

Policy adoption in North Carolina and Tennessee: A comparative case study of lottery beneficiaries.

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Abstract

This study analyzes the policy process through which two states determined education beneficiary programs of newly adopted state lotteries. Tennessee, in 2003, followed the regional pattern of allocating all lottery proceeds to merit-based college scholarships. North Carolina, in 2005, bucked this trend by allotting no lottery revenue for merit aid. This comparative case study draws on extensive interview and archival data to test the explanatory power of a revised multiple streams model. Our findings indicate that both stable characteristics, such as government structure and intra-state policy trends, and anarchical influences, such as the timing and strategies of policy entrepreneurs, matter most.

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since the adoption of the Georgia HOPE Scholarship program in 1993, seven additional southeastern states have adopted similar merit-based financial aid programs, most of which are also funded by state lotteries. While the merit aid phenomenon has attracted considerable attention from researchers, most studies focus on the effects of merit aid (Cornwell, Mustard, & Sridhar, 2006; Dee & Jackson, 1999; Dynarski, 2000, 2004; Heller & Marin, 2002, 2004; Henry & Rubenstein, 2002; Henry, Rubenstein, & Bugler, 2004; Ness & Tucker, 2008; St. John et al., 2004) rather than the policy process through which such programs have been established. This is particularly surprising given recent attention by scholars to the policy process in other

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