the work process, low autonomy and low conflict imply a bureaucratic work process, while high autonomy and high conflict suggest a nonbureaucratic work process.

D. Work Demands: Four items are used as measures of the average work demands in each school. The first, supervisory responsibilities, asked teachers if they supervised anyone and was answered either no (1) or yes (2). The second item asked teachers if they supervised any extracurricular activities and was answered in the same manner as the first item. The third item involved a subjective perception of class size and required teachers to response to the statement "my classes are too large" on a scale of 1 (definitely true) to 4



(definitely false). The final item represents the answer to the question,
"On the average, how many hours a week do you work on school matters at home?"

The four variables discussed above imply different sources of pressure brought to bear on the teachers regarding their work responsibility. The first two variables, supervisory responsibility and supervision of extracurricular activities, tap the supervisory duties assumed by teachers. The third variable, i.e., class size, taps the teacher's perception of the degree to which the class size exceeds a reasonable limit. The final dimension, i.e., average hours worked at home, is concerned with the degree to which work demands extend beyond working hours.

- E. Promotional Structure: Two items are employed as measures of the promotional structure in the school. The first item, certainty of promotional opportunity, is based on responses to the question, "How certain are you of the opportunities for promotion and advancement which will exist in the next few years?" Answers were scores on a scale of 1 (very uncertain) to 4 (very certain). The second item measures the perceived rationality of the promotion process and is based on responses to the question, "To what degree do you think that promotion in this school is basically a rational process?" This question was scored on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal).
- of union and professional identity: Four variables measure the degree of union and professional identity in the school. The first is a three item scale measuring the extent of union activity. The second is a three item scale measuring the extent of professional activity. The third variable is a four item scale measuring the degree of desire for union involvement in compensation issues, while the final variable is a seven item scale measuring the degree of desire for union involvement in issues of professional perogative.



The first two variables measure the degree of commitment to the values embodied in unions as they may differ from the values embodied in professional organizations. Teachers with an orientation toward professional associations assume they share with administrators and the community a common set of values and expectations. On the other hand, teachers who demonstrate a preference for the union as their representative organization, assume their values and expectations are more closely shared by other teachers than by members of the wider educational establishment. Strategic actions directed toward the administration are more likely to come from those who do not view themselves as sharing a professional ethos with administrators but with other teachers.

In addition to expecting that levels of militancy will vary with the preference for union rather than professional activities, it is also expected that militancy will vary with expressed preferences for issue involvement. Insofar as professional unions have emerged from the conflict of the professional ethos with the bureaucratic ethos, we would expect the desire for involvement in professional issues to be more strongly related to militancy. Moreover, because professional employees share with all workers a concern with compensation and with the organizations in which they work, we do not expect that a desire for involvement in compensation issues will differentiate between militancy over compensation and militancy over professional prerogatives.

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and ranges of the independent variables used in this analysis.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Analysis

To test our six hypotheses, each set of independent variables relevant



to a given hypothesis was regressed on each dependent variable separately for elementary and secondary schools. This procedure allows us to test such hypothesis without interference from variables unrelated to that particular hypothesis.

To find out what the most significant predictors of teachers' militancy over compensation issues and teachers' militancy over issues of professional perogative are, regardless of which hypothesis they relate to, integrated regression models were then rum for both elementary and secondary schools. Each model represents the results of a backwards stepwise procedure in which each of the previously significant (p \(\frac{1}{2} \). O5) variables was entered, with variables being removed in subsequent steps if they failed to reach significance. This procedure provides the independent variables which together explain the greatest amount of variance in the militancy measures (i.e., maximum R²). This is not to imply that other variables are not important; it is simply to place primary emphasis at this stage of our analysis on parsimony.

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analyses testing each of our six hypotheses on the elementary and secondary school level.

Insert Table 3 About Here

A. Individual and Positional Attributes

Recall that the first hypothesis deals with the relationship between attributes of the individuals in elementary and secondary school organizations and reported militancy. We base this hypothesis on previous research dealing with demographic and environmental variations among individuals and militancy.



There are three aspects to hypothesis one, the first related to age, the second to sex, and the third to experience. Specifically: 1) in schools in which the percentage of teachers below the age of forty is high, we expect militancy over compensation and professional prerogative issues to be high. The findings on the elementary school organization level fail to support this aspect of the hypothesis for militancy over either compensation (beta = .32) or professional prerogative issues (beta = .36). We find limited support on the secondary school level. The relationship between the percentage of the teaching staff below forty and militancy on compensation issues is significant in the expected direction (beta = -.32), but the relationship between this predictor and militancy over professional prerogative issues fails to attain significance. It appears that the affect of staff age on militancy depends upon the organizational level one attends to; 2) in schools in which there is a high percentage of males on the teaching staff there will be high levels of militancy over issues of compensation and professional prerogative. No support is found for this aspect of the hypothesis on either organizational level, with respect to either militancy over issues of compensation or militancy over issues of professional prerogative. It appears that sex has little effect on the reported militancy; 3) the more experienced the staff in schools, the less militant the staff will be over issues of compensation and professional prerogative. On the elementary school organization level, we find rather mixed support for this aspect of the hypothesis. High number of years in the district is associated with low militancy over compensation issues (beta = .67) and professional prerogative issues (beta = .66). However, high number of years in the position predicts high militancy over compensation issues (beta = -.35), while it fails to emerge as significant as a predictor of militancy over professional prerogative issues. On the secondary school organization level, there is no support for this aspect as no relationship



emerges as significant.

B. Rewards

The second hypothesis states that the less satisfied teachers are with their rewards, the more militant they will be. In presenting our measures of rewards, we went on to argue that there will be a direct relationship between the type of reward and the issue over which teachers will be militant. Thus dissatisfaction with salary should be related to militancy over compensation issues. We find support for this notion on the elementary school level. The less satisfied teachers are with salary, the more militant the behavior they would support in an effort to influence the administration (beta = -.29). On the secondary school level, however, the relationship between militancy over compensation issues and low satisfaction with salary fails to attain significance. On the contrary, low satisfaction with salary predicts that the teachers would support less militant behavior over issues of professional prerogative (beta = .41). In a similar manner, decisional deprivation, a form of symbolic reward that deals with the degree to which teachers feel that they are incorporated into the decision-making process, should be related to militancy over issues of professional prerogative. Specifically, it is expected that the greater the perception of decisional deprivation by teachers, the more militant they will be over issues of professional prerogative. The findings strongly support this idea on both elementary school organization level (beta = -.43) and the secondary school organization level (beta = -.33). In addition, the relationship between decisional deprivation and militancy over compensation issues emerges as significant at the elementary school organization level (beta = -.30).

We also argued that to the degree that teachers feel intrinsically rewarded, conceptualized as high job involvement, they would be less militant.



The findings on the elementary school organization level fail to attain significance and thus lend no support for this idea. On the secondary school organization level, the relationship between low job involvement and both militancy over issues of compensation and militancy over issues of professional perogative are significant and in the expected direction (beta = -.39 and -.54 respectively), thereby lending support to this line of reasoning.

C. Bureaucratization

Autonomy and role conflict were presented as critical variables in representing the conflict between bureaucratic and professional ethos. Low autonomy and low conflict represent indications of a bureaucratic work process. Therefore, hypothesis three states that we expect there to be a positive relationship between low autonomy and low conflict and reported militancy. The relationship is expected to be strongest for issues of professional prerogative, rather than issues of compensation.

The findings on this model do not support the hypothesis stated. Specifically, low autonomy does not emerge as significant in either the elementary or secondary school organizations, for either compensation or professional prerogative issues. Low conflict, however, emerges as significant in all four models, but in the unexpected direction. That is, in elementary school organizations, low conflict is positively related to low militancy over compensation issues (beta = .48) and professional prerogative issues (beta = .42), and in secondary school organizations low conflict is similarly related to compensation issues (beta = .31) and professional prerogative issues (beta = .48).

Although these results run counter to our hypothesis, they are consistent with other research which suggests that professionals are willing to accept



the organization. 40 Insofar as low conflict implies some degree of consensus as to the teachers role, this would explain the observed relationships between conflict and militancy over compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative.

D. Work Demands

Hypothesis four states that in schools with high levels of work demands, teachers will be militant over both issues of compensation and issues of professional prerogative. We expect that this is the case because the goal orientation of teachers as embedded in the professional ethos is in conflict with the nature of work demands. Teachers are likely to turn to militant behavior in an effort to redress the situation when confronted with high levels of work demands.

This notion is strongly supported by the findings in the models dealing with elementary school organizations. For militancy over compensation issues, high supervisory responsibility, low perception of class size as to large, and high number of hours worked at home each emerge as significant predictors in the expected direction (betas = -.24, .39, and .31, respectively). For issues of professional prerogative, high supervisory responsibility and low perception of class size as too large emerge as significant predictors in the expected direction (betas = -.23 and .42, respectively). In each case, as teachers' perception of the level of work demands increases, they report that they would approve of more militant behavior to influence the administration over issues of compensation and professional prerogative.



For secondary school organizations, we find more limited support for the hypothesis. While three relationships emerge as significant in the model dealing with militancy over compensation issues, only the relationship between high number of hours worked at home and militancy over compensation issues is in the expected direction (beta = .30). The finding for high supervisory responsibility (beta = .31) and low perception of calss size as being too large (beta = -.22) are both contrary to our expectations. That is, as the perception of the level of work demands increases, teachers report that they would approve of less militant behavior to incluence the administration on compensation issues. There are no significant relationships in the model dealing with work demands and militancy over issues of professional prerogative, and hence there is no support for the hypothesis offered.

The apparently contradictory results concerning supervisory responsibility and classroom size can be explained in the context of the differences between elementary and secondary school organizations. On the elementary level, the teacher is called upon to teach numerous subjects generally involving extended periods of contact with one group of students. On the secondary level, however, the teacher is primarily responsible for the teaching of a particular subject matter to several groups of students, over several limited intervals of time. The nature of secondary education therefore allows the teacher to present the material in a relatively programmed fashion, especially in the context of the New York State Regents curriculum. The primary supervisory responsibility a teacher is likely to have concerns the supervision of teacher aides. These aides either assist in classroom preparation and activities or, particularly on the elementary level, are part of a team responsible for the design and development of individualized instructional programs for the



handicapped and problem students. It is clear that either use of teacher aides represents an added burden to the elementary teacher, whereas the use of teacher aides in the classroom on the secondary level, where they can be given responsibility for much of the more routinized and programmatic aspects of the curriculum, reduces the teachers workload. These differences help explain why supervisory responsibility contributes to militancy on the elementary level, while reducing militancy among secondary teachers. These differences also explain why the perception of class size as being too large would have a much more significant impact on the elementary rather than the secondary level where class size is unimportant or may even be an indicator of teacher popularity.

E. Promotional Structure

Two measures of promotional structure were included in our analysis, high certainty of promotional opportunity and high rationality of the promotion process. Hypothesis five predicts that low certainty about promotional opportunity and low rationality of the promotion process will lead to high militancy. We find somewhat limited support for this hypothesis. That is, high rationality of the promotion process emerges as significant in the expected direction in all cases. In elementary school organizations, high perception of the promotion process as rational predicts low militancy over issues of compensation (beta = .29) and professional prerogative (beta = .36). Likewise, in secondary school organizations, the same relationship emerges (beta = .45 for compensation issues and beta = .62 for issues of professional prerogative). High certainty of promotional opportunity fails to emerge as a significant variable in any model, suggesting that the fairness of the process is more important to teachers than the certainty of the opportunity for promotion.



F. Union and Professional Identity

Our final hypothesis is based on the potential conflict between teachers identity as professionals and teachers identity as union members. It states that the greater the degree of professional identity, the less the militancy. Thus we expect that in schools in which teachers exhibit a high degree of professional activity, they will report that they support less militant means of influencing the administration over issues of compensation and professional prerogative. We find strong support for this hypothesis on the elementary school level. High professional activity is related to low militancy over issues of compensation (beta = .22) and professional prerogative (beta = .26). On the secondary school organization level, high professional activity emerges as significant in predicting low militancy over compensation issues (beta = .32). It does not attain significance with respect to militancy over issues of professional prerogative. In a similar manner, we expect that the relationship between union activity and militancy over compensation and professional prerogative issues will be positive. That is, in schools in which teachers are more involved in union activities, they will report that they would support more militant means to influence the administration on compensation and professional prerogative issues. The findings strongly support this hypothesis. For both elementary and secondary school organizations, high union activity emerges as a significant predictor of militancy (beta = -.40 and -.29 for elementary school organizations on compensation and professional prerogative issues; beta = -.41 and -.41 for secondary school organizations on compensation and professional prerogative issues, respectively). Taken together, these results lend strong support to the contention that union activity and professional activity conflict with one another, pulling teachers in opposite directions. This highlights one of the major dilemmas of "professional" unions.



In discussing the notion of union identity, we also argued that in schools in which teachers express a desire for the union to become more involved in issues of compensation and professional prerogative, the teachers will report that they approve of more militant means of influencing the administration on these two issue areas. The findings support this idea with respect to the desire for union involvement in issues of professional prerogative. Specifically, for elementary school organizations, the higher the desire for union involvement in issues of professional prerogative, the greater the militancy over issues of compensation (beta = -.27) and professional prerogative (beta = -.56). For secondary school organizations, the same relationships hold true (beta = -.32 for issues of compensation and -.59 for issues of professional prerogative). This implies that where teachers see no conflict between their professional identity and their union identity, a high level of militancy over all issues may be anticipated. With respect to the desire for union involvement in compensation issues, only one relationship emerges as significant: relationship between militancy over professional prerogative issues and the high desire for union involvement in compensation issues (beta = .59). finding implies that the higher the desire for union involvement on compensation issues, the lower the militancy over issues of professional prerogative. This relationship, when taken in combination with the earlier results in which a low satisfaction with salary related to low militancy over issues of professional prerogative for secondary teachers, suggests that secondary school teachers perceive a distinct difference between compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative. Specifically, it appears that concern over salary leads secondary teachers to avoid becoming involved in issues of professional prerogative, either in a trade-off between to obtain one while sacrificing the other or due to a conflict between their identity as professionals and their identity as



union members. Elementary teachers, on the other hand, seem to see the issues as more directly related and appear both less willing to make such trade-offs and more likely to see no conflict between their professional and union identities.

Integrated Models

Table 4 presents the integrated models which attempt to determine which variables are the strongest predictors of militancy over compensation issues and militancy over issues of professional prerogative in each type of school, regardless of hypotheses.

Insert Table 4 About Here

Examining equation (1), we find that working a high number of hours at home emerges as the strongest predictor of militancy over compensation issues for elementary school teachers (beta = -.38), with a high desire for union involvement in issues of professional prerogative also being a strong predictor (beta = -.36). A high level of union activity and a low level of role conflict remain as weaker predictors (beta = -.28 and .26 respectively).

Equation (2) reveals that the desire for union involvement in issues of professional prerogative remains as the strongest predictor of militancy over issues of professional prerogative at the elementary school level (beta = -.40).

Staffs characterized by a high number of years in the district (beta = .27) and a high percentage of teachers below the age of 40 (beta = .27) are weak predictors of militancy, as are high rationality of the promotion process (beta = .24) and high union activity (beta = -.21).

Taken together, equations (1) and (2) present an image of the militant elementary school as one staffed by teachers who have a high desire for union



involvement in issues of professional prerogative. It seems that these teachers identify the union as the vehicle through which to address professional issues, issues which are seen as relating to both compensation and professional prerogative. Further, they are issues which elementary school. teachers are willing to fight for.

This image of the militant elementary school stands in marked contrast to that of the militant secondary school. In equation (3), we find that low job involvement (beta = -.49) and high union activity (-.48) remain as the only predictors of militancy over compensation issues at the secondary level. Equation (4) shows that a high desire for union involvement in compensation issues is the strongest predictor of low militancy over issues of professional prerogative at the secondary level (beta = .55), with high union activity (beta = -.44), a high decire for union involvement in issues of professional prerogative (beta = -.40) and low job involvement (beta = -.37) emerging as strong predictors of militant behavior at this level. The image of the militant secondary school which these results present is one staffed by teachers who receive few intrinsic rewards from their job and who rely on the union to obtain extrinsic rewards. They also draw a clear distinction between compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative, and appear willing to make trade-offs between the two.

It seems likely that part of the differences between militant elementary and secondary schools can be attributed to two factors. First, the rise of teachers unions was due in large part to the efforts of secondary school teachers. They have dominated union offices, and as a result have received more from the union. This experience is probably responsible for their perception of the union as a vehicle for obtaining extrinsic rewards and



their ability to differentiate between compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative. In contrast, elementary school teachers are less experienced and have had fewer of the issues which are critical to them addressed by the union. They appear to see themselves slighted as professionals, both in terms of compensation and prerogatives, and seek to redress this situation. This situation is exacerbated by the organizational differences between elementary and secondary schools noted earlier. The specialization of secondary school teachers, combined with their teaching to several groups of students, adds to their professional image. In contrast, the structure of elementary schools detracts from the professional image of elementary school teachers. Militancy would appear to be seen as a vehicle for improving the professional image of elementary school teachers.

Conclusion

In an effort to overcome some of the limitations of previous research on union militancy, this paper conceptualized militant behavior as a strategic choice occurring within a specific organizational context which involves collective action. Using this conceptualization, we examined the affect of various organizational factors (i.e., individual and positional attributes of the staff, rewards, bureaucratization, work demands, promotional structure, and union and professional identity of the staff) on the willingness of elementary and secondary school teaching staffs to engage in militant behavior over compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative.

The results of our analysis lend strong support to this approach to the study of teacher militancy. First, differences in predictors between militancy over compensation issues and militancy over issues of professional prerogative highlight the strategic choice aspect of militant behavior. Militancy is not



an all or nothing phenomenon — it is a tactic chosen to obtain a specific outcome in a particular situation. Second, each of the organizational models was shown to predict to militancy, with different predictors emerging at the elementary and secondary school levels. This accentuates the importance of the organizational context. Finally, the differences elementary and secondary school staffs also underscores the notion of militancy as a form of collective behavior. Teachers are not a monolithic interest group. A union is a coalition of interest groups ⁴¹ and successful union action requires that the union be able to mobilize each of its constituent interest groups.

In this regard, one of the more interesting aspects of our findings is the contrasting images of militant elementary and secondary school teaching staffs which emerge. The results suggest that appeals to elementary school staff should be couched in terms of professional improvement and the teacher as a professional, regardless of the issue. In contrast, appeals to secondary school teachers should be issue specific rather than broad based.

This paper has some obvious limitations. First, by aggregating issues into compensation issues and issues of professional prerogative we may be underplaying the variation which may emerge across specific issues. Second, by using our measure of militancy as a scale, we are unable to focus on the specific tactical choices which may be made in terms of militant behavior. Both of these limitations are due, in large part, to our use of cross-sectional survey data. Ideally, our conceptualization of militancy as strategic choice should be pursued using in-depth longitudinal case studies. In that way, one would be able to address questions related to pattern bargaining and the trade-off of issues, while examining the impact of the



organizational context, and the context of the labor-management relationship in particular, in more detail. Despite these limitations, however, we believe that this research supports the validity of this approach to militancy and is deserving of further investigation.



Elementary Schools (N=42)

Secondary Schools (N=45)

Var	iable	Items included*	Mean	Low/High	Standard Deviation	Mean	Low/High	Standard Deviation
Α.	Compensation	1. Getting better salaries	2.85	2.17/3.50	.25	2.71	2.19/3.19	.21
		2. Health and dental insurance						
		3. Compensation for additional duties						
		4. Leaves						
В.	Professional Perogative	1. Class size impact	2.91	2.29/3.40	.24	2.87	2.02/3.37	.24
		2. Preparation time				•		
		3. Required non-teaching duties						
33		4. Evaluation procedures						
		5. Student discipline, student rights						
		6. Getting teachers a say in how they do their jobs						
		 Getting teachers a say in how the administration runs the district 						

^{*} These items follow the statement "For each issue below, please indicate the most severe means you would be willing to approve of to influence the administration." Items are rated on a scale of 1 (strike), 2 (some type of job action), 3 (continue work with formal negotiations), 4 (continue work with informal negotiations), and 5 (give in).

TABLE 2: INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

				Elementary Sc (N=42)	hools	Secondary Schools (N=45)			
Ī	/ariable	Items	Mean	Low/High	Standard Deviation	Меап	Low/High	Standard Deviation	
A.	Individual	1. % below 40	66,28	36.66/86.66	13.77	65.81	38.88/90.90	12.06	
	and Posi- tional	2. % male	16.71	0.0/35.29	8.14	58.52	23.52/84.84	9.75	
	Attributes	3. years in district	10.38	3.50/19.67	2.84	10.47	2.83/14.83		
	4	4. years in position	7.91	2.25/15.83	2.57	9.35	2.67/12.56	1.90	
	Rewards	1. satisfaction with salary	2.28	1.33/3.04	.39	2.58	1.79/3.73	.42	
В.	KC#81U5	2. decisional deprivation	5.24	1.75/8.33	1.86	4.89	1.32/9.87	1.60	
		3. Job involvement	4.05	3.29/4.84	.37	4.12	3.30/5.04	.44	
C.	Bureaucrati-	1. autonomy	. 21	1 (0/2 02	a.e				
	zation	2. role conflict	2.31 4.64	1.62/3.02 3.06/5.81	.35	2.15	1.67/2.55	24	
		i	4.04	3.00/3.01	.56	4.33	2.81/5.01	.58	
D.	Work Demands	1. supervisory responsibility	1.67	1.00/1.50	.13	1.17	1.00/1.54	.13	
		supervise extracurricular activities	1.19	1.00/1.75	.19	1.58	1.25/1.83	.14	
		3. classes too large	2.64	1.71/3.50	.41	2.86	2.13/3.67	. 31	
		4. work hours at home	8.73	4.71/13.83	2.32	9.61	5.61/17.00	2.69	
-									

TABLE 2 Continued:

				Elementary Sc	Secondary Schools				
<u>Variable</u>		Items .	Mean I		Standard Low/High Deviation		Low/High	Standard Deviation	
E.	Promotional structure	1. certainty of promotional opportunity	2.36	1.40/4.00	.51	2.44	1.62/3.11	. 34	
•		rationality of promotion process	2.72	1.8360	.43	2.59	1.43/3.41	.42	
F.	Union and Professional Activity	1. union activity	1.68	1.33/1.93	.12	1.69	1.44/1.94	.11	
35		2. professional activity	1.24	1.00/1.56	.13	1.36	1.04/1.64	.12	
		3. desired union involvement	3.72	3.04/4.42	.28	3.86	3.26/4.31	.26	
		4. desired union involvement professional issues	3.69	3.00/4.66	.31	3.70	3.26/4.12	.20	

TABLE 3: REGRESSION RESULTS

Dependent Variables

ŗ			Elementary Schools (N=42)		Secondary Schools (N=45)				
		Сотг	ensation	Profes	sional ative	Compens	ation	Profes. Perog	
<u>Ir</u>	dependent Variables ,	r	Beta	<u>r</u>	Beta	_ r	Beta	r	Beta
A.	Individual and Positional Attributes							:	;
1.	high % below 40	.11	. 32**	.12	.36**	27	32**	02	24
2.	high % male	24	13	12	.002	11	13	.06	.11
3.	high number of years in district	.26	.67***	.23	,66***	.07	3 1	22	19
4. 9 5	high number of years in position	.001	35**	.01	29	.11	.24	2 1	19
В.	Rewards	:							
1.	low satisfaction with salary	26	29**	08	16	34	13	.12	.41**:
	high decisional deprivation	27	30**	37	-,43***	18	07	47	33**:
	low job involvement	19	01	09	.11	48	39***	41	54**:
	,							,	
C.	Bureaucratization								
1.	low autonomy	06	.04	01	.08	11	03	28	16
2.	low conflict	.47	.48***	.40	.42***	.32	.31**	.52	.48**:

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'[]A	BLE 3 Continued:	Comp	Profess Compensation Peroga		ssional gative	_		Professiona Perogative	
_		ľ	Beta	r	Beta	r	Beta	r	Beta
D.	Work Demands								
1.	high supervisory responsibility	13	24 *	13	23*	.25	_31***	.20	.21
2.	high supervision of extra- curricular activities	04	06	04	07	06	11	.09	.04
3.	low perception of class size as too large	.28	.39***	. 34	. 42***	 22	22*	.19	.17
4.	high number of hours worked at home	.28	.31***	.0002	.06	.17	•30**	.02	.03
E.	Promotional Structure				•				
	high certainty of promotional opportunity	.28	.13	.28	.10	.08	14	.18	12
2,	high rationality of promotion process	.36	.29*	.41	.36**	.37	.45***	.56	.62***
F.	Union and Professional								
1.	high union activity	45	-,40***	4 6	29***	-,46	41***	49	41**:
2.	high professional activity	.23	. 22. k*	.25	.26***	.26	.32***	.03	.15
3.	high desire for union involvement in compénsation issues	23	 06	14	, 21	 05	:	.27	.59 ** :
. 4	high desire for union involvement in professional issues	46	27**	60	~,56***	26	32+**	-,30	 59**
	* p 4.10	• 10	5 <i>6</i> 4 <i>1</i>	100		, 20	••		43

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*** p#.01

Footnotes

- 1. R. Schutt. "Models of Militancy: Support for Strikes and Work Actions
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- 2. S. Coles. The Unionization of Teachers. New York: Praeger, 1969.
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- 14. This hypothesis is phrased in terms of the characteristics of the teaching staff rather than the individual. This is in line with our argument that militancy is best seen as a collective action. All subsequent hypotheses will also refer to the organization rather than individual teachers. See the section on "Militancy as Inter-Group Behavior."
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- 24. For example, V. Thompson. Modern Organizations. New York: Random House, 1961; or G. Strauss. "Professionalism and occupational Analysis,"

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- 25. See R. Hall. "Professionalization and Bureaucratization," American Sociological Review, 1968, 33, 92-104; and N. Toren. "Bureaucracy and Professionalism: A Reconsideration of Weber's Thesis," Academy of Management Review, 1976, 1, 36-46.
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- 29. J. Alutto and J. Belasco, "Determinants of Attitudinal Militancy," op. cit.
- 30. Per pupil figures for assessment and expenditures are as follows:

	Mean	•	Low/High
Assessment	\$19,517	<i>jj</i> 3	\$4,265/\$52,761
Expenditures	\$ 2,198		\$1,678/\$4,101

- 31. Some of the smaller rural districts have only one school and would not be included here. For purposes of analysis, middle schools and junior high schools were classified as secondary schools.
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