

Ways of Achieving Federal Objectives

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According to Derthick, the grant system is the most appropriate way of achieving federal objectives. The federal government uses the grant system to fund the state governments. The federal government plays a role in the state political system by issuing grants. However, it is an outlying actor and not integral because it lacks a legitimate purpose within the system. Further, the federal government has no legal right to decision-making and no identified informal right to perform as a hobby. Nevertheless, it changes the environment under which the integral actors operate, changes the influence distribution among them, and hence becomes an actor in the state's politics (Derthick 1970, p.201).

The federal government becomes a state actor in policymaking because it uses its grant funding system. The federal government expects that state governments develop state agencies that can receive government funds. Consequently, it is an unspoken recommendation that the more authority the state agency has in distributing and using state funds, the more likely it is to receive funding from the government. Once the funding has been devolved, the federal government strikes a rapport with the state agency so that the agency can serve as its spokesperson to ensure that the federal objectives are achieved. The relationship between the two agencies favours both of them, and neither wants to break because it is through the federal agency that the state agency gains authority and through the state agency that governmental objectives become successful (Derthick, 1970).

Nevertheless, if a state actively refuses to implement the federal objectives, the [federal government may withhold the funds](#). However, this is faced with significant criticisms from Congress because no state representatives want to see another state not receive funding. They support each other because their state may be in the spotlight again. Therefore, negotiations with state governments are better than withholding funding. Consultations improve the relationship between the federal-state and local systems and help uphold federalism (Derthick 1970, p.208).

In contrast, Krane explored how the federal government achieved its national objectives during the reign of President Bush. Bush favoured a centralised form of government, and he came up with policies like the No Child Left Behind Act and the Real ID Act and expected all the state governments to implement them without argument. Although the state government served as a middleman from the time they were developed, they were vehement in attacking the federal government's infringement on state flexibility. In this era, the federal government was performing as an integral actor in state politics. The centralist approach was viewed as an ideal way of marketing policies that the government believed were the best in taking America to the next level (Krane, 2007).

Similarly, Posner and Conlan, like Derthick, do not favour Bush's approach. They are convinced that state governments should be left to run their governments flexibly without the federal government's interference. Posner & Wrightson (1996) argue that the grant system is the best way for the federal

government to advocate for the success of its objectives (p.87). Conlan claims that due to the constant change from the actual federalism to the opportunism used by Bush, the best way to maintain federalism is by advocating for intergovernmental management so that the existing relations do not blur (Conlan 2006, p. 673).

Federalism and the Obama Administration

The striking thing with the Obama administration lies in the array of techniques and the intensity of its endeavour to influence state budgets, policies, and administration. Hence, the U.S. domestic policies under Obama leaned towards impacting the performance of the state governments. The trend depicts a move towards centralisation and away from federalism. However, with the Trump Administration, things have changed. The administration has loosened the grip of the Obama Medicaid and intends to increase state authority over education by creating an interstate bank assessment system, allowing states to assess students locally. Therefore, the nation will lean towards federalism if he successfully implements his policies.

How would Phillip Monypenny view the current relationship between the states and the federal government?

Monypenny (1960) argued that the grant-in-aid system was not designed to undermine federalism but instead refine it (p.16). However, if he had analysed the current grant system, he would have been surprised that the federal government uses it to lobby state governments to ensure the governmental objectives are successful. The government uses the Grant system to infringe on state flexibility by making the federal government an integral actor in state decision-making.

References

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