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Editor's Introduction

County Taxation Dynamics, Nonprofits, Equitable Workplace, and Corporal Punishment in the United States

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*T*he *Journal of Public Management and Social Policy* ends the twenty-fourth volume and begins its twenty-fifth with articles that examine contemporary public issues including county taxation, nonprofits, equity in the workplace, and corporal punishment. This combined edition begins with a discussion on county taxation dynamics and ends with a quantitative analysis of legalization and use of corporal punishment in the United States.

The first article, “Conditions for Competition: Assessing the Competitiveness of US Counties,” by Abraham Joshua L. Mitchell, LaShonda Stewart, John Hamman, and Steve Modlin examines theories that influence taxation policy adoption among counties in the State of Missouri. Using a negative binomial regression model with fixed-effects to capture yearly variations, the study finds that, while multiple internal factors might affect sales tax rate increases in Missouri, they vary across income levels. This finding shows that wealthier counties behave less competitively than their smaller counterparts with more limited resources. Nonetheless, the article concludes that devolution of policies from states to their localities may exasperate regional inequalities among counties.

In the second article, “Legislation Meets Tradition: Interpretations and Implications of the Volunteer Protection Act for Nonprofit Organizations as viewed through the Lens of Hermeneutics,” Patricia A. Groble, Nicholas Zingale, and Joseph Mead use hermeneutical conceptual framework to examine the legal interpretation of the Volunteer Protection Act and found that the tradition of volunteering has remained unchanged despite an evolving understanding of the liability of volunteers. Overall, the study concludes that the Act is designed to preserve the nation’s rich tradition of volunteerism.

The third article—“Similarity-Attraction and Old-School Values: African American-Led Nonprofits and African American Youth,” by Susan T. Gooden, Michael L. Perkins, Lindsey L. Evans, and Yali Pang—deploys a qualitative approach based on interviews with

program executive directors, board members, and staff of three nonprofits, among others, to examine the role of similarity-attraction between African American-led nonprofits and the predominantly African American youth they serve. The study's findings suggest that each of the programs administered by the nonprofits provides a direct focus on African American history and positive role models and teaches the youth how to succeed in their endeavors. While the study is limited to only three nonprofits, it concludes that the leaders of these organizations are not only highly committed to the youth, but they are highly respected resources of influence and authority within their jurisdictions.

Nicole M. Elias, Rana L. Johnson, Danny Ovando, and Julia Ramirez's fourth article titled "Improving Transgender Policy for a More Equitable Workplace" provides a qualitative analysis of federal transgender plans in 9 agencies aimed at improving the practice of transgender policy in public workplaces. The analysis demonstrates that each agency created and implemented transgender policy to support both transitioning and transgender employees. Furthermore, the study concludes with the suggestion that all transgender policy should include a detailed transition process with an inclusive language that prohibits harassment and discrimination and provides understandable restroom and locker room use guidance.

In the fifth article, "Neighborhood Concerns and Mobilization Patterns of Homeowners and Neighborhood Associations," Daniel S. Scheller and Anaïd Yerena deploy survey and interview data of neighborhood associations and homeowners associations (HOAs) and HOA presidents in Tallahassee, Florida, as well as a neighborhood political ecology model to understand and analyze residential community associations' responses to pressing issues. The findings show that neighborhood associations mobilize and petition/lobby municipal government to a greater extent than HOAs. Conversely, when HOAs do mobilize and interact with local government, the issues usually deal with the typical HOA concern of improving property values because they have legally contractual restrictive covenants. While addressing the limitation of their cross-sectional study, Scheller and Yerena conclude that future research should examine how residential community associations and their issues, concerns, and mobilization activities change over time and across various urban environments.

In the sixth article, "The Politics of School Discipline: A Quantitative Analysis of Legalization and Use of Corporal Punishment in the United States," Kaitlin P. Anderson utilize both a logistic regression model and an ordinary least squares regression method to predict the likelihood that a state has legalized corporal punishment in schools and the number of students in the state who received corporal punishment at least during the 2011- 2012 school year, respectively. Based on her findings, Anderson concludes that while states with more Republican votes are more likely to adopt 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.

In conclusion, I will like to thank all the authors and *JPMSP*'s dedicated reviewers for making this combined edition a success. As always, the ideas and thought-provoking questions raised in the articles presented will help our readers to deepen their understanding of issues regarding county taxation dynamics, nonprofits, equitable workplace, and corporal punishment in the United States.