

Neighborhood Concerns and Mobilization Patterns of Homeowners and Neighborhood Associations

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What issues and concerns of residential community associations (RCAs) compel them to mobilize and lobby local government? Do these patterns vary by RCA type? We argue that they do, and that neighborhood associations face different concerns than homeowners associations (HOAs). We also believe neighborhood associations are more likely to mobilize and interact with municipal government on behalf of the neighborhood. Using survey and interview data of neighborhood association and HOA presidents in Tallahassee, Florida, we find that neighborhood associations mobilize and interact with municipal government to a greater extent than HOAs. The issues and concerns that compel neighborhood associations to mobilize revolve around business/residential encroachment and crime. On the contrary, when HOAs do mobilize and interact with local government, the issues deal with the typical HOA concern of improving property values.

The growth of residential community associations (RCAs), such as homeowners and neighborhood associations, in the development of housing patterns in the United States has been termed a “quiet revolution” (Barton and Silverman 1994). The Community Associations Institute (CAI) estimates that there were 32 times more RCAs in 2013 compared to 1970 (Hur and Bollinger 2015). These organizations vary in terms of their organizational power, and association leaders are in a potential position to use their resources to lobby local governmental bodies for/against certain policies that may affect the neighborhoods they represent. These policies tend to be decisions by the local planning board and/or city council to encourage residential or commercial growth in certain areas of the city. RCAs may mobilize to attempt to prevent such actions by local government. Finally, RCAs may attempt to work with local governmental bodies to solve pertinent issues and problems in their neighborhood (Berry, Portney, and Thomson 1993; Crenson 1983; Davis 1991; Lenk et al.

2002) or to engage in the coproduction of goods and services (Lelieveldt et al. 2009). They are fundamental actors in neighborhood mobilization and development (Crew, Kim, and Schweitzer 1999; Rich 1980). The two most common RCAs are neighborhood and homeowners associations (HOAs). How do these RCAs vary in terms of their neighborhood issues and concerns, and how and for what issues/concerns do RCAs mobilize?

This study examines the process of mobilization of RCAs in relation to neighborhood issues and concerns. Our interview and survey data from Tallahassee, Florida, cover more than 65 RCAs, and we examine the issues of importance for them that may cause the neighborhood residents or the RCA to mobilize. For example, crime in a neighborhood may provoke residents to mobilize to combat misconduct in partnership with the local police. Additionally, a new business or large residential development may also compel residents to organize and lobby local government to prevent such encroachment.

Mobilization in the neighborhood may take many different forms. It may involve numerous residents organizing to combat a problem/issue in the neighborhood or interacting with local government en masse to achieve a certain outcome. RCA representatives may also act as delegates of the neighborhood and lobby or interact with local government. We consider all types of mobilization in the neighborhood – protests, letter writing, attending city meetings, working with other neighborhoods, etc. These efforts seek to achieve the goal of causing change or a response from local government for the neighborhood.

We believe that issues vary by association type, with neighborhood associations facing different issues than HOAs. We hypothesize that neighborhood associations are more likely to mobilize in response to crime and residential and business encroachment into the neighborhood compared to HOAs. We believe HOAs will be less likely to mobilize, and when they do, to address quality of life issues, like neighborhood aesthetics and improvements that aim to improve property values. These differences, we believe, stem from varying resource capabilities and structural strengths, whereby HOAs tend to enjoy an advantage over neighborhood associations. Our article proceeds as follows: First, we explain the differences between neighborhood associations and HOAs, and then we review the extant literature concerning RCA concerns and mobilization activities, offering a justification for the need to learn more about these concerns and activities not addressed in the literature. We then cover the theoretical model we use to develop and test our hypotheses. Next, we discuss our methodology and the results from our study. Finally, we conclude with the overarching findings and implications for future research.

RCA Types Neighborhood Associations v. Homeowners Associations (HOAs)

Two of the most common RCAs are neighborhood associations and HOAs, and they have stark differences. The main difference between neighborhood and homeowners associations lies in how they are organized and the legal powers entitled to each form of organization, with HOAs typically having more formalized governmental structures. HOAs are established when developers buy large tracts of land and build a subdivision of homes. Developers then draw up the articles of incorporation and covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) that stipulate the governing structure of the HOA and the activities allowed and prohibited in the neighborhood (e.g., color of homes, height of fencing, yard signage) (Blakely and Snyder 1997; Franzese 2000; McCabe 2005, 2011; Nelson 2005; Sterk 1997; Winokur 1989). As residents populate the new subdivision, the developer devolves authority and enforcement of the CC&Rs to an elected board of directors composed of residents of the neighborhood (McCabe 2005; Sterk 1997). The CC&Rs are a type of binding contract upon residents, and the HOA board usually has authority to enforce them through

liens and other legal recourses (Franzese 2000; Hyatt 1985, 2000; Nelson 2005; Sterk 1997; Winokur 1989) depending upon state statute (Natelson 1989). Residents purchasing a home within the jurisdiction of an HOA must abide by the legal stipulations set forth in the CC&Rs and pay involuntary fees to the association (Hyatt 1975, 1985, 2000; McCabe 2005, 2011; McKenzie 1994; Nelson 2005; Sterk 1997).

Neighborhood associations, on the other hand, are far less formal than HOAs, and their inception is different than the creation of HOAs (McCabe 2005; Scheller 2015a, 2015b; Sterk 1997). Neighborhood associations often form by a grassroots effort of residents organizing to overcome a particular problem or issue in the neighborhood, like crime, blight, morale, or business encroachment. While neighborhood associations often have bylaws, they do not carry the legal powers of HOAs' CC&Rs. Additionally, while HOAs rarely dissolve due to the requirement of enforcing the articles of incorporation and CC&Rs filed with the state, neighborhood associations may dissolve once an issue is solved or residents lose interest. Ultimately HOAs are a more formalized form of neighborhood governance, with greater structure and more contractually binding rules and regulations.

What's Left to Learn?

Neighborhood residents may solve community problems by becoming collective actors through RCAs (Rich 1980). Past research in this subfield finds that RCAs represent a human resource base for neighbors to mobilize against the building of undesirable facilities and objectionable land use in their neighborhoods (Mitchell and Carson 1986). Another example of an activity undertaken by RCAs, lobbying, constitutes a tactic through which these collective actors participate in contention against authority (Hawkins, Percy, and Montreal 2010) or in favor of specific issues. Research over the past two decades addresses these topics, but there are holes in the literature.

In one of the first studies of neighborhood association issues and concerns, Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) adeptly study the issues of neighborhood associations that compel them to become political actors. They also examine urban v. suburban differences in several cities in New York. For urban associations, the top four concerns are street/sidewalk maintenance, cleanliness, traffic/parking, and parks/playgrounds. On the contrary, the top four issues for suburban associations (not to be confused with HOAs) are industrial/commercial encroachment, residential land use development, traffic congestion/parking, and personal safety. The older, urban neighborhoods concern themselves with aging infrastructure and ensuring that the neighborhood is clean and safe for resident recreation. The wealthier and newer suburban neighborhood associations focus their worry on growth in the neighborhood vicinity, and seek to maintain the residential nature of the neighborhood.

After the Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) study, most research moved away from understanding the variety of issues and concerns for RCAs, and focused more on specific issues, and how RCAs overcame them. Contemporary studies provide information on neighborhood association and local government interactions (Chaskin 2003; Chaskin and Abunimah 1999; Hur and Bollinger 2014; Lenk et al. 2002; Logan and Rabrenovic 1990); effectiveness of neighborhood council and association constituency representation (Jun and Musso 2013; Jun and Shiao 2012; Swindell 2000); and even the neighborhood organizational, demographic, and citizen characteristics that compel residents to engage in collective action in neighborhood and RCA activities (Christens and Speer 2011; Foster-Fishman et al. 2007; Swaroop and Morenoff 2006). Embedded within a few of these recent publications are discussions of neighborhood issues and concerns that compel RCAs to act.

Results from Hur and Bollinger's (2015) case study of five neighborhood associations in Greenville, North Carolina, largely mirror the results of Logan and Rabrenovic (1990). Urban neighborhood associations concern themselves with protecting the residential nature of the neighborhood in the face of encroachment from developers and a local university. The wealthier suburban neighborhood associations (not HOAs) concern themselves with few issues other than protecting the upscale appearance of the neighborhood. Jun and Musso (2013) study Los Angeles neighborhood councils, focusing on how concerns vary across neighborhoods of different socioeconomic status. They find that low-income neighborhood councils predominantly focus on organizational maintenance/development and creating a sense of community in the neighborhood. As with previous studies, land use is also important, but not only for low-income councils. They argue that a U-shaped relationship exists between income and concern for land use, with both low-income and high-income neighborhoods concerned with development activities and locally unwanted land uses in the neighborhood.

While these rigorous studies provide useful information, their focus is solely on neighborhood associations or their related neighborhood councils. We seek to expand on this literature by offering a comparative perspective, where the issues and mobilization of neighborhood associations are compared and contrasted with their similar, but more formally organized, counterparts of HOAs at the same point in time. Both types of organizations exist and operate in the same municipal setting. Within the same economic, demographic, and municipal governmental setting, we attempt to see what issues and concerns are important for these vastly different organizations, and how they go about solving them at one point in time. To our knowledge, no study exists that examines the issues and mobilization activities of HOAs and neighborhood associations in the same context at the same time; most studies have focused the analysis on only one type of organization (typically neighborhood associations).

What Issues/Concerns Drive RCA Mobilization?

As previously mentioned, one of the reasons for the growth in neighborhood collective action and residential community associations is urban development projects by the city (Mesch and Schwirian 1996) or by commercial and/or residential developers. These examples of encroachment affect established neighborhoods, and residents may organize to counter city policies that affect their neighborhoods. Such neighborhoods are often referred to as Not-In-My-Back-Yard neighborhoods (NIMBYs) (Fischel, 2001). Groups in these neighborhoods stand in opposition to community projects that alter the character of the neighborhood. Several studies document resident and RCA activism in response to issues affecting their neighborhood. RCAs predominantly mobilize and lobby municipal government concerning land use (Jun and Musso 2013; Logan and Rabrenovic, 1990). Examples include mobilization dealing with radioactive waste sites (Kraft and Clary, 1991), hospital zoning (Martin, 2004), high-density housing (Nguyen, 2009), and university expansion (Hur and Bollinger, 2015), among others. Crime (Foster-Fishman et al., 2007; Gilster, 2014; Venkatesh, 2000), community planning (Chaskin and Greenberg, 2009; Sirianni, 2009), and public service provision (Fontan et al., 2009; Logan and Rabrenovic, 1990; Marwell, 2004, 2007) are also common issues that compel RCAs to mobilize and lobby local government. We expect land use (encroachment), crime, and community development issues to be the main concerns for which neighborhood associations mobilize.

A motivating factor for the creation of some RCAs (particularly HOAs) is resident desire to protect and enhance neighborhood property values (Boudreaux and Holcombe, 2002; Frazier, 1984, 1989; Lang and Danielsen, 1997; Low 2003; McKenzie, 1994; Pendall,

1999). HOAs focus more of their efforts on improving property values as compared to neighborhood associations (Scheller 2015a), and they have the legal powers to enforce their CC&Rs. The purpose of these binding contracts is to preserve the neighborhood and to protect property values (Boudreaux and Holcombe, 2002; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Low, 2003) by forcing residents to credibly commit to the stipulations of the contract (Hughes and Turnbull, 1996a, 1996b). We expect HOAs to focus on property values and the enforcement of the restrictive covenants compared to neighborhood associations.

NPE Model

The neighborhood political ecology model (NPE) is one theoretical lens through which to understand and analyze RCA responses to pressing issues (Mesch and Schwirian, 1996). This model offers an explanation concerning how RCAs may be able to respond to potential changes or threats to the neighborhood stemming from governmental policies or issues occurring in the area. According to Mesch and Schwirian (1996), “The NPE model focuses on both the processes of social organization within the neighborhood as it prepares to deal with important local issues and with the social action of the neighborhood in the pursuit of local goals for neighborhood structures and change.” (p. 469). Their model has three factors: neighborhood social ecology, organizational complexity, and coalitional embeddedness. While they examine the effectiveness of collective action and mobilization, we use their model to examine when and how neighborhoods mobilize.

The social ecology component focuses on the neighborhood’s social and economic milieu. The model predicts that wealthier and Caucasian neighborhoods will be more successful in organizing for effective social action. Additionally, if residents are more interested in neighborhood issues, and if there are threats to the neighborhood, the NPE model predicts more effective social action.

The organizational complexity component deals with the structure of the RCA. The model predicts that organizations with greater complexity will be in a better position to respond to neighborhood issues and promote social action.

Finally, coalitional embeddedness refers to the degree that RCAs work with other organizations in the area to solve neighborhood problems. The model predicts that the more an organization works with other organizations, the more effective it will be in social action.

Mesch and Schwirian (1996) test the claims of the NPE model in Columbus, Ohio, neighborhoods, and find that neighborhood demographics, organizational strength, and organizational coalition building affect the ability of a neighborhood to enact change for the neighborhood. Like Mesch and Schwirian (1996), we examine neighborhood demographics as they apply to neighborhood organizations, along with organizational characteristics and issues of concern that may compel residents and their associations to mobilize. Unlike Mesch and Schwirian (1996), who focus on effectiveness, our focus is on when and for what types of issues associations and residents mobilize. Vast differences likely exist between neighborhood and homeowners associations in their mobilization patterns, and we hypothesize:

H1: HOAs will be more concerned with property values than neighborhood associations, which will be more concerned about crime and residential/business encroachment.

H2: HOAs will be less likely to mobilize than neighborhood associations.

H3: Even though HOAs are less likely than neighborhood associations to mobilize, HOA mobilization efforts will address neighborhood aesthetics and quality of life issues (to enhance property values) compared to neighborhood associations, which will mobilize to address residential/business encroachment and crime.

We do not dispute Mesch and Schwirian's (1996) findings that neighborhoods with more resources and higher socioeconomic status will have more effective collective action and achieve their goals better than poorer neighborhoods. We agree with this logic and use it to develop and test our hypotheses. However, we believe that these resource-rich and wealthy neighborhoods, usually represented by HOAs, will not need to mobilize as much as neighborhood associations. This is the reasoning behind our second hypothesis. The first hypothesis is based upon previous findings in the literature. We believe that HOAs will be more concerned about property values than neighborhood associations. Of course, HOAs may need to mobilize to address neighborhood issues, especially issues that impact property values. As such, we believe that when they do mobilize, it will be for more aesthetic and quality of life issues, like drainage, street design, and bicycle lanes – all elements that affect property values. On the other hand, we expect neighborhood associations to mobilize for issues related to crime and residential and business encroachment, hence our third hypothesis.

Methods

We used a mixed-methods approach to answer our research questions and to test our hypotheses. The use of survey methodology allowed us to obtain data on a wide array of variables concerning the issues, activities, and organizational characteristics of RCAs in Tallahassee. With a sufficient sample size, we used the survey data to conduct quantitative analyses to compare neighborhood associations with HOAs. Even with our extensive survey, respondents were not able to explain their answers or go into greater detail, sacrificing some richness in the data, and preventing us from understanding the intricacies of the specific issues and mobilization activities of the surveyed RCAs. Therefore, we also interviewed neighborhood representatives from those RCAs who returned a survey to more fully understand the nature, extent, and degree of mobilization and the degree of importance and urgency of the issues they face.

The survey contained questions about the association's governance structure; budgetary items; relationship with local government; activities/services/amenities provided to residents; and neighborhood concerns. This survey is available in the Appendix, and the specific survey item or question is noted when analyzed in the discussion of the results. Interview questions are also located in the Appendix, and, as with the analysis of the survey items, we note the specific interview question when pertinent in the discussion of the results. The format of the interviews was semi-structured, with a core set of questions and the option to further probe respondents based upon their responses to the questions.

Neighborhood and homeowners association presidents were identified through a list compiled by the Tallahassee, Florida, Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Affairs Department. This list (total of 147 RCAs) identifies all RCAs that registered with the City of Tallahassee. We sent a survey to these 147 association presidents. A reminder postcard and second wave of surveys were also sent to non-responders. A total of 73 neighborhood and homeowners association presidents responded to the survey, resulting in a 49.66% response rate. Two responses came from condominium associations and were dropped from consideration, along with surveys returned indicating that the association no longer existed.

Therefore, the survey contains responses from 35 neighborhood association presidents and 33 HOA presidents.

To determine if our survey and interview respondent neighborhoods are representative of the population of RCAs in Tallahassee, we compiled information from the 2010 U.S. Census. We identified the census tracts of the RCAs that returned a survey and those neighborhoods where a representative agreed to be interviewed. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on median household income, poverty levels, and percent minority in the neighborhoods in both the interview data and survey data taken from their census tracts.

General patterns emerge for all of the demographic and economic variables for the neighborhoods in the interview and survey datasets. In terms of median household income, HOAs and neighborhood association neighborhoods in both the interview and survey data exceed the median household income for the City of Tallahassee (\$39,524), with HOAs having a higher median household income than neighborhood associations. For the survey respondents, the median household income was \$74,684 for HOA neighborhoods and \$43,119 for neighborhood association neighborhoods. For the interview data, the median household income was \$72,167 for HOA neighborhoods and \$41,310 for neighborhood association neighborhoods. The percent of population living below the poverty level is lower for HOAs and neighborhood associations compared to the City of Tallahassee in both datasets. HOAs in the datasets have exceptionally low levels of poverty, but this is not an unexpected observation. Not surprisingly, HOA neighborhoods have fewer minorities than neighborhood associations and the City of Tallahassee. Minorities comprised 42.6% of Tallahassee’s 2010 population. For our survey data, the average percent minority of the HOA neighborhoods surveyed was 29.91%, and 30.85% for the HOA neighborhoods interviewed. The average percent minority in the surveyed neighborhood association neighborhoods was 48.74% and 43.46% for the interviewed neighborhood associations.

These figures should not be a cause of concern; they simply note that HOA neighborhoods tend to be wealthier and have fewer minority residents than neighborhood association neighborhoods and the larger city. This finding is not surprising given the historical literature suggesting that HOA neighborhoods are demographically atypical of their city. The demographic and economic characteristics do not vary drastically between the interview dataset and survey dataset, so we are not concerned about systematic biases between the datasets.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics (2010 Census Tract Level Data)

	<i>Interview Data</i>		
	Median Household Income	% Living below Poverty Level	% Minority
HOAs (N = 10)	\$72,167	8.69	30.85
Neighborhood Associations (N= 14)	\$41,310	24.04	43.46
City of Tallahassee	\$39,524	30.2	42.6

Table 1 Cont'd Survey Data

	Median Household Income	% Living below Poverty Level	% Minority
HOAs (N= 33)	\$74,684	7.71	29.91
Neighborhood Associations (N = 35)	\$43,119	20.53	48.74
City of Tallahassee	\$39,524	30.2	42.6

Results

RCA Missions/Formation

As an initial test of our first hypothesis, we first asked all association presidents about the mission of their organization and/or why their organization formed as a means of understanding the central focus of the association. The missions and reasons for inception showcase the types of concerns and issues the associations constantly address or prepare to address.

In contrast to the HOAs in our interview dataset, the reasons for formation and mission of neighborhood associations differed drastically and were much more varied. Almost two-thirds of the neighborhood associations we interviewed indicated that they formed in response to residential or business encroachment or that their main mission was to help mitigate and prevent such encroachment. A neighborhood association president in a growing area of the city indicated the initial reason for formation and continued mission is the fight against encroachment:

Originally [our mission] when it was set up, it was to preserve the integrity and the beauty and keep business encroachment out...We've had problems with [redacted business development], because they've actually got some of the homes – used to be homes – rezoned into businesses. A lot of the encroachment is right on the edge of the neighborhood...We like the [redacted business development]. This is a walking neighborhood. We just walk down to the restaurants and bars and stuff, you know. We don't dislike it; we just don't want any more homes to be rezoned.

Another association president aptly described the concern for preserving the residential nature of the neighborhood and preventing future business encroachment as the reason for formation:

The association formed at a time when residential preservation became important. It formed at a time when a woman in the neighborhood was trying to change her zoning to mixed-use C, which would have allowed anything up to light industrial. We started having meetings.

A second major theme in neighborhood association missions was advocacy and representation with the city. Over one-third of association presidents described their mission and/or reason for organization within this broad category. One representative of a low-income

neighborhood described the reason for formation of the association, and later expounded on how the organization deals with the community on a homeless problem:

We were formed to be an advocate for the community and also to develop the local plan for us to follow...The other thing is homelessness...Every day you got 'em all along that [street]. They in the shelter at night and then they hang on the street there all day long. And that's not a good image for the community...[W]e've tried to talk to the Shelter, but we're trying to tell it's in the wrong place and stuff, but they kind of think that it's the right place...

A final common mission of neighborhood associations was to improve morale in the neighborhood – typically through socials and potluck dinners. These three predominant missions – encroachment prevention, advocacy, and morale improvement – are typical of the common themes presented by Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) in one of the first studies of neighborhood associations. They also confirm the importance of land use concerns in Jun and Musso (2013), Hur and Bollinger (2015), and Logan and Rabrenovic (1990).

For HOAs, nearly every president indicated that a developer formed the organization and entrusted the board of directors of the HOA to govern. HOA presidents also indicated that the mission of their associations and part of their administrative responsibilities is CC&R enforcement. One HOA president succinctly stated the reason for the association's formation and mission that mirrored most of the responses from other HOA presidents:

Basically, like most of them, it was to protect property values and the appearance of the neighborhood and to provide some guidance as to how the neighborhood should function so that individuals don't detract from the overall appearance of the neighborhood, nor do they detract from the property values of the adjacent neighbors.

Absent in every HOA president interview when asked about the reason for formation or main mission of the association is any discussion about lobbying, interacting with the city on behalf of the residents, or helping residents mobilize. Property values were the dominant topic.

Perceptions of association missions provide initial support for our first hypothesis that HOAs are more concerned with property values than neighborhood associations, which will be more concerned about crime and residential/business encroachment. However, missions do not reveal current issues and concerns, so we also asked presidents about some of the main concerns of their association. These concerns and issues may provide an impetus for mobilization and are a further test of our first hypothesis.

RCA Concerns/Issues

The perceptions of RCA presidents reveal vast differences between HOAs and neighborhood associations in terms of their concerns and the issues they face. In sum, neighborhood associations have concerns and issues that are much more conducive to organizing and mobilizing to address their concerns. Table 2 shows the main issues and concerns for each type of RCA based upon the interviews. Neighborhood associations tend to have more common concerns and issues that differ vastly from HOAs. HOA interviewed did have concerns, but very few concerns became common themes across the HOAs.

Not surprising, and in confirmation of our first hypothesis, neighborhood association presidents expressed more concerns regarding encroachment, rezoning, and general land use. Over 64% of the neighborhood association presidents interviewed identified this category as a main concern or issue for the neighborhood. Another common theme was crime. One association president identified both in his response:

Well, crime is always an issue. Keeping crime down. A couple years ago, we had a spat of crime and got neighborhood crime watch people meetings together...We're next to the [redacted street name] housing project, and some other low-income neighborhoods to the south. So, we're always concerned about crime in the neighborhood...Another concern we have is the impact of development surrounding the neighborhood or wanting to creep into the neighborhood. Rezoning issues – rezoning residential property to multi-family or to commercial – so there's always those issues that we're concerned with.

Table 2 Main Concerns and Issues for RCAs

Neighborhood Associations	HOAs
1. Encroachment/Rezoning/Land Use: 9 (64.3%)	1. Covenants/Property Values: 4 (40%)
2. Crime: 7 (50.0%)	2. Drainage: 3 (30%)
3. Traffic/Speeding: 4 (28.6%)	3. Streets/Parking: 2 (20%)
4. Streets/Sidewalk Maintenance: 4 (28.6%)	4. Appearance/Beauty: 2 (20%)
5. Code Violations: 3 (21.4%)	

Despite not having to deal with rezoning or encroachment, another neighborhood association president in a middle-income neighborhood expressed readiness and resolve in case the neighborhood faces the issue in the future.

I also [became president], because I thought it may be useful if there were zoning issues or like things [where] we needed to band together for, for whatever reason, to fight for or to fight against. Just some issues, say a Wal-Mart tried to, I don't know, take over part of our neighborhood, and we didn't want it to. Or something like that, or a gas station.

Few common themes emerged in the concerns and issues of HOAs. The most cited concern/issue was enforcing covenants and the protection of property values. During a discussion about CC&Rs and property values, one HOA president discussed filing suit against an advertising agency:

We are also responsible for a number of commercial properties with [the neighborhood]. One of the major issues that we have – deeply involved in a lawsuit is against [redacted business name]. They put a billboard at our entrance, at one of our properties, right next to our property, and the covenants for that particular property says that they've got to come before the Architectural Control Committee for approval for any structure. When we saw that was going up, we sent them a letter to cease and desist until they came before the Architectural Control Committee. They refused.

The second most common concern/issue of HOAs was drainage. The City of Tallahassee receives substantial rainfall each year, and some neighborhoods suffer from poor drainage, leading to flooded streets and, sometimes, homes. Surprisingly, neighborhood associations did not mention drainage as a main concern in interviews, but this issue may be inferior to crime and encroachment for these associations. The other two common themes mentioned by HOA presidents were streets/parking and neighborhood appearance/beauty. Only one HOA mentioned encroachment/rezoning as a main concern. From these examples, it appears that HOAs mainly deal with enforcing the CC&Rs in the name of improving property values, and also deal with aesthetic needs of the neighborhood that enhance quality of life. They are much less concerned about encroachment issues than their neighborhood association counterparts. Even when probed about the encroachment creeping into the neighborhood, an HOA president echoed the sentiment of most other presidents in the interviews: *“Probably not, because I don't think it is possible. The covenants would restrict it.”*

These results, along with the findings concerning RCA missions, provide support for our first hypothesis that HOAs are more concerned with property values than neighborhood associations, which are more concerned about crime and residential/business encroachment. They also confirm some of the findings of previous studies, and elucidate differences from previous research. Neighborhood associations continue to be concerned with land use in the form of residential and business encroachment in the same manner described by Logan and Rabrenovic (1990), Jun and Musso (2013), and Hur and Bollinger (2015). In contrast to these studies, neighborhood associations appear to consider crime prevention a major concern. Neighborhood associations also appear to have as a main mission improving a sense of community among residents. This issue was not one of the top concerns for neighborhood associations in the Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) study, but our finding comports with results from Jun and Musso's (2013) study of Los Angeles neighborhood councils.

RCA Mobilization

Which type of association is more likely to mobilize and attend city meetings and further interact with city government? The results from our survey clearly show that neighborhood associations are more likely to mobilize and to interact with local government compared to HOAs. Table 3 depicts statistical tests for the relevant survey items. We use chi-square when comparing HOAs to neighborhood associations on nominal dependent variables. When comparing HOAs to neighborhood associations on ordinal dependent variables, we use a nonparametric test, the Wilcoxon Rank Sum (Mann-Whitney Test), since our sample size is less than 100.

As seen in Table 3, neighborhood associations tend to maintain a presence at municipal government meetings compared to HOAs. A total of 79.4% of neighborhood associations in the survey dataset indicated that representatives attend municipal government

meetings, compared to only 51.6% of HOAs. The difference between neighborhood associations and HOAs is significant at the 95% level, as indicated by the chi-square statistic.

Neighborhood associations also engage in more lobbying of local government compared to HOAs. Only 28.1% of HOAs report that they engage in lobbying at the municipal level compared to 48.6% of neighborhood associations. While the difference appears large, the chi-square statistic is only significant at the 90% level. Association presidents may have different ideas about lobbying, hence the noise in the data and lack of significance. Some presidents may assume lobbying involves giving money to campaigns and/or engaging in formal contacts with local government representatives. Other presidents may view lobbying as simply contacting local officials or attending meetings and expressing opinions.

Two other survey items may help elucidate these differences. Also shown in Table 3 are the responses to the statement, "The association is an effective conduit between residents and city and county governments." Over 82% of neighborhood association presidents either agree or strongly agree to this statement compared to only 51.5% of HOA presidents. This variable is measured at the ordinal level, so the best nonparametric test is a Wilcoxon Rank Sum test. Since the variable is coded from -2 (Strongly Disagree) to +2 (Strongly Agree), the percentage in the parentheses indicates the probability that HOAs score higher or show higher agreement on this variable than neighborhood associations. The test statistic is significant at the 95% level, and HOAs are only 36.1% more likely to score higher on this variable than neighborhood associations. Therefore, neighborhood associations are 63.9% more likely to score higher on this variable than HOAs, revealing that neighborhood association presidents indicate more often than HOA presidents that their organization is an effective conduit between residents and local government.

Neighborhood association presidents tend to respond that city officials pay attention to the association's opinions compared to HOA presidents, as indicated in their responses to the statement, "City officials pay attention to the association's opinions." Slightly over 71% of neighborhood association presidents either agree or strongly agree to this statement compared to just more than 45% of HOA presidents. The Wilcoxon Rank Sum test statistic is significant at the 99% level, and neighborhood association presidents are 67.5% (100% - 32.5%) more likely to score higher on this variable than HOA presidents.

These results indicate that neighborhood associations have a stronger presence and relationship with municipal government compared to HOAs.

These findings also provide support for our second hypothesis that neighborhood associations mobilize more than HOAs. However, since HOAs have more resources than neighborhood associations, they may not need to interact and/or lobby local government to the same extent as neighborhood associations. This pattern is evident in Table 3. All neighborhood association presidents report having annual dues less than \$10,000 per year. Over one-half of HOA presidents indicate the same amount of revenue, while the rest report having more than \$10,000 per year. A total of 16.1% of HOA presidents report having annual revenues more than \$30,000 per year. The Wilcoxon Rank Sum test is significant at the 99% level and HOAs are 74.2% more likely to score higher on this revenue variable than neighborhood associations.

Unexpectedly, neighborhood association presidents in our study of Tallahassee's RCAs appear to believe that they can affect local government decisions. They do not express the frustration with local government seen in other communities (see Ault, Gleason, and Riley 2000).

Table 3 Survey Item Responses & Analysis

Survey Item	Response	Neighborhood Assoc.	HOA	X ²	Wilcoxon Rank Sum (Pr(HOA)> Neighborhood Assoc.)
"Assoc. representative(s) attend meetings of city and/or county government."	Yes	27 (79.41%)	16 (51.61%)	5.60**	N/A
	No	7 (20.59%)	15 (48.39%)		
"The assoc. engages in lobbying at the municipal level."	Yes	17 (48.57%)	9 (28.13%)	2.94*	N/A
	No	18 (51.43%)	23 (71.88%)		
Total Annual Revenues	< \$10,000	31 (100%)	16 (51.61%)	N/A	4.363*** (74.2%)
	\$10,000 - \$20,000	0 (0%)	5 (16.13%)		
	\$20,000 - \$30,000	0 (0%)	5 (16.13%)		
	> \$30,000	0 (0%)	5 (16.13%)		
"The assoc. is an effective conduit between residents and city and county governments."	Strongly Disagree	2 (5.71%)	1 (3.03%)	N/A	-2.11**
	Disagree	2 (5.71%)	2 (6.06%)		
	Neutral	2 (5.71%)	13 (39.39%)		
	Agree	20 (57.14%)	12 (36.36%)		
	Strongly Agree	9 (25.71%)	5 (15.15%)		
"City officials pay attention to association opinions."	Strongly Disagree			N/A	-2.60*** (32.5%)
	Disagree	3 (8.57%)	4 (12.12%)		
"The association's main goal is to protect property values."	Agree	14 (40%)	13 (39.39%)		
	Disagree	2 (5.88%)	1 (3.03%)		
	Neutral	4 (11.76%)	0 (0%)		
	Strongly Agree	11 (32.35%)	20 (60.61%)		

N = 68 (35 neighborhood association presidents & 33 HOA presidents – some questions left blank in survey may affect N in table. Parentheses depict % of responses per type of organization.) *p<0.10; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Most surprisingly, our results counter the expectations of the NPE model’s social ecology perspective and organizational complexity perspective. The NPE model predicts that higher socioeconomic status RCAs and those with greater organizational complexity will

more effectively mobilize. In Tallahassee, Florida, as seen in the demographic data from Table 1, HOAs represent the wealthier and more homogenous neighborhoods, yet they are much less likely to mobilize and interact with municipal government than neighborhood associations. HOAs, by their nature, are also much more organizationally complex than neighborhood associations. Multiple interview respondents from HOAs discussed having committees with binding powers not seen in neighborhood associations. We find that greater organizational complexity actually decreases the likelihood of mobilization.

Our findings do not negate the NPE model. Admittedly, Mesch and Schwirian (1996) examine RCA effectiveness, and we examine when and if RCAs mobilize. Our divergence from the NPE model is likely due to a number of factors. First, HOA neighborhoods tend to be wealthier neighborhoods in the outlying suburbs of a central city. The resources available to these associations based upon their constituents and the required association dues likely make it easy for HOAs to solve issues in the neighborhood and/or provide for necessary services, like street lighting, sidewalk repair, neighborhood cleanup, the purchasing of recreational park equipment, etc. Second, HOAs can be viewed as micro-level governments that share some of the characteristics of municipal government (McCabe 2011; McKenzie 1994, 2011). In some respects, HOAs act autonomously and are insular organizations. They establish their own rules; provide urban services like trash collection; and also provide public and commons goods like swimming pools, parks, clubhouses, golf courses, etc. Therefore, their levels of mobilization are likely to be much lower than neighborhood associations.

RCA Mobilization Issues and Activities

Even though HOAs are less likely to mobilize than neighborhood associations, circumstances may arise when HOAs must interact with municipal government in the neighborhood's best interest. However, these circumstances, we hypothesize, are very different from the circumstances leading to neighborhood association mobilization. Most of these issues surround neighborhood improvements that enhance the quality of the neighborhood in the name of property values. This finding is further corroborated by the last item in Table 3, where association presidents were asked to respond to the statement, "The association's main goal is to protect property values." Almost 97% of HOA presidents agree or strongly agree that the main goal of their association is to protect property values. A total of just over 70% of neighborhood associations agree to this statement. The difference is statistically significant at the 99% level, and HOA presidents are 68.5% more likely to score higher on this survey item than neighborhood association presidents.

Table 4 shows the types of mobilization activities of RCAs where the neighborhood residents banded together as a group to meet with the city and/or representatives from the association met with city officials to discuss or lobby on an issue. Neighborhood associations mobilized for more pressing concerns than HOAs, for example, mobilizing against rezoning and residential/business encroachment. In some instances, the neighborhood association mobilized residents to speak out against rezoning and to protest the lack of sidewalks in the neighborhood:

And we have had – we are kind of, I won't call it reactionary, but when an entity attempts to rezone, we actually get the neighbors together and go down to city hall and speak at commission meetings, and we might have 30 or 40 people. And we have demonstrated out on [redacted street name] with signs. We're serious when we do it. We make it fun...one of the ideas

was to get t-shirts and ink them and run over with car tracks so you know, to protect our kids, and don't run over our kids, because we have no sidewalks.

A neighborhood association president in a low-income neighborhood gleefully discussed her success in preventing residential encroachment by lobbying the city:

A few years ago, we lobbied the city for some – against – a builder or contractor [that] wanted to build those high-rise, three or four-story apartments, and of course, we won that, and the city bought that property – 5 or 6 acres of green space, and they have developed it into green space.

These sentiments and activities mirror many of the statements made by neighborhood association presidents in the interview responses. They constantly monitor residential and business encroachment and are seemingly forever in a state of awareness and readiness and resolve to prevent such encroachment.

HOA mobilization activities did not predominantly deal with encroachment. HOAs worked with the city on improving medians in the neighborhood and designing shared roadways versus bike lanes. These issues were almost always mentioned amid discussions of the importance of property values during the interviews. In an interesting case, one HOA president asked the city to clean up pollution in the neighborhood lake. When the city refused, the HOA president conducted research that discovered the lake was a body of the state, and that the city and state must help in pollution mitigation. These activities tend to fall under the quality of life activities to improve property values that we hypothesized HOAs would be engaged in compared to neighborhood associations. With these findings, we are confident that our third hypothesis is supported.

As mentioned previously, HOAs appear to be fairly autonomous. They have their own governance structure and high levels of resources to handle problems. Their mobilization is not as imperative as neighborhood associations. As one president stated when asked if she works with other associations, *“We really, on an ongoing basis, we're just in our own little bubble.”*

Conclusion

Given the growth of residential community associations (RCAs), like neighborhood and homeowners associations, urban scholars continue to study the impacts and importance of these organizations for residents and neighborhoods. Our research builds upon this burgeoning literature by comparing the types of neighborhood concerns of HOAs and neighborhood associations. We ultimately seek to identify when and for what issues these associations mobilize to trigger change in the neighborhood and/or change in local policies that affect the neighborhood. We use Mesch and Schwirian's (1996) neighborhood political ecology (NPE) model to provide the theoretical framework for our hypotheses. Instead of examining how residential community associations vary in terms of their effectiveness in creating change, we examine when they mobilize, and the concerns/issues that compel them to do so. The resource-rich, wealthy, and organizationally-complex neighborhoods that

Table 4 Mobilization Activities of RCAs

Association	Activities	Association	Activities
Neighborhood Association #1	Worked with other associations on Front Porch Initiative; talked with homeless shelter about homeless in neighborhood causing problems	HOA #1	Prevented commercial projects on adjacent land, including Sam’s Club; prevented cut-through traffic on road project.
Neighborhood Association #3	Contacted city to improve streets and drainage	HOA #2	Contacted police department for additional patrols;
Neighborhood Association #4	Prevented rezoning attempts; prevented residential/business encroachment; demonstrated on streets concerning sidewalks; worked with engineering department on street widening	HOA #3	Worked with city on plans for median strips; lobbied city/state to clean up lake pollution; worked with city on bike lanes
Neighborhood Association #5	Letters to and meetings with planning commission on rezoning and growth management; lobbied city for sidewalks, neighborhood fence on main thoroughfare, bike lanes, and vegetation	HOA #5	Asked city to regulate multi-family units in neighborhood; contacted city about drainage issues; petitioned city to get one-side street parking in neighborhood
Neighborhood Association #6	Worked with city on neighborhood historic preservation designation	HOA #6	Worked with city to correct drainage problem
Neighborhood Association #7	Protection against rezoning; worked with police on speeding and city on traffic intrusion; prevented residential encroachment; worked with city to establish green space	HOA #7	Worked with other associations to monitor apartment complex on adjacent land; worked with Animal Control on pit bulls running loose; worked with city on drainage issues
Neighborhood Association #8	Worked with city to improve a park, and to obtain No Parking and neighborhood signs; monitoring of commercial encroachment; initially mobilized/formed against business encroachment	HOA #8	Contacted city about potholes and streetlight problems
Neighborhood Association #9	Worked with city on speed bumps; spoke against street widening; lobbied against commercial development		
Neighborhood Association #11	Lobbied city and filed suit against apartment development		
Neighborhood Association #13	Attempted to get city to provide more amenities, barriers for hazardous waste, speed bumps		

Mesch and Schwirian (1996) argue are more effective at creating change in their neighborhood and in lobbying government are the associations that we believe will be less likely to mobilize. These associations, predominantly HOAs, have far more resources than neighborhood associations. Using a mixed-methods approach with unique survey and interview data, we find that, indeed, HOAs are less likely to mobilize than neighborhood associations. Additionally, we demonstrate that the issues for which these two different associations mobilize are vastly different. HOAs mobilize to address issues that affect quality of life, like improving sidewalks, establishing bicycle lanes, and working with the city government to solve drainage problems. These mobilization activities seem to coincide with the main goals and missions of HOAs as depicted in our survey – to improve property values.

Neighborhood associations mobilize more often than HOAs and for more pressing concerns in the neighborhood, like crime and residential and business encroachment. Neighborhood association presidents in our interview data overwhelmingly show concern for new businesses that may creep into the neighborhood and affect the character of the neighborhood. They remain keenly aware of rezoning attempts by developers and the city, and they mobilize to protect the residential nature of their neighborhood. Unlike HOAs that have legally contractual restrictive covenants that prevent certain types of residential and business development in the neighborhood, neighborhood associations are not able to employ covenants to protect the neighborhood. Their main recourse is to mobilize and petition/lobby the local government.

We do not believe our study negates Mesch and Schwirian's (1996) NPE model. While our results are counter to their model's predictions, we think these contrasting results suggest the need for further theory development of RCA mobilization. Specifically, theoretical development should separate neighborhood associations and HOAs and provide a framework that helps to explain determinants of their mobilization efforts. Answers may already be grounded in classic organizational, collective action, and/or economic theories. Nevertheless, with the growth of RCAs, further theoretical development is needed to advance our understanding of these organizations.

Future research should attempt to create a large-N survey of neighborhood and homeowners associations, measuring their demographic and organizational characteristics, like neighborhood size, number of members, number of households, annual budget/expenses, and political and mobilization activities, much in the same realm as Hunter and Staggenborg (1986). Our study attempts to cover these components in a medium-sized Florida city, but surveying more associations in additional cities throughout the U.S. would enhance the generalizability of this study. The City of Tallahassee is a fairly stable municipality, and the variation in residential community associations in terms of size, fees, and amenities provided (swimming pools, golf courses, gated entrances, social, etc.) is small. They do not resemble the stereotypical associations in California and Southern Florida. Future research should examine how these results compare to other Florida cities, especially those of similar size to Tallahassee, to help determine generalizability of our results.

Future research could examine how RCAs and their issues, concerns, and mobilization activities change over time and across urban contexts. For example, how do RCAs adapt to ever-changing issues, and how do these issues affect the organizational evolution of the organization? RCAs solve or fail to solve problems in the neighborhood, which affects organizational strength and development. They also ebb and flow in terms of the amount of resident participation and degree of organizational viability. Some neighborhood issues empower the RCA, while others effectively dissolve the organization.

Our study is cross-sectional and does not address neighborhood and RCA change over time and may overlook important temporal components. Urban scholars, either independently, or in partnership with organizations like the Community Associations Institute, should work to create a database that surveys and/or tracks RCA issues, activity, and organizational structure over time. The analysis of time-series-cross-sectional or panel data would provide urban scholars a greater understanding of how RCAs affect neighborhood issues and vice versa. Even with these limitations, our study contributes to a growing literature and offers a detailed description of the differences between HOAs and neighborhood associations in terms of their mobilization levels and what issues compel these groups to mobilize. Most studies examine RCAs from a single standpoint – either attempting to understand only neighborhood associations or HOAs. We attempt to study both of these types of organizations simultaneously within a single context to fully understand the systematic differences in the issues of importance to each type of organization and the means with which they address them.

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**Appendix
Neighborhood Association Survey**

In the questions below, I refer to the geographic area covered by your association as a "neighborhood." Also, I use the terms "organization" and "association" interchangeably. Please answer each question as fully as you are able. Please note that questions appear on both sides of the sheets of paper.

- 1. Your current position:
- 2. Circle the item that best describes your association.
 - A. Formed by developer
 - B. Formed by community following establishment of neighborhood
 - C. Formed by city or county government
 - D. Other _____
- 3. Approximate number of households in your association: _____
- 4. Do you consider association management your primary profession?
- 5. Does your association have a professional manager?
- 6. About how many requests do members make to your executive board in a typical month?
 - A. 5 or less
 - B. 6-15
 - C. 16-30
 - D. 30 or more

Now, I'd like to ask you some questions about the governance of your association.

Please circle "yes" or "no" as appropriate

- 7. yesno Association members must live in neighborhood.
- 8. yesno Only property owners may join the organization.
- 9. yesno All members pay equal amounts of dues.
- 10. yesno Amounts of dues are based on the value of property owned.
- 11. yesno Amounts of dues are based on the number of parcels owned.
- 12. yesno A developer pays dues to the association.
- 13. yesno Association representative(s) attend meetings of city and/or county government.
- 14. yesno Representatives report government and agency rulings that affect your association.
- 15. yesno The association engages in lobbying at the municipal level.
- 16. yesno Association management is contracted out to a professional management firm.
- 17. How does your association notify members of meetings? Please circle all that apply.
 - A. Mail
 - B. Postings at location within the community
 - C. Web site
 - D. Hand delivery
 - E. Email
 - F. We do not notify our members
 - G. Other: _____
- 18. When are general meetings usually held (day and/or time)? _____
- 19. How often does your association meet?
 - A. Monthly
 - B. Quarterly
 - C. Annually

- D. Other _____
- 20. About how many members attend a typical association meeting? _____
- 21. Please circle the amount that best reflects your association’s total annual revenues.
 - A. Less than \$10,000/year
 - B. Between \$10,000 and \$20,000/year
 - C. Between \$20,000 and \$30,000/year
 - D. More than \$30,000/year
- 22. To the best of your knowledge, please list the top 3 items that account for your budget:
- 23. Who decides the budget of your association?
 - A. Outside agent
 - B. Board member
 - C. Association member
 - D. Other _____
- 24. How much direct influence do association members have on budgetary decisions?
 - A. Very little influence
 - B. Little influence
 - C. Moderate influence
 - D. Much influence
 - E. Very much influence
- 25. Does the general membership vote on the budget?
- 26. What amenities does membership in the organization make available to members?
Please circle all applicable items.
 - A. Pool
 - B. Racket club
 - C. Tennis courts
 - D. Golf course
 - E. Club house
 - F. Restaurant
 - G. Horse stables
 - H. Child Care
 - I. Parks/Trails
 - J. Security Patrol
 - K. Secured gate
 - L. Website (address: _____)
 - M. Other: _____
- 27. Is the developer of the neighborhood allowed to elect a member or members to the board of your association?
- 28. Does your association have an established procedure that can be used to enforce rules when violations occur?
- 29. Does the association publish a newsletter?
 - A. If yes, how often is it published?
 - a. Monthly
 - b. Quarterly
 - c. Annually
 - d. Other: _____
- 30. Please rate how much influence you have over the goals and activities of your association.
 - A. Very little influence

- B. Little influence
- C. Moderate influence
- D. Much influence
- E. Very much influence

31. Please rate how difficult it is to change/reform association bylaws, assuming members desire the change.

- A. Very little difficulty.
- B. Little difficulty
- C. Moderately difficult
- D. Difficult
- E. Extremely difficult

32. Does the organization have a formal procedure for seeking delinquent dues?

33. Does the association provide services that are not available through city or county government? If so, please explain.

Now, I'd like to know your opinions about your association's activities.

Please circle the response that best reflects your opinion. If you do not know the answer to the question, please leave it blank.

(SA=Strongly Agree; A=Agree; N=Neutral; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree)

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|---|---|---|----|--|
| 34. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association's main goal is to protect property values. |
| 35. | SA | A | N | D | SD | City officials pay attention to the association's opinions. |
| 36. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps maintain the neighborhood's appearance. |
| 37. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps enforce covenants. |
| 38. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association is an effective conduit between residents and city and county governments. |
| 39. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association provides a good venue for citizens to voice their opinions. |
| 40. | SA | A | N | D | SD | Members are more likely to contact association representatives about neighborhood problems than they are city or county officials. |
| 41. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps educate members about local taxes and regulations. |
| 42. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps residents resolve disputes. |
| 43. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps residents get to know one another. |
| 44. | SA | A | N | D | SD | The association helps foster a sense of community. |

General Questions

45. Does your association have a set of written bylaws that I may obtain? If your association has a charter or set of written bylaws, please include a copy with your survey response. If it is available via Internet, please write down the address.

46. May I attend a meeting of your association to gain a better understanding of how your organization operates?

47. Would you be willing to be confidentially and anonymously interviewed for another component of my dissertation?

Association Interview Questions (Not part of survey)

1. What are the boundaries of your association?
2. What is the main mission of your association and/or why was it formed?
3. What are some of the main concerns of your association?
4. Have you worked with or lobbied municipal government entities?
5. Have you received any state/funds for your association?
6. What changes have you seen in the neighborhood in the past 5 years?

The Politics of School Discipline: A Quantitative Analysis of Legalization and Use of Corporal Punishment in the United States

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Corporal punishment in schools has been criticized for many reasons related to lower student achievement, delinquency, and mental health, but is still legal in 19 states. Attitudes towards corporal punishment have been linked to political leanings, fundamentalist religion, socioeconomic status, and rurality. In this study, I test whether political culture and voting patterns are predictive of the legality and frequency of corporal punishment use in schools, utilizing data from the Office for Civil Rights. Independent of median household income, educational attainment, state demographics, and the share of Evangelical Protestants, states with more Republican votes are more likely to legalize school corporal punishment. However, the main driver of the frequency of corporal punishment use is the prevalence of evangelical Protestants in the state.

Corporal punishment is defined as “the intentional use of physical force upon a student as punishment for any alleged offense or behavior,” (DC Public Schools, in Arum 2003). In U.S. schools, corporal punishment tends to take the form of paddling across the buttocks. One way to define corporal punishment, however, takes a harsh stance: “any action taken to punish a child which, if directed at an adult, would constitute an unlawful assault” (Council of Europe 2007, p. 7). Some view corporal punishment as a violent act that many adults sugarcoat with labels such as “smacking” or “spanking” (Council of Europe 2007, p. 7), and its use in schools, juvenile facilities, child care nurseries, and other public or private institutions is opposed by the American Psychological Association (APA)(2015). The APA criticizes the use of corporal punishment for several reasons: there are other, less violent, solutions to corporal punishment; children learn to imitate the behavior of adults so corporal punishment might reinforce violent activity; and this practice can instill “hostility, rage, and a sense of powerlessness without reducing the undesirable behavior.”

In 1977, the Supreme Court ruled in *Ingraham v. Wright* that corporal punishment in schools was constitutional, concluding that the Eighth Amendment ban on cruel-and-unusual punishment did not apply to corporal punishment in public schools. Individual states have the power to ban corporal punishment in schools, but nineteen states still permit it (Strauss 2014). Interestingly, according to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) data collection, 48 states plus the District of Columbia reported at least one incident of corporal punishment in 2011-12, the last year for which OCR data is available (Civil Rights Data Collection). In many places, parents may request exemption from the use of corporal punishment (Farrell, 2015).

Corporal punishment has been under attack for many reasons, including bodily harm, isolation, social control, and disparate impacts on disadvantaged students (Arum 2003), but differences in opinion exist. Republicans, for example, have viewed these arguments as merely the “psychobabble of touchy-feely, feel-good” types (Arum, 2003, p. 29), indicating that legalization and widespread use is possibly related to the political leanings and political culture of the state and local community.

The use of corporal punishment in schools is often justified by the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, meaning literally “in the place of a parent.” Dating back to 1770, this doctrine was applied to educators who may be delegated the authority, by a student’s parent, to discipline that student (Zirkel and Reichner, 1986). A recent attempt to ban corporal punishment failed in Arkansas, with the state’s Department of Education taking a neutral stance, viewing this practice as primarily an issue of “local control” (Caputo, 2017). In addition, in many states where corporal punishment is legal, districts as well as parents within districts are allowed to opt-out, further reinforcing the ideas of both local control and *in loco parentis*. In other words, corporal punishment, in at least some cases, is used because it is desired by the community and/or parents.

In this paper, I do not attempt to examine the potential beneficial or harmful effects of corporal punishment. However, empirical research has suggested that corporal punishment and other strict disciplinary practices could lead to lower student achievement and higher rates of delinquency (Welsh et al. 1997, in Arum 2003). Further, corporal punishment has been linked to psychiatric symptoms and lower overall well-being (Bachar, et.al., 1997); depression (Turner & Finkelhor 1996); aggressive, violent, or antisocial behavior (DuRant, et.al.,1994; Flynn, 1999). At the time of writing, I am not aware of any literature indicating a positive impact of corporal punishment for students.

Literature Review

This paper explores the intersection of politics, demographics, socioeconomic factors, and the use of corporal punishment in schools. Therefore, the literature reviewed for this paper focuses on how three main factors are related to corporal punishment: political culture and voting patterns, fundamentalist Christianity, and other socioeconomic or demographic factors.

The Politics of Corporal Punishment

Political leanings are associated with views on school discipline. Richard Arum (2003) notes that Republicans sometimes view the criticisms of corporal punishment as the “psychobabble of touchy-feely, feel-good” types (p. 29). Previous studies have tested the link between political culture, “the particular pattern of orientation to political action in which each political system is imbedded” (Elazar 1966, p. 79) and the progressiveness of

state policy (Elazar, 1966, 1984; Lieske, 2011; Mondak and Canache, 2014; Sharkansky, 1969).

Elazar (1966) categorizes state political cultures as moralistic, individualistic, traditionalistic, or a combination thereof. Each culture represents different viewpoints on issues such as political participation, bureaucracy, the level of government intervention in the community, and the initiation of new programs (Sharkansky, 1969, p. 68-69). According to Sharkansky, moralists view political participation as a moral issue, something that should be done “for the sake of the commonwealth” (p. 68) and seek programs or policies for the good of the community. Traditionalists want to protect the status quo and the existing power structure. Individualists tend to seek opportunities to improve one’s own position or that of one’s group.

According to Elazar, Southern states are generally dominated by traditionalistic culture, which I hypothesize is correlated with the use of corporal punishment in schools. States in the Northeast and Pacific Coast tend toward moralistic cultures, and states in the Midwest tend toward individualistic cultures. Sharkansky (1969) updates Elazar’s measure of political culture to a numerical index on a 1-9 scale (where 1 = Moralistic and 9 = Traditionalistic), viewing them as opposites (p. 70). However, the explanation of why these are considered opposites is unclear, at best. Instead, it is helpful to group states based on their dominant political culture or explore other potential measures, such as voting patterns, as in the current study.

Is political culture related to the use of corporal punishment? Vandenbosch (1991) finds a link between Sharkansky’s political culture index and use of corporal punishment in elementary and secondary schools in different states. In fact, Vandenbosch claims that over half of the variation in the use of corporal punishment was associated with variations in political culture. This correlational study found a relationship even when controlling for region. In addition, seven of the eight states included in Vandenbosch’s study that prohibit corporal punishment were either moralistic or partly moralistic, by Sharkansky’s index. The current proposed study plans to build on this work by incorporating a measure of Christian fundamentalism, as well as updating the political cultures based on more recent voting patterns.

Christian Fundamentalism/Evangelical Protestantism and Corporal Punishment

Christian fundamentalism began as a movement in the late 19th century and affirms a set of core Christian beliefs, including “the historical accuracy of the Bible, the imminent and physical Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and Christ’s Virgin Birth, Resurrection, and Atonement (Sandeem 2016). Evangelical beliefs, which emphasize the “preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, personal conversion experiences, scripture as the sole basis for faith, and active evangelism (the winning of personal commitments to Christ),” emerged out of Protestantism (Melton 2016). Thus, I use these terms interchangeably throughout this study. Christian fundamentalism, or evangelical Protestantism, has been linked to favorable attitudes towards corporal punishment, both at home and at school, even after controlling for socioeconomic and demographic variables (Grasmick et al. 1991). This relationship may be driven by the belief in biblical literalness (Grasmick et al. 1991; Ellison and Sherkat 1993) and the belief that humans are inherently sinful and deserve punishment (Ellison and Sherkat 1993). Ellison & Bradshaw (2008) find that there is a relationship between religious conservatism and support for corporal punishment even after controlling for sociopolitical conservatism.

Other Socioeconomic and Demographic Factors

Others have studied the link between racial/ethnic diversity and policy (Hero and Tolbert, 1996). Demographic factors may be associated with support for and use of corporal punishment, such as socioeconomic status (McClure and May, 2007), regional variation (Flynn, 1996; Owen, 2005; Straus and Stewart, 1999), and rurality (Grossman, Rauh, and Rivara, 1995).

McClure and May (2007) performed a multivariate regression including a variety of covariates, such as median household income, unemployment rates, population density, rurality, measures of religious and political leanings, and region. They found that median household income was the factor that best predicted the prevalence of corporal punishment in the country. Some have hypothesized that economically strained counties use corporal punishment as an attempt to cost-efficiently punish their students for misbehaviors (Messner and Rosenfeld, 2001).

Data and Methods

While political culture has been linked to the use of corporal punishment in schools (Vandenbosch, 1991), this work did not consider the share of evangelical Protestants in the state. Similarly, other studies on the use of corporal punishment as a function of socioeconomic and regional characteristics (Flynn, 1996; McClure and May, 2007; Messner and Rosenfeld, 2001; Owen, 2005; Straus and Stewart, 1999) did not explicitly incorporate evangelical Protestantism, which is associated with support for corporal punishment in surveys (Grasmick et al., 1991). Further, its relationship to legality or frequency of use of corporal punishment in schools is understudied. Thus, a key contribution of this work is combining multiple measures hypothesized to be related to a preference for corporal punishment to conduct a more careful *ceteris paribus* analysis of the key drivers of its legalization and use. This study tests two hypotheses related to the relationship between the use of corporal punishment and political culture, socioeconomic factors, and other cultural factors. The methods used to test each hypothesis are described separately.

Hypothesis 1: States with traditionalistic political cultures will be more likely to legalize corporal punishment in schools, and will use it more frequently.

I use logistic regression to predict the likelihood that a state has legalized corporal punishment in schools as of the 2011-12 school year. I also use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to predict the number of students in the state (per 100 enrolled) who received corporal punishment at least once during the 2011-12 school year, the most recent year for which OCR data is available. The OCR data includes the number of students who received corporal punishment at least once, so these data represent a lower bound on corporal punishment use to the extent that this type of disciplinary consequence is used repeatedly with the same students. In the OLS regressions, heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are obtained.

In the baseline model, only controls for the dominant political culture will be included (traditionalistic or moralistic, with individualistic as the baseline). Then, I will include the share of votes in the 2008 presidential election that were for the Republican candidate, John McCain. Originally, the intention was to continue to include additional control variables to assess whether political cultures independently predict the legalization and frequency of corporal punishment in schools, conditional on other factors. However,

given the collinearity between political culture and the share of 2008 votes for the Republican presidential candidate, as well as age and datedness of the political culture measure, I focus primarily on Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: States with more Republican votes in the last presidential election will be more likely to legalize corporal punishment in schools, and will use it more frequently.

Related hypothesis: This relationship will be maintained, even after controlling for other factors, such as demographic, economic, and religious characteristics.

In the baseline model, only controls for the percentage of 2008 presidential votes for a Republican candidate will be included. Then, I consecutively add more control variables to assess whether 2008 presidential voting patterns independently predict the legalization and frequency of corporal punishment in schools, conditional on other factors.

To answer Hypotheses 1 and 2, the following types of data are used:

School Environment/ Discipline Data:

- Number of students receiving corporal punishment during 2011-12 school year (OCR)
- Public school enrollment in 2011-12 school year (OCR)
- Percentage of students that are eligible for Federal Free- and Reduced- lunch (National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data), as a proxy for income of students' families

Political Culture Measures:

- Measures of dominant political culture, modified from Sharkansky's scale (1969)
- Voting patterns by political party (percent of votes for Democrats, Republicans, and other in 2008 presidential election (The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration)

Demographic/Economic Data:

- Total state population and racial breakdowns (US Census Bureau 2010) to distinguish whether the political or cultural attributes of states are predictive of legalization and use of corporal punishment above and beyond simply demographic factors
- Median household income (3-year average from 2009-2011, US Census Bureau), as a proxy for the state's economic status
- Percent of certain religions: Christian, evangelical Protestant, and Catholic (Pew Research Center's 2014 U.S. Religious Landscape Study)
- Educational attainment, the percent of people 25 years or older in 2009 with a high school degree or higher (US Census Bureau)
- Percent of population in state or federal prison in 2010 (US Bureau of Justice Statistics), as a proxy for a state's propensity towards punitive behavior
- Percent of population that is foreign born (2009 American Community Survey) to further control for the demographic characteristics of the population

Table 1 Number of Students Receiving Corporal Punishment in Schools, by state (2011-12 OCR data)

	Students Per 100 Enrolled	Number of States	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Delaware & Hawaii	0	2	4%	4%
Other 39 States & DC	>0 and <=0.05	40	78%	82%
Missouri	0.54	1	2%	84%
Texas	0.57	1	2%	86%
Louisiana	0.65	1	2%	88%
Georgia	0.72	1	2%	90%
Tennessee	1.05	1	2%	92%
Oklahoma	1.49	1	2%	94%
Alabama	3.65	1	2%	96%
Arkansas	4.22	1	2%	98%
Mississippi	6.31	1	2%	100%

Table 1 lists some of the states in order of frequency. Unfortunately, the OCR data reports corporal punishment numbers in terms of the number of students receiving corporal punishment, not the number of instances. For this reason, since students may receive corporal punishment more than once, these numbers are just a lower bound on corporal punishment use. Two states (Delaware and Hawaii) reported zero students receiving corporal punishment, 39 states plus the District of Columbia reported less than 0.05 students per 100 students received corporal punishment at least once, and 9 states had more than 0.5 students per 100 students receive corporal punishment. Mississippi reportedly used corporal punishment most frequently in 2011-12 (6.31 students per 100 students), followed by Arkansas (4.22 students per 100 students).

Results

Hypothesis 1: States with traditionalistic political cultures will be more likely to have legal corporal punishment in schools, and will use it more frequently.

I conduct logistic regression to assess whether political culture predicts the legality of corporal punishment in schools. When only the indicators of political culture are included, traditionalistic political culture does appear related to whether or not corporal punishment is legal in schools. As indicated in column 1 of Table 2, which reports marginal effects, a state with a traditionalistic-dominant political culture, relative to a state with an individualistic-dominant political culture, has a 40.4 percentage point higher chance of legal school corporal punishment (significant at the 95% confidence level).

Table 2 Hypothesis 1 (Political culture as predictors of corporal punishment legality and frequency of use)

	Logistic Regression of Likelihood of Legal Corporal Punishment in Schools (Marginal Effects)		OLS Regression, Predicting Students (Per 100) Receiving Corporal Punishment		OLS Regression, Predicting Students (Per 100) Receiving Corporal Punishment	
	All States		All States		States Where CP is Legal	
	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6
Moralis	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
t	0.2	0.2	15	58	13	49
	57	84	6	9	7	
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.6
	82	99	12	16	12	08
			2			
Traditio	0.4	* 0.2	1.0	* 0.8	* 1.4	* 1.4
nalist	04	* 8	66	* 59	* 72	* 99
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.6
	72	14	23	68	71	22
		0.0	*	0.0	*	0.0
% Republican		44	*	34	*	81
		9	*	8	*	
		-	-	-	-	-
		0.0		0.0		0.0
		14		14		42
Consta			0.0	* -	0.0	* -
nt			32	* 1.5	* 35	* 4.4
			1	* 75	* 5	* 9
			-	-	-	-
			0.0	-	-	-
			07	0.6	0.0	2.3
			9	45	11	04
Observ	48	48	48	48	19	19
ations						
Pseudo	0.2		0.1	0.1		0.0
R-	29	0.5	51	95	0.0	72
squared	8	2	9	7	55	9

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Percent Republican is republican share of votes in 2008 presidential election on a 0-100 point scale. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

However, once controls are added for the percentage of 2008 presidential votes for a Republican candidate, there is no relationship between the political culture measures and the likelihood of having legalized school corporal punishment (see column 2 of Table 2). Here, we see that voting patterns are associated with legal corporal punishment in schools, even conditional on political culture. These results should be interpreted as the following: a state with a one percentage point increase in Republican votes is associated with an increased likelihood of having legal school corporal punishment of 4.5 percentage points, all else equal.

Why does political culture no longer matter once voting patterns are controlled for? First of all, the Sharkansky (1969) political cultures are largely outdated. Hawaii and Alaska, newly formed states at the time, are not even included in the measures. In addition, changes over time, including an influx of immigrants, and social changes related to non-traditional lifestyles have culminated in a “new political culture” (Leckrone 2013).

Therefore, the 2008 presidential election outcomes may be a more relevant measure of political environments for predicting recent corporal punishment support and activity. While recent voting patterns are more relevant, they are also collinear with the dominant political cultures from Sharkansky (1969). An f-test of the joint significance of Moralistic and Traditionalist indicators reveals that they are jointly insignificant at the 95% confidence level, and therefore can be removed from the model. While columns 3-6 of Table 2 indicate that political culture may still have an influence on the frequency of corporal punishment use, even after accounting for voting patterns, these two factors (political culture and share Republican votes) are still highly correlated. Given that the 2008 measure is more timely and likely more relevant, I focus primarily on Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: States with more republican votes in the last presidential election will be more likely to have legal corporal punishment in schools, and will use it more frequently.

Related hypothesis: This relationship will be maintained, even after controlling for other factors such as demographic, economic, and religious characteristics.

Since the measures of political culture are outdated relative to recent voting patterns, I will discuss the results of Hypothesis 2 in more detail. I begin with the analysis predicting whether corporal punishment is legal in a state's schools. Table 3 indicates that voting patterns within a state (percent of Republican votes) are related to whether or not corporal punishment is legal in schools. Column 1 shows the results from a logistic regression, including only the percent of Republican votes as an independent variable. The results indicate that a ten percentage point increase in the share of votes for a Republican candidate is associated with a large, 41 percentage point increase in the likelihood that corporal punishment is legal.

The strength or magnitude of this relationship, as well as its statistical significance, is somewhat diminished when other covariates are included. However, it remains statistically significant. For example, when median household income (which has a negative relationship with the legality of corporal punishment in schools), a measure of educational attainment (the percent of 25 year olds with a high school degree or higher), and the percent of the population that is non-Hispanic white are included, the relationship between voting patterns and the legality of corporal punishment is roughly around 35 percentage points for each additional ten percentage point increase in the share of Republican votes (see Column 2). In Column 2, the negative coefficient on median household income, although only marginally significant, indicates that economic factors play a role in the legality of corporal punishment above and beyond political leanings, which is consistent with a study conducted in Kentucky (McClure & May 2007). In each column in Table 3, more covariates are added to further estimate whether the share of Republican votes is a consistent driver of the legalization of corporal punishment, and, in all seven columns of Table 3, this estimated relationship was significant and positive. Even in the fullest specification (Column 7), a ten percentage point increase in the share of votes for the Republican 2008 candidate was associated with a 27 percentage point increase in the likelihood of having legal corporal punishment in schools. In this fullest model, median household income remains negatively correlated with legalization, educational attainment is positively related with legalization, the percent of evangelical Protestantism is positively related with legalization, and the percent of the population that is foreign born is positively associated with legalization.

The second part of Hypothesis 2 relates to how voting patterns predict the *frequency* of corporal punishment. The results in Table 4 indicate that, on their own, and with minimal controls, voting patterns do predict the frequency of school corporal punishment use in schools (Columns 1 and 2). In Column 1, the results indicate that a ten percentage point increase in the Republican share of votes is associated with an additional 3.5 students out of 1000 who received corporal punishment at least once.

In Column 2 of Table 4, the estimated relationship between percent Republican votes and the frequency of corporal punishment use is smaller, and educational attainment (the percent of people 25 years or older with at least a high school degree) is negatively associated with frequency of use, indicating that more educated states use corporal punishment less frequently. Starting in Column 3, when the share of evangelical Protestants is included, the percent Republican is no longer significant. In fact, the remaining columns (except for Column 7, which is possibly over-specified and underpowered), indicate that evangelical Protestantism is the main driver of the frequency of corporal punishment use. For example, in Column 6, all else equal, a ten percentage point increase in the share of evangelical Protestants is associated with an additional 3.6 students out of 1000 students who received corporal punishment at least once.

It is useful to check whether the results are similar when limiting the sample to only the states where corporal punishment is actually legal. The results, in Table 5, are sensitive to this sample restriction. Given the low sample size (19 states) in this case, I do not include the full set of covariates, as in Table 4. Column 1 of Table 5 indicates that when I only include the states where corporal punishment is legal in schools, the relationship between the share of Republican votes and frequency of use is actually higher (about 8.6 extra students per 1000 for an additional 10 percent of Republican votes, compared to about 3.5 extra students per 1000 for an additional 10 percent of Republican votes in Table 4). The coefficient in Column 1 is only marginally significant, as a result of a small sample size ($N = 19$). Further, the adjusted R-squared in this model is quite low (0.02), so this model does not have much predictive power.

In Columns 2-7, however, among states with legal corporal punishment in schools, the share of Republican votes is no longer correlated to the frequency of corporal punishment use, all else equal. Column 2 indicates that states with higher median incomes use corporal punishment less frequently, even holding constant the legality of this practice. States with an additional \$1,000 in median household income, conditional on the share of Republican votes, tend to have about 1.7 fewer students per 1000 receiving corporal punishment. And in Column 5, the share of the state that identifies as evangelical Protestant is positively associated with the frequency of use (and even larger than the estimated relationship in Table 4).

Comparing across Tables 3-5, it appears that the political leaning of a state, as measured by the share of 2008 presidential votes for the Republican candidate, is a consistent predictor of whether corporal punishment is legal, but that once a state has already decided to legalize corporal punishment in schools, this Republican share does not drive the frequency of use. While among all schools (Table 4), evangelical Protestantism is the most consistent driver of frequency of corporal punishment use in schools, there is less of a clear story in Table 5, perhaps due to the model being relatively underpowered. In addition, the lack of consistent findings in Table 5 could be due to a high degree of collinearity between the covariates in the model, or it could be that states that legalize corporal punishment already are similar enough in terms of observable characteristics that

there is not enough variation in these explanatory variables to further explain frequency of corporal punishment use.

Table 3 Hypothesis 2 (Voting patterns as predictors of legal school corporal punishment)

Logistic Regression of Likelihood of Legal Corporal Punishment in Schools (Marginal Effects)														
	-1		-2		-3		-4		-5		-6		-7	
% Republican	0.0406	***	0.0353	***	0.0347	**	0.034	**	0.034	**	0.036	**	0.027	*
	-0.012		0.0118		0.0135		-0.016		-0.016		-0.02		-0.02	
Med. HH income (\$000s)			-0.025	*	-0.017		-0.018		-0.017		-0.02		-0.03	**
			0.0132		-0.015		-0.014		-0.018		-0.02		-0.01	
% of 25-yos w/ H.S. +			0.0174		0.0132		0.0038		0.0046		0.01		0.093	***
			0.0401		0.0351		-0.038		-0.035		-0.05		-0.03	
% Non-Hispanic whites			0.0086		-0.015	*	-0.014	**	-0.014	**	-0.01	**	1E-04	
			0.0084		-0.008		-0.007		-0.007		-0.01		-0	
% Evangelical Protestants					0.0266		0.013		0.0131		0.016		0.058	**
					0.0176		-0.014		-0.014		-0.02		-0.02	
% Catholic							-0.021		-0.021		0.003		0.008	
							-0.019		-0.02		-0.01		-0.01	
% Other Christian							-0.018		-0.018		-0.02		0.016	
							-0.018		-0.019		-0.02		-0.02	
% Students FRL-eligible									0.0009		-0.02		0.011	
									-0.012		-0.02		-0.01	
% of Population in Prison											0.33		0.835	
											-1		-0.64	
% Foreign Born													0.074	***
													-0.03	
Observations	51		51		51		51		51		50		50	
Pseudo R-squared	0.37		0.561		0.622		0.646		0.646		0.644		0.696	

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Percent Republican is republican share of votes in 2008 presidential election. Med. HH income = Median household income. Percent of 25-yos with H.S. + is the percent of people 25-years or older with a H.S. degree or higher. All percentage variables coded from 0-100.
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4 Hypothesis 2 (Voting patterns as predictors of frequency of school corporal punishment) All States

OLS Regression, Predicting Students (Per 100) Receiving Corporal Punishment

	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7
% Republican	0.0353 **	0.022 **	0.009	0.0008	0.008	0.0082	0.0036
	-	-0.01	-0.01	-	-	-	-0.014
	0.0156			0.0084	0.011	0.0159	
Med. HH income (\$000s)		-0.03	-0.01	0.0046	0.024	0.0319	0.0382
		-0.02	-0.02	0.0193	0.024	-0.027	0.0304
% of 25-yos w/ H.S. +		-0.1 *	-0.08	0.0938	0.067	0.0448	-0.098
		-0.06	-0.05	-0.067	0.062	0.0549	-0.087
% Non-Hispanic whites		-0	-0	-0.002	0.008	0.0143	0.0006
		-0.01	-0.01	0.0096	0.013	0.0138	-0.018
% Evang. Protestants			0.036 **	0.0347 *	0.035 *	0.0361 **	0.0143
			-0.02	-0.018	0.019	-0.017	0.0292
% Catholic				0.0096	-8E-04	0.0009	0.0124
				0.0203	0.021	0.0219	0.0277
% Other Christian				0.0251	0.022	0.0289	0.0099
				0.0214	0.022	-0.026	0.0204
% of Students FRL					0.038	0.0506	0.0417
					0.028	0.0403	0.0358
% of Pop. in Prison						1.057	0.581
						-0.891	-1.06
% Foreign Born							0.0604
							0.0678
Constant	-1.243 *	10.03 *	6.393	7.617	0.757	-2.506	5.066
	-0.623	-5.1	-4.61	-6.191	5.409	-5.892	-9.193
Observations	51	51	51	51	51	50	50
Adjusted R-squared	0.0934	0.235	0.271	0.279	0.287	0.295	0.294

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Percent Republican is republican share of votes in 2008 presidential election. Med. HH income = Median household income. Percent of 25-yos with H.S. + is the percent of people 25 years or older with a H.S. degree or higher. All percentage variables coded from 0-100.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<01

Table 5: Hypothesis 2 (Voting patterns as predictors of frequency of school corporal punishment), States where legal

OLS Regression, Predicting Students (Per 100) Receiving Corporal Punishment

	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6
% Republican	0.0857 *	0.0503	0.0634	0.0668	0.0475	0.0326
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	0.0471	0.0397	-0.037	0.0402	-0.042	-0.055
Med. HH income (\$000s)		-0.174 *	-0.099	-0.113	-0.109	-
		-	-	-	-	-
		0.0968	-0.101	-0.132	-0.122	0.0999
% of 25-yos w/ H.S. +			-0.157	-0.116	0.0296	-0.119
			-0.111	-0.196	-0.202	-0.194
% Non-Hispanic whites				-	-	-
				0.0119	-0.041	0.0236
				-	-	-
				0.0452	0.0468	0.0393
% Evangelical Protestants					0.0605 *	0.0219
					-	-
					0.0334	0.0582
% Catholic						-
						0.0814
						-
						0.0777
% Other Christian						0.0506
						-
						0.0763
Constant	-3.698	6.531	15.59*	13.42	1.794	11.76
	-2.365	-4.64	-8.767	-11.23	-12.74	-15.04
Observations	19	19	19	19	19	19
Adjusted R-squared	0.023	0.24	0.238	0.188	0.2	0.212

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Percent Republican is republican share of votes in 2008 presidential election. Med. HH income = Median household income. Percent of 25-yos with H.S. + is the percent of people 25 years or older with a H.S. degree or higher. All percentage variables coded from 0-100.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<01

Conclusion

Voting patterns, as measured by the percent of votes for a Republican candidate in the 2008 election, predict whether a state has legal corporal punishment in schools, conditional on median household income, educational attainment, and a variety of demographic characteristics. Voting patterns help predict the frequency of corporal punishment in schools (as measured by the number of students receiving it at least once during the 2011-12 school year) in somewhat naïve models, but this factor loses its predictive power once the share of evangelicals in the state is controlled for.

Further, the results are dependent on whether the sample includes all states or only the states in which school corporal punishment is legal. For example, in the models in Table 5 including only the states where corporal punishment in schools is legal, there is less of a clear story about what drives the frequency of its use, perhaps due to collinearity between

the explanatory variables or a lack of variation in descriptive factors to further explain frequency of corporal punishment use. This low power is a key limitation of this study, and future work could focus on corporal punishment use at a more granular level, such as the school district level. In addition, incorporating a qualitative component to this analysis could improve the types of explanatory variables available. For example, whether or not a community uses the policy could also be driven by factors such as the political balance of the local school board, the state Board of Education, or the demographic characteristics of school leaders.

The primary conclusion is that, while states with more Republican votes are more likely to have legal corporal punishment in schools, the main driver of the frequency of use of corporal punishment is the share of the state that identifies as evangelical Protestant. How should state policy makers think about this relationship between religion and school discipline? The “separation of church and state” may arise as a concern, as religious beliefs outside the school building are related to policies that are being implemented within school walls. However, it is not a clear violation of any constitutional rights. The First Amendment prohibits the government from establishing an official religion, preferring one religion over others, or interfering with practice of one’s religion. Given that corporal punishment is not an explicitly religious issue, but rather one that may be supported more or less by people from different faiths, there is no First Amendment violation. Further, within states, districts sometimes have codes of conduct disallowing corporal punishment, and parents in some states are able to opt their children out of corporal punishment (Farrell 2015), so where corporal punishment remains in use, it may be viewed primarily as an issue of local control (Caputo 2017).

Discipline policies are not the only area in which religious groups have influenced school policies. Evangelical Protestants have attempted to influence the curriculum taught through arguments over creationism versus evolution (Berkman & Plutzer 2010) and sex education (Irvine 2004). Corporal punishment is just another area in which the community’s preferences or beliefs can influence what happens within school walls. As time goes on, I expect that states dominated by the religious right may continue to allow corporal punishment and defer to local communities to decide, but that demographic changes over time in some states may tip the scale towards opposing this practice and eventually banning it at the state level.

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