

Christopher Gelpi, "Alliances as Instruments of Intra-Allied Control," in Helga Haftendorn, Celeste Wallander, and Robert Keohane (eds.) *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions Over Time and Space* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 107-139.

I. Introduction -- This chapter focuses on the role that alliances can play as instruments of intra-allied control. Gelpi examines 117 mediation attempts in international crises between 1918 and 1988 coded in the International Crisis Behavior dataset. Gelpi explicitly makes use of selection effects -- by focusing on mediation, he selects cases in which allies choose to become involved as mediators rather than intervening militarily on behalf of their ally. The findings should therefore be seen as relevant to the effectiveness of allies as mediators and not to the intervention of allies in disputes in general. In addition, in all of these cases the mediator has been accepted by both of the disputants, suggesting that its interests and those of its ally diverge over some of the issues in question.

II. Hypotheses: Gelpi derives hypotheses concerning the success of allies as mediators based on three distinct perspectives on IR and mediation.

A. The international mediation literature stresses that mediators should be impartial, non-threatening to the disputants, and that the use of high levels of pressure can backfire. This suggests that:

1. The more unequal the mediator's ties to the disputants, the lower the probability the mediation will be successful. (H1)
2. The greater the mediator's military capability, the lower the probability the mediation will be successful. (H2)
3. A curvilinear relationship exists between the coerciveness of the mediator's strategy and mediation success. Moderately coercive strategies will be successful, but strategies with low and high levels of coercion will not. (H3)

B. Institutionalism and mediation: this literature suggests that mediators with strong alliance ties to one of the disputants will have greater success since they can exert leverage on both parties through threats to intervene on behalf of its ally or threats to suspend support for its ally. Accordingly: the more unequal the mediator's alliance ties to the disputants, the higher the probability of mediation success. (H4)

C. Realism and mediation: the greater the military power of the mediator, the more likely the mediation will be successful. (H5)

D. The realist and institutionalist hypotheses can be combined as well: the inequality of the alliance bonds between mediator and disputants interacts with the military strength of the mediator. The stronger the mediator, the stronger the effect of the alliance bias on the success of mediation. (H6)

E. This fusion of the realist and institutionalist perspectives also suggests a different hypothesis concerning the role of coercion: The more coercive the mediator's strategy, the higher the probability of success. (H7)

III. Results

A. Hypotheses 1-4 were not supported by the analysis.

B. Hypothesis 5 was supported by the analysis, but the effect posited by hypothesis 6 was even more powerful. In other words, the mediator being a great power has an independent positive effect on the likelihood of success, but this effect was more pronounced the more unequal the mediating great power's ties to the two disputants.

- C. Hypothesis 7 was supported quite strongly by the data. Mediators that actually intervened militarily in the dispute were successful 83 percent of the time, as opposed to 30 percent of the time when only formal mediation was attempted.
- D. Being allied to the mediator was disadvantageous in terms of outcomes. If the challenger shares a defense pact with the mediator, for example, the chance the mediation decision will go against it is 68 percent. If the challenger has no ties to the mediator, the chance of failure is only 45 percent.

IV. Conclusion -- Alliances should be seen not only as instruments of capability aggregation, as realists have traditionally viewed them, but also as instruments of intra-allied control. The results of this study indicate that the most successful mediators in international crises are great powers that are allied to one of the disputants and that use coercive tactics to produce a settlement. In addition, biased mediators appear to be effective because they use their leverage to erode the position of their ally in the negotiation. This finding diverges from the capability aggregation model, but should be seen as a complement to that approach given the particular circumstances under which this finding is observed.