

INTEGRATION AND CLEAVAGE AMONG COMMUNITY INFLUENTIALS IN TWO BORDER CITIES *

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Studies of community power structure have tended to assume the existence of single, socially integrated elite groups dominating the decision-making process. The present study was designed to ascertain whether or not those who were presumed to be business and political influentials are indeed integrated. Integration was measured in four ways: (1) extent to which businessmen and politicians were chosen as influential both in business and politics; (2) extent of commonality of social backgrounds and participation in selected voluntary associations; (3) extent of perceptual agreement on business and government practices; and (4) agreement on major problems facing the community and groups working for or against the solution of these problems. The study was carried out in a cross-cultural setting, using twin border cities. The data show greater integration in the American than in the Mexican city, where institutional boundaries are rather sharply delineated. In neither case do the data suggest the existence of a single power system; power conflicts may arise between groups which overlap institutional boundaries in American communities, while in Mexican communities conflicts may arise between institutions.

EARLIER studies in community power were largely concerned with identifying community influentials and providing illustrations of their power.¹ Two parallel assumptions about top influentials have dominated much of this research: that they constitute a solidary social system; that they are integrated in their values and perspectives. It is theoretically possible for neither of these conditions to hold.² Keller has emphasized the need to examine carefully the "degree of integration existing at the highest levels of the social system" to find out if there is, in fact, a sharing of values

and perspectives which may be expected to "result in some coherent direction for the [community] as a whole."³

Therefore, two related research tasks appear to be urgent: delineating the degree of social integration among top influentials, and relating this to the social structure of the community. Miller's investigations of the degree of cohesion existing among the top influentials of three large cities are aimed largely at the first of these objectives.⁴ But no one, to our knowledge, has systematically related such data on influentials to, first, their community participational patterns and, second, their degree of consensus on institutional values and perspectives. This is the major objective of this study.

A general positive correlation should be expected between the degree of social cohesion found among influentials and their

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¹ A brief bibliography of such studies appears in Robert O. Schulze and Leonard U. Blumberg, "The Determination of Local Power Elites," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 63 (November, 1957), pp. 290-296. A contrast in conception and identification of community influentials appears in Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937, and Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954.

² See Robert A. Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," *The American Political Science Review*, 52 (June, 1958), pp. 463-469.

³ Suzanne Keller, "Sociology and Social Stratification," edited by Hans Zetterberg, *Sociology in the United States*, UNESCO, 1956. An excellent treatment of the problem is found in Robin N. Williams, Jr., *American Society*, (Revised edition), New York: Knopf, 1956, Chapters 11 and 13.

⁴ Delbert C. Miller, "Industry and Community Power Structure: A Comparative Study of an American and an English City," *American Sociological Review*, 23 (February, 1958), pp. 9-15; Miller, "Decision-Making Cliques in Community Power Structure: A Comparative Study of an American and an English City," *American Journal of Sociology*, 64 (November, 1958), pp. 299-310.

degree of consensus on values, perspectives, and participational patterns. The research design commonly used to study community influentials, however, tends to hide evidence of social and valuational cleavages. In seeking consensual nominations for the most influential persons in the community, a list is obtained of businessmen who often appear to form a tightly knit social system.⁵ Yet in cases of conflict and decision-making these persons often meet the resistance (sometimes successful) of others (often politicians) who may or may not be included in, say, the "top 40" list. Moreover, since subsequent interviewing avoids systematic probing of inter-institutional relations which are often the sources of conflict,⁶ the range of potential cleavages is minimized. Studies using a community context design (within a given society) rather than a comparative design (using communities in different societies) further reduce the possibility of observing variable relations among influentials and differences in their perceptions of local inter-institutional relations.⁷ The research design used here seeks to meet and overcome some of these shortcomings.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Objectives. Two comparable communities representing different socio-cultural systems (United States and Mexico) were studied simultaneously to investigate the relations among influentials representing political and economic institutions.⁸ The following guiding hypotheses were derived from the proposition that the integration between

economic and political institutions is greater in the United States than in Mexico:⁹

1. Significantly more influentials will be nominated as representing *both* the economic and political spheres in the "American" than in the Mexican community. Thus, the more integrated the institutions the more difficult it will be to differentiate economic from political influentials.

2. Differences in the social characteristics and participational profiles between the political and economic influentials will be smaller in the "American" than those in the Mexican community.

3. Perceptions which United States economic and political influentials have concerning extant institutional relations and practices in both countries will converge more than those of the Mexican influentials.

4. Political and economic influentials in the United States will agree more than the Mexican influentials on the identification of the main local community issues and the organizations which will line up in opposition to each other with respect to these issues.

Research Sites. The border cities of El Paso, Texas, and C. Juarez, Chihuahua, were selected as research sites. They had certain features in common which enabled us to test the above hypotheses. Yet their social, cultural, and historical differences provided the conditions necessary for demonstrating the impact of institutional relations on the social organization of influentials. The high degree of interaction between the cities allowed us to probe the perceptions of influentials in both communities of two types of socio-cultural systems.

The two cities share a geographical setting along the Rio Grande River which ordinarily trickles through this semi-arid region. They have similar histories dating back to the late 17th century when the area was first occupied by the Spaniards. From the beginning the communities were primarily wholesale, retail, banking, and transportation centers for their large but thinly populated hinter-

⁵ See, e.g., Hunter, *op. cit.*; Robert Aggar, "Power Attributions in the Local Community: Theoretical and Research Considerations," *Social Forces*, 34 (May, 1956), pp. 322-331.

⁶ See James S. Coleman, *Community Conflict*, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957, pp. 21-25.

⁷ See Albert J. Reiss, Jr., "Some Logical and Methodological Problems in Community Research," *Social Forces*, 33 (October, 1954), pp. 51-57; Peter H. Rossi, "Community Decision Making," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1 (March, 1957), pp. 440-441.

⁸ Influentials from other institutional sectors were not studied because they were perceived as having negligible influence on technological interchange, community issues, and international relations. This observation was supported by further interviewing done in 1958.

⁹ Cf. Williams, *op. cit.*; William P. Tucker, *The Mexican Government Today*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957; Frank Tannenbaum, "Personal Government in Mexico," *Foreign Affairs*, 27 (October, 1948), pp. 44-57; Fernando de los Rios, "Remarks on Intellectual Life in South America," *Social Research*, 10 (February, 1943), pp. 100-117.

lands. There, cattle raising and mining were the primary activities. Later, irrigation from the river, supplemented by underground waters supported the growing of cotton and other crops. As main points of entry for both countries for long segments of the border, both communities attracted tourist and related businesses. State and federal agencies concerned with international trade and immigration also located in the cities.

During and after World War II the communities boomed. At the time of the research (1955) they each contained about 140,000 people within the city limits, exclusive of the locally stationed military personnel. However, El Paso had become economically dominant, as a wholesale center, over an area which extended far into Mexico; it also had developed ore and oil refinement, cement, meat packing, clothing, and other industries. The demand for cheap labor became so great that ten to fifteen per cent of the labor force of C. Juarez was regularly employed in El Paso. An aggressive Chamber of Commerce, exploiting the climate, local scenic attractions, and the proximity of Mexico stimulated the growth of tourist business.

For many visitors from the United States, C. Juarez is a tawdry community living off tourist trade and vice. While tourism is a chief source of revenue, a "legitimate" Mexican community does exist. The city has four banks, large import-export houses, and small but important industries such as distilleries, breweries, textile mills, foundries, and meat packing, cotton-seed oil, and building products plants. In addition it has the usual urban facilities and the wide range of formal organizations found in the United States and other Mexican cities.

The two communities are highly interdependent. El Paso employs Juarenses and counts on them to patronize its retail stores. Both communities profit from "American" and Mexican trade, tourist and otherwise. Formal recognition of community interdependence is manifested by the regular joint meetings held by the Chambers of Commerce, service clubs, and fraternal, governmental, and many other organizations of the two cities. Moreover, a majority of the residents of El Paso are Spanish-speaking, and many of them have family and other ties across the border. Yet notable contrasts are

found in the physical and social organization of the two cities. C. Juarez is more densely populated, is poorer, and has less adequate institutional resources than El Paso.

Selecting the Influentials. During the exploratory phase of the study interviews were held with "knowledgeables" in business, labor, education, government, religion, mass communications, and "society" in both communities. They were asked to provide lists of people who had the most influence and power in the community. The nature of the responses to this question led us to view business and political influentials as two distinct groupings. Therefore, at two separate points in the formal interview, the influentials were asked to name the persons who were most influential in business and most influential in government and politics; if they asked whether or not the same names could appear on both lists they were told "yes."¹⁰ Interviews were first held with those who had received the most consensual nominations from the knowledgeable. Further interviews were held with persons whom the influentials themselves named as influentials. Systematic attempts were made to escape possible "sociometric traps." Approximately 40 persons in the economic area and 20 in the political area were finally interviewed in each city.¹¹

The Interview. An English and a Spanish interview schedule containing the same questions were prepared. The following data on the influentials were obtained: (a) social backgrounds, (b) nature and extent of cross-cultural contacts, (c) perceptions and evaluations of business and government practices, (d) perception and evaluation of business and government relations and the relations of these with each other and with other institutions, and (e) specification of local issues and of their protagonists and antago-

¹⁰ They were not asked to select names from a list. This technique departs somewhat from that used by Hunter and others. Although it still identifies influentials primarily by reputation, it adds a "check" on the nominations obtained from knowledgeable. Some 30 knowledgeable in El Paso and 25 in C. Juarez were also formally interviewed.

¹¹ Tandem interviewing was used similar to that described in Harry V. Kincaid and Margaret Bright, "Interviewing the Business Elite," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 63 (November, 1957), pp. 304-311. Interviews with C. Juarez influentials were conducted in Spanish unless they insisted on using English.

TABLE 1. THE INSTITUTIONAL IDENTIFICATION OF INFLUENTIALS IN TWO BORDER COMMUNITIES

Influentials	El Paso		C. Juarez		
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
Business only	23	38	29	48	
Business and political	27	44	12	20	
Political only	11	18	19	32	
Total	61	100	60	100	
$\chi^2 = 7.88$		d.f. = 2		p = .05 - .02	

nists. It should be emphasized that in (c) and (d) the influentials were asked to evaluate the situation in their own community and in the community across the border. The cross-cultural slant of the questions was used to sharpen the respondents' observations concerning institutional relations in their own communities. The questions were developed and pretested during three months of exploratory research.

FINDINGS

Hypothesis 1: Influentials in the United States will be nominated more often than Mexican influentials as representing *both* business and politics.

Influentials in both communities were asked to provide separate lists of people in the political and business realms. Table 1 shows that such institutional identification was easier for the C. Juarez influentials: only one-fifth of their nominees were identified as associated with *both* institutions, compared with over two-fifths of the El Paso nominees.¹² This difference is statistically significant and perhaps underestimates the differences since respondents made these overlapping choices without being asked to do so. Thus the hypothesis that institutional cleavage among business and political influentials in Mexico is greater than in the United States is strongly supported.

Despite differences in the size of businesses in the two communities, leading bankers, manufacturers, retailers, and wholesalers were chosen in almost equal proportions in both cities. The fact that seventeen business influentials in El Paso and nine in C. Juarez were also identified as political

influentials points to the important place which economic dominants occupy in the total influence structure.¹³

Such parallels were not apparent among the political influentials of the two communities. Table 2 reveals that a higher proportion are found in the executive branch of government in C. Juarez while a higher proportion are found in the judiciary branch in El Paso. Legislative officials were seldom chosen as influentials, and none of them was selected as a "key" influential.¹⁴ Non-government influentials in the Mexican city were all PRI party officials;¹⁵ three of them were labor union officials. In El Paso all non-govern-

¹³ This is somewhat contrary to the findings reported by Robert O. Schulze, "Economic Determinants in Community Power Structure," *American Sociological Review*, 23 (February, 1958), pp. 3-9.

¹⁴ "Key" influentials were the sociometric leaders among the influentials; the remaining are identified as "top" influentials. A common vocabulary has been worked out with Delbert C. Miller of Indiana University.

¹⁵ PRI means Partido Revolucionario Institucional, roughly the Institutional Revolutionary Party. The party has controlled Mexico since the Constitution of 1917. One PRI leader proudly stated that his party had the "best" organization of any in Latin America. It is divided into three major sectors: the small businessmen and property owners, the workers, and the peasants or small farmers. Although traditionally expressing an anti-private enterprise ideology and strongly favoring labor and the propertyless agricultural workers, the party has shown a markedly friendly attitude toward big business in recent years, at least on the national level. For an excellent analysis of the Mexican political system today, see L. Vincent Padgett, "Mexico's One-Party System: A Re-Evaluation," *The American Political Science Review*, 2 (December, 1957), pp. 995-1008. Padgett makes the point that organized public opinion is becoming of increasing importance to the PRI leaders in influencing their actions. Whether PRI will permit the growth of a second, contending political party, capable of winning at the polls, is problematic.

¹² Final institutional identification of the influentials for research purposes was determined by the frequency of the nominations.

TABLE 2. IDENTIFICATION OF POLITICAL INFLUENTIALS *

Identification	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials	
	"Key"†	"Top"	"Key"	"Top"
Executive	4	2	13	1
Legislative	—	1	—	4
Judiciary	2	6	—	—
Non-governmental	1	5	2	3
Total	7	14	15	8

* The chi-square test was computed for the association between communities and political identification. Key and top influentials were combined. Because of the small numbers in some of the cells a combination of chi-square and Fisher's exact probability test was used. Exact probability levels were converted into chi-squares and the individual chi-squares were totaled, giving a χ^2 of 8.994, with 4 degrees of freedom and a probability between .10 and .05.

† Twice as many key influentials were chosen in C. Juarez as in El Paso. The differences are significant, the chi-square being 5.75 with one degree of freedom, yielding a probability between .02 and .01.

ment influentials were lawyers and were either directly or indirectly allied with the business influentials. Moreover, four-fifths of the C. Juarez politicians were in office in contrast to only one-half in El Paso.

In the Mexican system, influence apparently is more an extension of executive authoritative positions than in the United States. Since the Mexican government is strongly centralized, power proceeds downward from the President to the Governors and thence to the municipalities. This institutionalized pattern places authority and influence at the same address within the political system, and the labor unions are more or

less an appendage of that system. Businessmen seemingly must accommodate to the institutionalized party pattern in order to become political influentials.

For El Paso, the data suggest that holding political office is not a requisite for becoming a political influential, a role for which business success and political interest qualify the individual. If an office is held it tends to be in the judiciary branch of government, which is typically more stable and prestigious than the legislative or executive branches. This situation suggests the important role of lawyers in linking business and politics. In general, then, the data support the hypothesis of greater integration of economic and political institutions in El Paso than in C. Juarez.

Hypothesis 2: Greater integration of business and political institutions in the "American," compared to the Mexican community, is associated with greater similarities in the social characteristics and community participation of institutional influentials.

Influentials in each city were compared for such social characteristics as age, place of birth, education, social origin, occupational mobility, social mobility, and organizational memberships. Data in Table 3 generally support the hypothesis. Almost no differences were found between the El Paso groups. The differences between the C. Juarez groups point to the weaker integration of the politicians with the wider community. The businessmen were more than five years older on the average than the politicians, and a relatively larger proportion of the former were born in the state of Chihuahua. Differences in educational achievement were greater between the C. Juarez

TABLE 3. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INFLUENTIALS IN TWO BORDER CITIES

Characteristics	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials	
	Business	Political	Business	Political
Age: mean years	51.7	49.4	55.6	49.0
Education: median years	16.0	16.6	12.6	11.4
Born outside the state	50%	47%	50%	64%
Fathers in white-collar occupations	78%	80%	69%	55%
Mean number of organizational memberships	3.0	3.7	4.1	2.7
No political party identification	32%	20%	90%	5%
Number of cases*	38	19	37	22

* Varied slightly because of no answers to some questions.

TABLE 4. PROPORTION OF BUSINESS AND POLITICAL INFLUENTIALS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF SELECTED LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Types of Organizations	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials	
	Business	Political	Business	Political
Chamber of Commerce	95%	70%	90%	9%
Service clubs	76	73	62	14
Church organizations	21	21	57	10
Masonic lodges	21	10	—	30
International committees	18	21	14	—
Community welfare associations	34	21	33	5
Asociación Cívica	—	—	30	—
Number of cases	38	19	37	22

than between the El Paso groups. In C. Juarez the businessmen were more highly educated, 70 per cent of whom had fathers in white-collar occupations as compared with 55 per cent of the politicians. Thus, it is not surprising to find that the political influentials were somewhat more upwardly mobile than the business influentials.

These differences were further emphasized in the amount of organizational participation. The business elite¹⁶ in C. Juarez showed relatively greater participation than the political elite, again pointing to the greater articulation of the former to other local structures. The cleavage between the groups is dramatized by the fact that nine-tenths of the C. Juarez business elites expressed no political party identification, compared with only five per cent of the politicians. In El Paso, the great majority of both elite groups identified themselves as "Democrats for Eisenhower."

Table 4 provides more precise data on organizational participation for the four groups. About the same proportion of business and political elites are represented in various El Paso organizations. A different pattern exists for C. Juarez. Vast differences were found in the Chamber of Commerce, Asociación Cívica,¹⁷ service clubs, and in Catholic and welfare organizations, in which

businessmen showed greater relative participation, while political elites were more strongly represented in the Masonic lodge.¹⁸ Careful analysis of the data reveals that a group of about twelve businessmen dominated the Civic Association, the Chamber of Commerce, and several organizations sponsored by the Catholic Church, such as the Boys' Town; their main service club identification was with Rotary. None of the politicians was a member of Rotary, and only one, who was in opposition to the government, was a member of any of the associations dominated by businessmen. In general, the data indicate that sharp differences exist between the C. Juarez influentials in their social characteristics, social backgrounds, and community participation.

Hypothesis 3. Perceptions of economic and political influentials in the United States concerning institutional relations and practices in *both* countries will converge more than those of Mexican influentials.

The interview was designed to probe the following areas: business practices, governmental practices, business-government relations, labor-management relations, educational relations, religious relations, and community problems.¹⁹

Business Practices. Mexican business is

¹⁶ Used synonymously with influential. Political influential and politico are also synonyms.

¹⁷ A civic organization made up of business, professional, and other citizens interested in bringing about good government to C. Juarez. Because of the great overlap in membership of this organization and the Chamber of Commerce, local politicians claimed that the businessmen were "illegitimately" engaging in politics.

¹⁸ The Scottish and York Rites have vied for and held political power in Mexico since the earliest days of independence. Several of the business elite asserted, that one could not hope to get ahead in Mexican politics without joining one of the Masonic lodges.

¹⁹ Space limitations prevent detailed analysis of labor-management, educational, and religious relations in this paper. They will be analyzed in a forthcoming monograph.

allegedly less competitive, more oriented to local markets, more custom bound, and more family controlled than business in the United States. The following questions were posed to compare the images of the four groups on the practices and social linkages of business:²⁰

1. Is there more free competition in Mexico or in the United States?
2. Generally speaking, when compared to U.S. businessmen, do Mexican businessmen insist on higher profit rates or not?
3. Are Mexican businessmen inclined to reinvest more heavily in their business than businessmen in the United States?
4. Compared to U.S. businessmen, does the average Mexican businessman think more in terms of a mass market or is he satisfied with adequate profits from a limited market?
5. Is the Mexican more inclined to concentrate ownership in the family or does he prefer to have broader stock holdings?
6. Does the Mexican businessman tend to inherit his business position more or less than businessmen in the United States?
7. Are Mexican businessmen more or less inclined than U.S. businessmen to stress family and personal ties in the conduct of their business?

While these questions are biased in favor of "American" business ideology, their use seemed to be justified because exploratory research revealed that this ideology apparently had become the significant referent for C. Juarez businessmen. Since they enjoyed status-equal contacts with their counterparts in the United States they might not feel the need to defend themselves. This situation could actually obscure the cleavage between them and the local politicians. Thus a C. Juarez businessman might indicate that Mexican businessmen generally seek higher profits because they lack business experiences and must undertake greater risks. Politicians might also assert that Mexican businessmen seek higher profits but assert that they are greedy and selfish. Such probing as was possible tended to confirm this pattern.

As expected, there were no statistically significant differences in the responses of the El Paso business and political influentials on

the seven questions. In all cases they asserted "American" superiority and endorsed the traditional image of the Mexican businessman.

Differences between the two Juarez groups were not as sharp as anticipated. In all seven questions, however, the differences were greater than between the El Paso groups. In two of the three questions concerning the role of the family in business, the pattern of high agreement between the two U.S. groups and disagreement between the two Mexican groups was maintained. This was most clearly apparent in question 6 which deals with amount of opportunity for mobility in U.S. business (see Table 5). While all the influentials in El Paso agreed that the Mexicans have less opportunity than "Americans," a reversal was shown by the Mexican groups. Almost half of the politicians insisted that the Mexican workers have equal or greater opportunity, while only one-fifth of the businessmen expressed this view. The C. Juarez politicians, perhaps, were responding in terms of their revolutionary ideology which emphasizes the equality of opportunity for all, while the Mexican businessmen expressed a perspective, characteristic of businessmen in the United States, which stresses freedom from governmental control as a requisite for mobility.

Governmental Practices. Because political involvements may be more emotional than rational, the perceptions of political practices might be expected to differ more than perception of business practices. Such differences would be larger in Mexico where a greater cleavage was postulated between business and political institutions. Respondents were asked to compare the United States and Mexican society in three areas: the degree to which seven democratic ideals are more nearly realized, the degree of mobility possible within government, and the amount of graft and corruption in government.

The following question was asked in the first area: "On this card are listed a number of ideals commonly associated with a democratic society. Let us assume that both the United States and Mexico enjoy these ideals to some degree. In which country is each ideal more closely realized?"

Table 6 presents data on the degree of agreement between political and business in-

²⁰ These are somewhat abbreviated wordings of the questions.

TABLE 5. RELATIVE OPPORTUNITY OF WORKERS IN MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES TO BECOME BUSINESSMEN

Relative Opportunity	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials*	
	Business	Political	Business	Political
1. Mexican has greater opportunity	—	—	1	2
2. Same opportunities	1	—	7	8
3. United States has greater opportunity	36	16	26	9
Other responses	1	3	3	3
Total	38	19	37	22

* In the computation of the chi-square for C. Juarez influentials, categories 1 and 2 were collapsed and "other responses" were dropped.

$\chi^2 = 5.953$ d.f. = 1 $p = .02 - .01$

fluentials in each country. As might be expected, the majority of El Paso influentials of both types agreed that the United States had more nearly approximated all seven democratic ideals than Mexico. In the case of equal justice under law, however, the differences between the groups were statistically significant: while all of the businessmen admitted U.S. superiority, only two-thirds of the politicos so responded.

Table 6 shows that the political and business influentials of C. Juarez differed significantly in their evaluations of four of the seven ideals. A greater proportion of businessmen than of politicos felt that all of the ideals are more nearly realized in the United States. For only two ideals, however—free and honest elections, and equal justice under law—did a majority of the businessmen indicate U.S. superiority. Yet the majority of Mexican politicos (70 per cent) felt that the two countries had equally approximated all seven ideals.

Possible conflict between business and gov-

ernment may develop over the issues of corruption in government and collusion between businessmen and politicians. Seven questions sought general and specific views of graft in government. All four groups believed that corruption in the United States is largely a matter of politicians feathering their own nests, although larger proportions of the Mexican influentials pointed to other types of connivance. A similar pattern appeared for Mexico, but larger proportions of respondents refused to give their opinions. In the questions dealing with corruption in the two cities, the most frequent response was that politicians alone were responsible for local corruption, but C. Juarez businessmen conceded that other groups (businessmen, union officials, and racketeers) entered into collusion.

On two questions comparing corruption in the two cities and nations, and on a question comparing the prevalence of bossism in the two countries, statistically significant differences appeared in the responses of the

TABLE 6. CHI-SQUARES AND LEVELS OF PROBABILITY BETWEEN BUSINESS AND POLITICAL INFLUENTIALS FOR THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF RELATIVE NATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

Democratic Ideal	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials	
	Chi-Square *	Probability	Chi-Square *	Probability
Free speech	1.284	.30-.20	2.284	.20-.10
Free press	3.569	.10-.05	0.442	.90-.80
Freedom of religion	0.410	.70-.50	5.790	.02-.01
Free, open and honest elections	N.T.P.**	1.00	10.648	.01-.001
Equal justice before law	7.353	.01-.001	9.859	.01-.001
Protections of rights of property and management	0.542	.50-.30	5.549	.02-.01
Protection of rights of labor	1.044 †	.70-.50	1.071 †	.70-.50

* Unless otherwise indicated all chi-squares have one degree of freedom.

** No test possible; both groups concurred unanimously.

† Two degrees of freedom.

TABLE 7. CHI-SQUARES AND LEVELS OF PROBABILITY BETWEEN BUSINESS AND POLITICAL INFLUENTIALS FOR THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Business-Government Relations	El Paso Influentials		C. Juarez Influentials	
	Chi-Square	Probability	Chi-Square	Probability
Bus.-govt. cooperation at local level	0.272	90 p 80	3.746	20 p 10
Bus.-govt. cooperation at national level	0.289	70 p 50	8.351	01 p 001
Govt. regulation of bus. in the United States	4.046	05 p 02	0.356	70 p 50
Govt. regulation of bus. in Mexico	0.029	90 p 80	5.562	02 p 01
Govt. ownership of bus. in United States	5.509	02 p 01	N.T.P.*	1.00
Govt. ownership of bus. in Mexico	0.266	70 p 50	3.150	10 p 05

* No test possible; both groups agreed that it was "just right" in the United States.

Mexican groups.²¹ The businessmen maximized corruption and bossism in government, while the politicians minimized them. These differences suggest the difficulties of getting the two groups to function in an integrated way in community organizations (see Table 4) and in problem solving (see below).

This general pattern of similar responses for El Paso influentials and deviating responses for the two Mexican groups persisted in questions about the social origins of governmental officials in each country. Almost all political and business influentials in El Paso insisted that governmental recruitment in the United States was more representative of all social classes; most of the Mexican politicians attributed the same pattern to Mexico, but the Mexican businessmen were evenly divided on the question.

Business-Government Relations. An attempt was made to ascertain the degree of cleavage between business and government by asking the four groups directly to evaluate the degree of cooperation between business and government on both national and local levels, the degree of government regulation of business, and the amount of current government ownership of business in their countries.²² The results of the chi-square tests of

association on the images of business-government relations are presented in Table 7.

The El Pasoans were strongly in agreement that business and government enjoyed more amicable relations both locally and nationally in the United States than in Mexico, and also concurred that both government regulation and ownership of business were overdone in Mexico.

Since businessmen in the United States complain of any kind of regulation or control (except subsidies) by the government, it is not surprising to find them differing significantly from El Paso politicians on questions about this situation in their own country. As expected, the political influentials defended present government regulation and ownership as proper and necessary. In view of the fact that the businessmen insisted that business and government got along very well in the United States, their significant disagreement with politicians on these questions attests to the strength of the "conventional wisdom" of free and private enterprise.

The Juarenses tended to be more consistent. The businessmen saw business-government relations in the United States as much superior to the Mexican situation, both in general and with respect to regulation and ownership by government. The C. Juarez politicians thought business-government relations were about the same in both countries, that Mexican government regulation and ownership was proper and just, and they agreed with the businessmen that the U.S. situation also was proper and just. That the chi-square on the question of government ownership in Mexico does not quite reach the significant level may be partially accounted for by the fact that the government owned PEMEX (Mexican Petroleum Indus-

²¹ The differences were significant at the .01 level by the chi-square test.

²² The point is often made that the border regions of the two countries are so untypical that local institutional relations depart from those commonly found in the interiors, a situation about which the respondents were asked to give their impressions. All of the El Pasoans stated that business-government relations in their community were typical of U.S. cities, and three-fourths of the Juarenses declared that parallel relations in C. Juarez were typical of other Mexican cities. The accuracy of their appraisals is supported by such works as Tucker, *op. cit.* and Hunter, *op. cit.*

try) was at that time directed by a former citizen and businessman of C. Juarez who was without doubt the city's most illustrious "son."

Community Problems. Hypothesis 4: Political and business influentials in the United States will agree more than the Mexican influentials on the identification of the main community issues and the organizations which will be opposed with respect to these issues.

Both business and political influentials are concerned with the solution of community issues. They may be said to be integrated when they agree on the priority of problems facing the community, the groups which may be expected to support their positions, and the expected sources of opposition.

The four groups were asked to name the most pressing problems facing their respective cities. They all concurred that finding sufficient water for both farming and urban growth was the most pressing problem. El Paso influentials generally agreed that the remaining problems, in order of importance, were traffic control, new industry, educational expansion, stimulation of the economy, and delinquency control. They also agreed that local government and business associations were playing the most active roles in working together toward the solution of these problems. No organizations were singled out as derelict in their community responsibilities. The prevailing attitude was that the community agencies were concerned with the same problems and were cooperatively working toward their solution without opposition.

The need for expanded public utilities and educational services were the uppermost problems, next to water supply, in C. Juarez. With one major exception, C. Juarez influentials agreed in naming local problems; one-half of the businessmen felt that better local government was a major issue, while politicians gave this their lowest number of votes. These businessmen represented the most active opponents of the local government, and were strongly represented in the Civic Association mentioned above. They argued consistently that corruption in government was a long-standing problem in Mexico and one that prevented Mexico from having a better business climate. In fact, they insisted that such problems as educa-

tion, traffic control, improved sanitation, and slum clearance would never be resolved until the whole structure of the Mexican government was changed. As might be expected, the politicians dismissed these charges as "mere politics."

Cleavages in C. Juarez were also apparent in the responses to questions seeking to identify the groups working to solve local problems. Four-fifths of the groups named by businessmen were under business dominance, namely, the Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, Asociación Cívica, and Catholic Church organizations. Government-dominated groups, including the government itself, were named by two-thirds of the businessmen as not doing their part to resolve these problems.

As occurred so often, the C. Juarez politicians tended to minimize the cleavage. They chose both their own groups and business-dominated groups in equal proportions as helping to solve major community problems. Moreover, the political influentials generally did not claim that certain groups failed to carry out their community obligations. The politicians attributed no importance whatsoever to the political activities of the businessmen, dismissing them as the grumblings of a few self-seeking individuals. That such an evaluation missed the mark is demonstrated by the fact that the businessmen persuaded the President of Mexico to remove the Governor of Chihuahua, an act which had great repercussions in local government. The implications of this situation are beyond the scope of this paper, although it illustrates how cleavage may be temporarily resolved in Mexico.²³

CONCLUSIONS

Studies of community power have suffered from the assumption that the top influentials

²³ Further research during the summer of 1958 revealed that the cleavage, wide as before, is now somewhat more structured. As an illustration of the growing influence of business within PRI, the President selected as candidate for Mayor of C. Juarez in the 1956 elections the businessman who had headed the opposition group in the study reported here. This caused a rift between the new group and the old PRI leaders. At the same time, other elites in the Civic Association became the formal leaders of the Party of National Action (PAN), thus splitting the original protesting group. Analysis of these data will appear in a forthcoming monograph.

represent a solidary or cohesive social system in communities which perforce have integrated institutional structures. The prior question of whether or not the elites are actually cohesive has been largely ignored. Bell and others point out that we cannot answer this question without knowing what interests and values are of importance to the elites.²⁴

This study attempted to measure degrees of integration and cleavage between the business and political influentials in a cross-cultural setting. It was assumed that integration of political and business influentials might be measured by commonality of social backgrounds, common participation patterns, perceptual agreements on business and government practices, and by agreement on major problems facing the community and groups working for or against the solution of these problems.

In all four of these areas, integration between the influentials in El Paso was found to be greater than in the Mexican community. This difference may be explained in part by the fact that for C. Juarez businessmen, business-governmental relations in the United States serve as a major reference point for what they believe the Mexican situation ought to be. In contrast, the principal reference point for the C. Juarez politicians is turned inward toward Mexico City and focused on the national revolutionary ideology.

Even though the data suggest considerable integration between the economic and political influentials and institutions in El Paso, they do not support a simple model of community power structure in the decision-

making process. The responses of the business and political influentials were by no means identical. While the reputational technique used to identify the influentials yielded data that support the hypothesis of business domination of local government, many questions are left unanswered. There is no clear-cut hierarchical arrangement in business which definitely places bankers above industrialists and industrialists above merchants. Nor are businessmen automatically ranked above government officials. Moreover, since local, county, state, and federal officials may be named as influentials in the local community, uni-dimensionality is not probable except in a party-dominated system, such as that prevalent in Mexico. A simple model of community power structure also ignores the power potential of the citizens and other organized groups in the community. An adequate theory must relate the social structure of the influentials to that of the broader community.

Our data suggest that conflicts do not occur along institutional lines in the United States, but among different coalitions of business and political influentials. Conflict may concern means to reach given ends, rather than institutionalized goals. Thus a wide range of institutional facilities may be used to resolve local conflicts and to launch local projects. In contrast, institutional cleavages in Mexico call for the resolution of local problems by one institution or the other, limiting the number and range of organizational facilities which might be brought to bear on a community problem.

It would appear from the above considerations that comparative cross-cultural research is highly useful in the development of a more adequate theory of community power and decision making.

²⁴ Daniel Bell, "The Power Elite—Reconsidered," *American Journal of Sociology*, 64 (November, 1958), pp. 238-250.

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