

THE EFFECTS OF AUTOCRATIC CHARACTERISTICS ON PUBLIC OPINION TOWARDS DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES: A CONJOINT ANALYSIS

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Abstract. Does the level of public support for democracy promotion policies vary with the characteristics of potential autocratic targets? We conduct an experimental study with a conjoint design on a sample of 1,464 U.S. citizens that manipulates several core characteristics of potential autocratic targets. We then compare citizens' preferences with the cross-national evidence testing the determinants of democracy promotion success. We find that respondents support the use of coercive measures (military action and sanctions) precisely in contexts where, according to comparative research, these instruments are unlikely to foster democratization: Oil-rich, exclusionary, personalistic regimes with no elections, and with no ties to the U.S. Conversely, the characteristics driving public support for the use of democracy aid are more consistent with those favoring effectiveness: Autocratic regimes with multi-party elections and with links to the U.S. These findings have important policy implications by contributing to understand the micro-foundations of target selection.

Keywords. Public opinion; democracy promotion; autocratic regimes; conjoint analysis; military intervention; economic sanctions; democracy assistance; dictatorship.

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Introduction

Spreading democracy has traditionally been a central component of U.S. foreign policy (Fowler 2015). In pursuit of this goal the U.S. has sent troops to overthrow incumbent regimes in several third countries (such as Panama, Haiti, and Iraq); it has imposed economic sanctions against dozens of foreign states seeking to force them to liberalize (such as the Dominican Republic, Uganda, and Cuba); and it has spent billions of dollars in aid over the last decades aimed at supporting pro-democratic actors and institutions abroad (especially in Latin America and Eastern Europe). As Brancati (2014, 706) claims, “the ability of the US to promote democracy in other countries depends in large part on the American public’s attitude toward democracy promotion,” which makes it crucial to understand the elements that citizens factor in when forming their foreign policy preferences. This paper investigates the extent to which the characteristics of target autocratic states influence the American public’s willingness to support three democracy promotion strategies: military interventions, economic sanctions, and democracy assistance.

Recent experimental studies show that some targets’ characteristics such as regime type and predominant religion influence foreign policy attitudes (Mintz and Geva 1993; Johns and Davies 2012; Lacina and Lee 2013; Tomz and Weeks 2013). Yet, experimental designs specifically examining the determinants of attitudes towards democracy promotion policies are rare.¹ Besides, these tools target non-democracies; and such regimes are heterogeneous. That is, autocracies differ from each other along several dimensions, including their leadership, institutions, endowments, and connections to the West (Geddes 1999; Gandhi 2008; Levitsky and Way 2010; Svobik 2012; Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2018). Drawing on image theory to derive our expectations, we integrate this multidimensional framework into the study of public opinion by conducting an original conjoint experiment on a sample of 1,464 voting-age American citizens. The design randomly combines several country characteristics and estimates their relative impact on citizens’ views.

Examining the determinants of public support for democracy promotion instruments is relevant for at least two reasons. First, despite being central in shaping U.S. foreign policy, democracy promotion is a goal for which support among Americans might be more difficult to

¹ The closest example is experimental research on humanitarian interventions (Hildebrandt et al. 2013; Davies and Johns 2016). Most studies on attitudes towards democracy promotion have typically used public opinion surveys and socio-demographic and attitudinal variables as correlates (Faust and Garcia 2014; Kim 2014). Brancati’s (2014) and Christiansen, Heinrich and Peterson’s (2019) works are an exception.

mobilize than protecting security and economic interests from external threats (Tures 2007). According to a 2013 Pew poll, 18% and 33% of respondents considered that promoting democracy and human rights, respectively, should be a top priority of U.S. foreign policy.² Another poll revealed that 45% of Americans agreed when directly asked if helping establishing democracy in other countries should be a role of the U.S.³ Support for a general foreign policy goal, however, does not inform us about the specific, practical policies citizens would choose to use to advance it. As that same poll showed, Americans tend to favor soft policies rather than aggressive ones to promote democracy. Yet, a survey conducted a few months before the 2003 invasion revealed that 68% of Americans approved of taking military action to end Saddam Hussein's rule in Iraq.⁴ Public opinion polls can be strongly influenced by specific events and, besides, do not allow us to identify the drivers of public support. Such position might thus have been caused by several factors, most prominently, elite cues about Saddam having weapons of mass destruction and representing a threat to international security. What remains to be explored is the extent to which the fact that Iraq was a predominantly Muslim, oil-rich country governed by an unconstrained strongman heading a one-party system with no legal opposition might have also influenced Americans' preferences. Would citizens have reacted differently had the target been another type of regime? Our findings suggest that individuals' judgements about democracy promotion policies are indeed affected by targets' traits such as their linkages to the U.S., their religion, the existence of authoritarian elections, personalism, and leader type.

Secondly, analysts stress that the success rate of democracy promotion efforts is low, especially that of sanctions and military interventions (Pape 1997; Hufbauer et al. 2007; Easterly, Satyanath and Berger 2008; Grimm 2008). In contrast, scholars have found democracy aid to, at least moderately, enhance the emergence of democracy in recipient countries (Finkel, Pérez-Liñán and Seligson 2007; Kalyvitis and Vlachaki 2010; Scott and Steele 2011). Comparative research suggests that success largely depends on the characteristics

² "Americans put Low Priority on Promoting Democracy Abroad," *Pew Research Center*, 4 December 2013. Available at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/12/04/americans-put-low-priority-on-promoting-democracy-abroad/>

³ "Transatlantic Trends," German Marshall Fund, 2006. Available at: <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/series/235>

⁴ "Public Struggles with Possible War in Iraq," *Pew Research Center*, 30 January 2003. Available at: <http://www.people-press.org/2003/01/30/public-struggles-with-possible-war-in-iraq/>

of targets and, therefore, on using the appropriate tool in the right context (Carothers 1999; Levitsky and Way 2010; Cornell 2013; Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015).⁵ While explaining how U.S. officials select targets is beyond the scope of this paper, exploring whether citizens' views are affected by targets' characteristics can contribute to understanding the micro-foundations of target selection and subsequent policy (in)effectiveness. Particularly, our findings reveal an important mismatch concerning coercive policies: Americans are more supportive of military interventions and sanctions against dictatorships whose characteristics make these instruments more likely to fail. Conversely, the characteristics driving support for democracy aid are more in line with those facilitating its success. These findings suggest that poor target selection and the resulting low success rate of democracy promotion efforts may be, at least partly, rooted in public opinion.

An increasing body of scholarship has found that foreign policy decisions in democracies are sensitive to public opinion (e.g. Holsti, 2004; Aldrich et al., 2006; Baum and Potter, 2008; Milner and Tingley, 2016; Tomz, Weeks and Yarhi-Milo, 2020). Public opinion affects elite decision-making at least via two channels (Tomz, Weeks and Yarhi-Milo 2020): First, public opinion may act as a constraint, and consequently responsive decision-makers might choose aggressive policies in unpromising contexts because the public favors them. Similarly, public opinion may create audience costs for leaders threatening forcible action against some target but backing down later. Second, voters may select candidates with foreign policy positions similar to their own; as a result, for example, candidates with more aggressive stands against targets would be more likely to be elected. Our findings suggest that, to the extent that public opinion shapes foreign policy making, it could steer policy-makers' inclinations toward aggressive but ineffective policies and away from softer approaches when deciding how to deal with certain autocratic countries.

Foreign Policy, Targets, and Public Opinion

Prior research shows that foreign policy attitudes are shaped by individual dispositions and belief systems such as internationalism, militarism, and partisanship (Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Holsti 2004; Berinsky 2009; Eichenberg and Stoll 2017); contextual factors such as costs, relative success, and war goals (Jentleson and Britton 1998; Eichenberg 2005; Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler, 2005/2006; Gartner 2008); or elite cues (Berinsky 2007). This literature can be expanded on three fronts. First, most studies focus on public support for war. Other

⁵ See Krasner and Weinstein (2014) for a review.

foreign policy measures, such as aid or sanctions, have received less attention, although recent research suggests that public attitudes influence these policies too (Milner and Tingley 2013; McLean and Whang 2014; Heinrich, Kobayashi and Long 2018). The growing experimental research on citizenry support for sanctions and aid mostly evaluates the role of voters' material and moral concerns as well as expected effects (Heinrich, Kobayashi and Peterson 2016; Christiansen, Heinrich and Peterson 2019; McLean and Roblyer 2017).⁶

Second, despite their importance in determining success, the impact of target regimes' features on individuals' foreign policy preferences remains insufficiently explored. Those studies that do so have mainly focused on the target's political regime and religion. Scholars examining the micro-foundations of the 'democratic peace' have shown that public support for war and sanctions is higher when used against autocracies than democracies (Mintz and Geva 1993; Lektzian and Souva 2003; Tomz and Weeks 2013). Other studies reveal that when the target's religion is manipulated together with its political regime the former outdoes the effect of the latter (Johns and Davies 2012; Lacina and Lee 2013). Nonetheless, Dafoe, Zhang and Caughey (2018, 408) contend that labeling a country a democracy or an autocracy in an experimental setting might affect respondents' beliefs about real-world background characteristics, "potentially biasing the effect of interest." Particularly, they find that "subjects who are told that the country is a democracy are more likely to perceive it as having the characteristics associated with democracies in the real world" such as having predominantly Christian populations, links with the U.S., and no large oil reserves. This suggests that failing to include other relevant characteristics increases the risk of masking (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014), making it challenging to infer which attributes drive public support. While other studies examine the effect of other target characteristics such as the adversary's relative power and motives (Herrmann, Tetlock and Visser 1999; Tomz and Weeks 2013), or its oil wealth (Muradova and Gildea 2019); they either do not adopt a fully multidimensional setting and/or overlook the institutional heterogeneity existing among dictatorships.

Finally, most works normally consider attitudes towards one single policy and, therefore, overlook the fact that in most situations decision-makers usually ponder alternative courses of action simultaneously. By presenting citizens with a range of policy options, we can better uncover what factors determine citizens' support for different instruments in

⁶ Heinrich and Kobayashi's (2018) work is a partial exception. They examine the impact of 'nasty' policies of aid recipient countries; yet, they focus on outcomes/practices rather than institutional configurations.

conjunction, and what is the main factor potentially driving their “willingness to escalate from peaceful measures to violent ones” (Tomz and Weeks 2013, 863).

Our paper builds on and extends this literature in several ways. We examine and compare the effect of autocracies’ institutional characteristics on public support for democracy promotion policies along with other contextual characteristics, namely, their dominant religion, military strength, oil-wealth, and links to the U.S. Disentangling the effect of some characteristics from other confounding background factors not included in the design is difficult. So is discerning which traits have the strongest comparative weight in shaping public support. Our multidimensional experimental approach addresses these two shortcomings. Further, since the evaluation of one policy alternative does not conform to real-life decision-making, we allow subjects to evaluate multiple foreign policies, which are not mutually exclusive and vary in their degree of aggressiveness.

Autocratic Target Images and Foreign Policy Attitudes

We draw on the insights from *image theory in international relations* to derive expectations for how these institutional (and other) characteristics of autocratic regimes might inform individuals’ opinions. It provides a well-established, parsimonious, and testable framework for connecting target attributes to individuals’ perceptions of foreign countries and their policy choices. According to this framework, individuals use stereotypical images to simplify and interpret complex international affairs and to assess foreign countries vis-à-vis their own (Herrmann 2013). These cognitive images are in turn used to guide their judgements and reactions toward other countries (Hurwitz and Peffley 1990; Herrmann et al. 1997; Herrmann, Tetlock and Visser 1999). A central component of these perceptual judgements is the threat (or opportunity) that a subject believes another country represents, which hinges on the perceived similarity/dissimilarity between individuals’ own country and foreign ones (Herrmann et al. 1997; Alexander, Levin and Henry 2005; Mintz and Geva 1993; Geva and Hanson 1999) and which provokes emotions that in turn give rise to behavioral inclinations (Herrmann and Fischerkeller 1995).

Prior studies have used this framework to evaluate cues related to political regime and religion (Johns and Davies 2012; Lacina and Lee, 2013). But its applicability to the influence of autocracies’ institutional attributes remains untested. As Alexander, Levin and Henry (2005, 28) remark, images are “comprised of cognitions and beliefs regarding the target nation’s motives, leadership, and primary characteristics.” Indeed, as Geddes (1999, 121) stresses, “different kinds of authoritarianism differ from each other as much as they differ from

democracy.” This heterogeneity is precisely the result of differences in leadership, primary institutional characteristics, and motives of autocracies that broader regime classifications overlook. Such differences are of profound political relevance since they influence dictatorships’ survival, behavior, and, crucially, their vulnerability to external pressure. Our primary variables of concern are thus the three most relevant features along which dictatorships differ as identified by the extant comparative literature: *Personalism, ruler type, and electoral competition*. These three traits (and their combinations) constitute the key characteristics that structure autocratic rule (Wright 2019), and that are typically used to classify these regimes into broadly used categorical or continuous regime typologies (Huntington 1991; Geddes 1999; Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Gandhi 2008; Cheibub, Gandhi and Vreeland 2010; Svobik 2012; Weeks 2014; Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2018).

These characteristics might seem less familiar to lay citizens and thus the informational basis for informing attitudes based on them might be weaker. Indeed, we do not expect the citizens to be totally aware of and internalize contextual differences among target regimes.⁷ Neither do we assume that citizens will be informed about the effectiveness of different democracy promotion measures against different targets.

⁷ Although information about autocratic features is not always fully accessible to the public, mass media, social peers, and political elites expose citizens to partial information and visual cues about dictatorships’ traits and functioning. For example, President Trump stressed the instrumental status of Saudi Arabia when he recently called it “a truly spectacular ally” (*Reuters*, 18 November 2018). Several statements can also be found describing the type of regime and leadership and pinpointing the perils often associated with that. In 2007 the then President George W. Bush described Myanmar as a “brutal regime” and clearly referred to its regime type: “Americans are outraged by the situation in Burma, where a military junta has imposed a 19-year reign of fear” (*The New York Times*, 25 September 2007). In a series of remarks to the public about Libya in 2011, Obama referred to Gaddafi in the following terms: “For more than four decades, the Libyan people have been ruled by a tyrant –Moammar Gaddafi. He has denied his people freedom, exploited their wealth, murdered opponents at home and abroad, and terrorized innocent people around the world –including Americans who were killed by Libyan agents.” (*The New York Times*, 28 March 2011). Actually, Gaddafi has received many depictions along this line over the years by various American leaders (Ness and Cope, 2015: 260). Nixon called Gaddafi an “international Outlaw.” President H.G. Bush defined him as an “egomaniac who would trigger World War III to make headlines.” Reagan called him “the mad dog of the Middle East”, and said he was a “barbarian” and, interestingly, “flaky.” Similarly, George W. Bush referred to Saddam Hussein in the following terms: “the dictator of Iraq is a student of Stalin, using murder as a tool of terror and control, within his own cabinet, within his own army and even within his own family” (*The Guardian*, 7 October 2002). In other cases, U.S. officials have praised the holding of not-fully competitive but multiparty elections, such as in Ethiopia or Myanmar in 2015.

We propose that autocratic characteristics making targets more distant from American democracy – namely, civilian, popularly elected government and institutional checks and balances – are more likely to be categorized as adversary outgroup and threatening. Individuals can see different forms of dictatorship and their institutional features as representing more or less divergent from democratic rule. Farther deviations from civilian, elected rule may decrease the perceived legitimacy of other regimes, while deviations from effective checks and balances will likely increase perceptions of lack of effective constraints on the executive’s decisions. If these psychological mechanisms inform individuals’ preferences, it is reasonable to expect the propensity to support alternative democracy promotion tools to be “a function of categorizing the target as an ingroup (similar) or an outgroup (dissimilar)” (Geva and Hanson 1999, 810). Specifically, we expect negative attributes to increase support for the adoption of coercive measures (military intervention and sanctions) for two related reasons. The first is that aggressive measures might be seen as forms of inflicting punishment against outgroup countries (Nossal 1989). The second is that coercion (or force) is perceived as the best response against the seeming threat that other nations represent (Hurwitz and Peffley 1990; Alexander, Levin and Henry 2005). In contrast, arguably, viewing democracy aid as a supportive instrument and a positive incentive, citizens may approve its distribution to countries with characteristics making them look more legitimate and constrained. In other words, negative labels will more strongly guide support for taking coercive action; and may affect democracy assistance in the opposite direction but possibly less strongly – since aid entails support, but not necessarily a reward, and it is explicitly intended to promote regime change.

Building from these insights, we delineate the following hypotheses about the effect of autocratic characteristics. The first attribute along which dictatorships differ is power concentration, that is, the degree of influence elites and leaders have over policy-making and appointments (Geddes, Wright and Frantz 2018). Under personalism, one single individual concentrates these powers in his own hands. In collegial regimes, instead, decisions are controlled by collective institutions – such as a junta, council or party committee – so leaders are elite-constrained by domestic audiences (Geddes 1999; Svobik 2012; Weeks 2014). Personalism thus embodies unconstrained, erratic, and arbitrary power, which radically departs from the checks and balances and the rule of law that limit executive power in democracies. A regime led by a strongman might be arguably seen as more internally and internationally threatening and, thus, receive a negative image label. Certainly, as ample research underscores, personalist regimes are associated with more violent repression, civil war, interstate conflict, and pursuing of nuclear weapons (Peceny and Beer 2003; Way and Weeks 2014; Weeks 2014;

Frantz et al. 2019). Therefore, we expect that regimes headed by a single unconstrained leader will lead to higher support for military intervention and sanctions, while dampening support for democracy aid.

A second key attribute along which non-democracies vary is the leadership identity. Dictatorships might be headed by military leaders, civilian leaders heading a dominant-party, or monarchs (Cheibub, Gandhi and Vreeland 2010). This visible trait shapes leaders' preferences and their support network, which influence regimes' behavior and their propensity to concede and reform when externally pressured (Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Weeks 2014; Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015). Some of these regime types get further from the democratic ideal of elected, civilian government than others, and are more likely to be perceived as illegitimate forms of rule. We contend that citizens may perceive men in uniform as more dissimilar than civilian-led regimes since military rule normally emerges from irregular takeovers, namely, coups (Svolik 2012). They might also perceive them as more threatening to the targets' own populations and to international peace since the leader's identity might be employed as a heuristic to draw inferences about the target's motives.⁸ Several studies demonstrate that military officers have a comparative advantage in the use of violence and are indeed found to be more repressive and more conflict-oriented (Davenport 2007; Weeks 2014). We thus expect support for military intervention and economic sanctions to be higher and support for democracy assistance to be lower when the regime leader is a military officer as opposed to a civilian. Yet, in evaluating monarchies, other considerations may come into play. While monarchies, based on dynastic hereditary rule, have obvious dissimilarities with civilian rule; individuals might still see monarchies as rooted in traditional legitimacy and less threatening. Therefore, we do not have clear theoretical expectations about the latter.

The third source of variation among autocracies we study concerns the status of the opposition and the presence of elections (Hadenius and Teorell 2007; Gandhi 2008; Levitsky and Way 2010; Svolik 2012; Donno 2013). Despite not fully free, many non-democracies now feature regular, multi-party elections, which represent institutional configurations significantly closer to democratic standards of representative legitimacy and accountability (Miller 2015a).

⁸ As Weeks (2014, 6) emphasizes, "military officers tend to have substantially more hawkish preferences than the civilian audiences in machines. Why? Career military service tends to select for certain types of individuals and then further socialize them into a "military mindset" in which force is seen as a necessary, effective, and appropriate policy option. Often, militaries also have narrow parochial interests that cause them to prioritize force over diplomacy."

Relying more on co-optation and institutions to channel societal demands, several works show that competitive authoritarian regimes tend to be more inclusive, less conflict prone, and have better human rights records (Reiter and Stam 2003; Frantz and Kendall-Taylor 2014; Weeks 2014). Consequently, we posit, elections – and most especially multi-party ones – in the target regime should strongly encourage the formation of more positive image labels and, hence, lead to lower support for military intervention and economic sanctions but higher support for democracy aid.

Furthermore, we control for the duration of the incumbent regime in years to capture regime consolidation. Reading about the dictator holding power for a long continuous period may arguably elicit more negative images in individuals due to lack of legitimacy and its contrast with constitutional term limits present in American democracy. We consider three different values: 4, 10 or 25 years.⁹ Respondents are expected to more strongly support coercing longer-lasting regimes and oppose giving them democracy aid.

Besides political characteristics, scholars have identified additional component parts driving image formation and perceptions of similarity which may inform public inclinations toward foreign policy measures (Herrmann et al. 1997; Herrmann, Tetlock and Visser, 1999; Alexander, Brewer and Livingston 2005). These are culture, relative power, and economic and strategic links, which we include as controls to make the country profiles more realistic and minimize masking (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto. 2014; Dafoe, Zhang and Caughey 2018).¹⁰

Along with cues about regime characteristics, cultural differences are another major component part of a multidimensional socio-cultural similarity label (Geva and Hanson 1999). Religion is an aspect of culture that growing evidence suggests influences Americans' foreign policy responses (Johns and Davies 2012; Lacina and Lee 2013). We consider predominantly Christian, Buddhist, and Muslim countries and outline two mechanisms underpinning hostility towards the latter.¹¹ A first one is based on the growing saliency of religion as a heuristic to

⁹ These values are close approximations to the median, 25th, and 75th percentiles of the regime duration variable in Geddes, Wright, and Frantz's (2014) dataset.

¹⁰ In our design, for example, excluding religion or oil-wealth could make respondents use other attributes that are correlated with them as proxies and inflate their effect: e.g., monarchy, oil, and Islam.

¹¹ Including only (predominantly) Muslim vs. Christian countries, as other designs do, may actually capture the reluctance to use force against other Christian countries but not necessarily hostility towards Muslim ones. Therefore, to make the choice sets more realistic, we added Buddhism to our design.

estimate threat. With the rise of Islamic terrorism, and the launch of the war on terror by George W. Bush's Administration in 2001, religious differences have gained relevance, and many Americans have come to perceive Islamic countries as threats. A second mechanism concerns cultural identity. Religious identity and differences, and the lack of affinity with Muslims specifically (Kalkan, Layman and Uslaner 2009), are a driver of negative reactions and prejudices towards religious outgroups that might factor into foreign policy preferences (Lacina and Lee 2013). Therefore, we expect respondents to be more willing to use coercive policies against predominantly Muslim targets than non-Muslim dictatorships and less willing to use democracy aid.¹²

Another image component pertains to the target's military power. Since citizens weight the potential long-term costs of confronting a militarily strong adversary (Herrmann et al., 1999; Tomz and Weeks 2013), we expect individuals to refuse approving military action or giving fungible aid to militarily strong regimes. We tentatively suggest that citizens may want to debilitate or contain a strong adversary by imposing economic sanctions.

With few exceptions, most major oil-exporting countries are governed by authoritarian governments. How such feature affects citizens' attitudes is less evident. On one hand, oil increases the strategic and economic strength of countries by allowing them to increase military spending, forego cooperation, and avoid (or resist) international scrutiny and pressure (Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015; Wright, Frantz and Geddes 2015; Ross and Voeten 2016). Moreover, targeting an oil-exporting country may undermine U.S. energy interests and destabilize markets. Linking oil to strength, citizens might be wary of taking action against oil-rich targets. On the other, citizens might perceive U.S. national interests to be at stake in oil-rich countries and, for this reason, see engaging them as a way of securing oil supplies. Existing evidence seems to support this latter claim (Herrmann, Tetlock and Visser 1999; Muradova and Gildea 2019). We thus expect citizens to be more likely to prefer coercive tools against oil-rich autocracies and oppose the use of democracy aid.

Finally, previous studies have emphasized the importance of alliances and trade in shaping threat or opportunity perceptions (Tomz and Weeks 2013; Heinrich, Kobayashi and Peterson 2017; Heinrich and Kobayashi 2018). Inspired either by anti-communism, security concerns, or other geostrategic and economic interests, the U.S. has traditionally kept strong

¹² The potential impact of Buddhism remains exploratory. According to the dissimilarity mechanism, predominantly Buddhist countries may elicit hostile responses too. Yet, it is unlikely that Buddhist countries are seen as a threat and hence motivate support for coercive responses.

connections with numerous non-democratic countries. Allies and trade partners are unlikely to inspire hostility. We expect citizens to oppose the use of coercive action against autocracies with such relations to the U.S. due to their perceived trustworthiness, their alignment to national interests, and instrumental benefits (Herrmann, Tetlock and Visser 1999). Individuals should be more likely to support democracy aid instead.

Table 1 summarizes the full list of attributes, their values, and the hypothesized effect with regards to the reference category (top value). Those characteristics for which we do not have clear or strong expectations are indicated with an interrogation mark.

[Table 1]

Experimental Design

To evaluate the impact of targets' characteristics on individuals' support for democracy promotion instruments, we designed a conjoint experiment which allows us to identify and estimate the causal effects of several treatment components simultaneously (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014). Our experiment is vignette-based and describes a hypothetical situation about which respondents' judgements, based on different attributes of a potential autocratic target, are needed. The experiment was embedded in an online survey that was administered within the United States via *Prolific*, a participant recruitment, payment, and management crowdsourcing platform.¹³ Prior to the full-scale study, we conducted a small-scale pilot experiment (n = 50) to evaluate the measurements and the feasibility of the survey as well as to improve upon the experimental design. The final survey was conducted between May and June 2016. Our sample comprises 1,464 American individuals with ages between 18 and 65.¹⁴

Participants were first presented with a brief introduction to the exercise which includes clear definitions of the three democracy promotion instruments under study.¹⁵ Then, the following vignette described the hypothetical situation:

¹³ See Peer et al. (2017) for a comparison of *Prolific* with other platforms and a discussion of its advantages.

¹⁴ Table A1 in the Supplementary Files shows the main sociodemographic characteristics of our sample.

¹⁵ The introduction is as follows: "Democracy promotion has long been a key component of U.S. foreign policy. Further, as of 2016 still about 41 percent of the world countries are not democratic. For the next few minutes, we will provide you with several pieces of information about non-democratic countries which might become targets of United States' democracy promotion efforts.

The countries below are governed by an authoritarian regime: the government is not constitutionally responsible to the people, and the regime has recently placed even more severe restrictions on individuals' civil and political rights. In dealing with this situation, U.S. government officials are currently studying what course of action would be most appropriate to promote democracy. Please read carefully the descriptions of the potential target countries and respond to the question below.

The issue summary clearly states that the potential targets are authoritarian regimes; it provides a definition of what these regimes do, and then highlights the increasing repressive nature of the regime. We then suggest that this motivates U.S. authorities studying how to proceed but do not imply that some action must be taken. The design specifically states that the goal of foreign policy is to promote democracy and keeps general and constant the political situation in the potential target as well as its behavior; so the type and intensity of repression or human rights violations are not an attribute in the country profiles. This is done intentionally for two reasons. First, describing specific events or repression intensity might alter the baseline support for the alternative policies; second, these outcomes are endogenous to the institutional attributes of regimes, that is, some characteristics make some regimes more prone to conflict and abuses than others.

Following Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto (2015), who find that paired conjoint designs (without forced choice) come closest to the behavioral benchmark, we use a side-by-side comparison of two potential target countries. Paired designs make it easier for respondents to compare each country profile on each attribute. Each respondent is thus presented with six pairs of country profiles and, therefore, six choice tasks as displayed in

This exercise is hypothetical, and therefore it is not about a specific country in the news today. Please read the country descriptions very carefully. Even if you aren't entirely sure, please indicate whether you would support the use of these foreign policies (i.e., military intervention, economic sanctions or foreign aid) in each of the two cases separately.

To clarify: A military intervention consists of the use of military troops or forces against a third-country in order to change the target's political regime. Economic sanctions consist of government imposed trade and financial restrictions such as embargoes, asset freezes, aid cuts, or travel bans. Foreign aid consists of technical, material, and financial assistance to support pro-democracy actors (e.g., civil society, media, and parties) and initiatives. The United States has also the option of not using either of these instruments.”

Figure 1.¹⁶ Each profile randomizes information about the nine core attributes discussed above and also the order in which the attributes appear in the tables (see Table 1).¹⁷

Respondents were then asked to indicate what action (or actions) they think the U.S. should take to promote democracy in each of the countries described in the tables. They were offered three options: military intervention, sanctions, and democracy aid. The three outcome variables are binary, so participants must answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the use of these policies for each of the two profiles presented in every task (see Figure 1). Respondents were thus allowed to select more than one policy tool – since these strategies might be used in combination – or none. We chose these three policy tools due to their relevance and because they have different degrees of coerciveness and costliness. The whole questionnaire is shown in the Supplementary Files.

[Figure 1]

Results

As Figure 2 illustrates, respondents are overall less supportive of more coercive and costly instruments. The foreign policy tool most commonly selected by respondents is democracy aid: Over the total number of scenarios (six per respondent), about 53% of individuals chose this instrument. The second preferred policy is sanctions (45%). Unsurprisingly, the use of military force is the least supported policy (13%).

For the analyses we restack the data matrix so that each country k of task j presented to respondent i is a different row. The survey collected 1,464 respondents, hence generating a total of 17,828 observations. Since the outcome is dichotomous, we follow a standard strategy and use a probit model to estimate the causal quantity of interest (Rao 2011), which corresponds to the effect of one attribute averaged over the joint distribution of the remaining attributes. Put

¹⁶ The number of tasks intends to limit respondents’ satisficing.

¹⁷ We intentionally omit the names of potential autocratic countries in our design in order to disentangle the effect of target attributes, rather than trigger citizens’ preconceptions about specific countries. Nevertheless, we added a Manipulation Check where we asked respondents to indicate whether they had any country in mind when deciding among foreign policy options. No systematic pattern with regards to specific countries is found.

differently, it provides the expected change in the outcome of interest when a given attribute is compared to the baseline and relative to the other attributes included in the model.¹⁸

[Figure 2]

Figure 3 plots the marginal effects for each attribute and the 95% confidence intervals across the three instruments. For each attribute, we indicate the baseline category against which the other values are to be compared.¹⁹ Overall, the results show that the most salient attributes shaping public preferences are ally status and elections, followed by military strength and predominant religion. Consistent with our expectations, respondents refuse using coercion against allied countries and trade partners but favor the distribution of aid to them. The same is true for regimes that hold elections with competing opposition parties. Military strength strongly reduces support for the use of military force and aid, but has little impact on sanctions. The level of personalism, ruler type, regime duration, and oil-wealth are also partially relevant for some instruments and, generally, in the direction we predicted.

More specifically, and regarding support for military intervention, our findings underscore the preponderance of attributes measuring alliances and strength. Individuals are significantly more likely to support a military intervention when the regime is not a U.S. ally. Respondents are also less supportive (but not significantly) of interventions against trade partners. As expected, support for military action decreases significantly if the target is militarily strong; while being an oil-rich country increases support (significant at 90%). Long regime duration (i.e., 25 years) significantly increases the probability of opting for an intervention as well. Similar to previous findings, individuals are more likely to support military action against a Muslim autocratic regime.²⁰ Out of the institutional traits, public

¹⁸ We replicated the analyses using both the linear Average Marginal Component Effects and Seemingly Unrelated Regressions (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014). The latter considers the fact that respondents could choose multiple outcomes simultaneously and so the error terms of three equations may be correlated. The results are nearly identical (Table C2).

¹⁹ Table C1 reports models where several attitudinal, situational, and socio-demographic controls were added. Although values are randomized, checking the stability of the coefficients by including respondents' characteristics contributes to account for potential observed differences across individuals.

²⁰ Note that adding Buddhist countries along with a larger set of attributes causes the difference between Muslim and Christian countries to be significant only for the case of military interventions.

opinion is mostly sensitive to electoral competition. In line with our expectations, individuals are much less likely to prefer military interventions when dictatorships hold multiparty elections. Importantly, as hypothesized, they also view military force more favorably if used against unconstrained leaders. The type of leadership is irrelevant in shaping support for military action: the effect of ‘military’ is positive, as expected, but very small.

The results for sanctions are similar, as predicted, and fairly in line with our expectations. The two most salient attributes are, again, alliances and multi-party elections. Respondents are more likely to endorse economic sanctions against a non-ally. When opposition groups can have some electoral contestation, Americans are much less supportive of economic coercion. Further, support for sanctions is more likely if the regime is oil-exporting, long-lasting, and, importantly, is headed by an unconstrained personalistic (90%) and military leader. As for religion, curiously, it is both Muslim and Christian countries (as compared to Buddhist ones) that increase sanction approval among respondents.

Concerning democracy aid, preferences are mainly driven by linkages to the U.S. As expected, both economic and strategic ties with the U.S. strongly increase support for using democracy assistance, especially the latter. This underlines the importance of positive labels in shaping support for aid, and how aid is interpreted as an incentive or a form of support. Citizens approve using an instrument aimed at changing (and potentially destabilizing) allies and trade partners’ institutions, which might undermine their instrumental status. Further, militarily strong regimes and being a predominantly Muslim country dampen the likelihood of respondents choosing the delivery of democracy aid. Out of the institutional characteristics, only multi-party elections are significant, notably increasing support for democracy aid. Although the effects of personalist and military rulers are negative, as predicted, they are not statistically significant.

[Figure 3]

The administration of online surveys has several limitations that might affect our results, which we examine in a series of additional and robustness tests reported in the Supplementary Files. First, respondents may not pay enough attention to instructions; so we introduced an instructional manipulation check aimed at detecting respondents’ potential lack of attention. Only 1% of respondents selected the wrong answer. Excluding such respondents does not affect our results. Second, we introduced a battery of questions measuring respondents’ political information. Politically sophisticated individuals may better understand

the rationale of the conjoint and, especially, the differences between autocracies and consequences of policy instruments. Our collected sample shows substantial variation in the distribution of political information (Figure D6). If included as a control variable, estimates remain unaffected. Third, we are cognizant of the fact that our convenience sample is not entirely representative of the American population and thus the estimated effects may have limited external validity. However, studies comparing experimental treatment effects from convenience samples to those from population samples find substantial similarity between them (e.g., Berinsky 2009; Berinsky, Huber and Lenz 2012; Mullinix et al. 2015). Although these results strengthen the confidence in the usefulness of convenience samples, to dissipate doubts about potential biased estimates, we re-ran our models using weighted data according to different population characteristics (Huff and Kertzer 2018): our results remain robust (Figure C1). Fourth, we ran our baseline model using a Bonferroni correction for multiplicity in order to deal with ‘multiple testing’ problem (Figure C5). Results remain robust too. Fifth, our design allowed respondents not to select any democracy promotion tool. None of the respondents left all the conjoint tables blank and, also, no respondent selected all policy instruments in all tables. The great majority of respondents selected at least one instrument. Only 7% of respondents selected none of the options and 4% of respondents selected them all in at least one conjoint table. If these observations are removed, our results remain robust. Sixth, the conjoint tables allowed respondents to select a single policy, a combination of two strategies or, as said, none or all of them. We examine this by running a multinomial model with all possible policy combinations as dependent variable (Table C3). The results reflect the same patterns identified so far, adding an additional nuance to the overall picture: given certain autocratic regimes’ characteristics, the foreign policy instruments of economic sanctions and military intervention are coupled together, while democracy aid is mostly chosen for similar and instrumental countries. In other words, it seems that, given some attributes, respondents prefer to use a combination of sanctions and military intervention in order to enhance democracy promotion. Seventh, in a fully randomized conjoint, some combination of characteristics might be implausible in the real world (for instance, an oil-exporting Buddhist state). Hence, we ran a few tests after dropping the most unrealistic combinations (which represent a very small percentage of the total). Results did not change either. Dropping unrealistic combinations might generate a selecting on the dependent variable problem. Given that respondents are informed that the exercise is strictly hypothetical, we opted for including all profiles. Eighth, since image formation might be conditioned by individuals’ ideological preferences, Figures C3a-C3c explore whether the relative effect of attributes is heterogeneous

across ideology groups (conservatives, liberals, and moderates). Further, leaders and representatives are likely to be more responsive to their constituents, that is, ideologically-close voters whose support they rely on for winning elections. Some interesting patterns emerge: Support for coercive measures against Muslim countries is mostly driven by conservative individuals; while the positive effect of personalistic rule on support for coercive measures is driven by the positions of liberal respondents. The positive effect of multi-party elections on support for aid is also driven by liberals' responses. Lastly, Figure C2 reports results examining the effect of individuals' predispositions, ideology, and sociodemographic characteristics on their policy preferences.

Discussion: Mismatch or Congruence?

Comparative studies of democratization have long emphasized the relevance of international factors (Huntington 1991; Whitehead 1996). A crucial strand of this literature suggests that the success of active democracy promotion efforts is conditioned by structural and contextual variables of target regimes.²¹ This section discusses the implications of our findings by comparing them to the observational evidence on the actual conditions influencing the effectiveness of democracy promotion.

In their comparative analysis of competitive authoritarian regimes in the post-Cold War era, Levitsky and Way (2010) contend that international efforts to advance democratization are more intense and effective where both linkages to the West and Western leverage are high. Linkage to the West refers to “the density of ties (economic, political, diplomatic, social, and organizational) and cross-border flows (of capital, goods and services, people, and information) between particular countries and the United States and the EU” (Levitsky and Way 2010, 23). Leverage refers to the “states’ vulnerability to Western democratizing pressure” (Levitsky and Way 2010, 24), which is largely determined by their strength and size. These two factors raise the international costs of autocratic abuse and alter the internal balance of power in favor of pro-reform groups. Yet, strong linkages should lead to democratization even if leverage is low.

²¹ Quantitative studies examining the unconditional effect of the three foreign policy instruments on democratization have yielded mixed results. On military interventions, see Meernik (1996), Pickering and Peceny (2006), Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2006), and Easterly, Satyanath, and Berger (2008); on economic sanctions, see Peksen and Drury (2010) and von Soest and Wahman (2015); and on democracy assistance, see Finkel, Pérez-Liñán, and Seligson (2007), Scott and Steele (2011), Askarov and Doucouliagos (2013), and Heinrich and Loftis (2019).

Our findings show that citizens' preferences are only consistent with these claims above regarding targets' military strength, which decreases leverage, and significantly saps support for interventions and democracy aid. However, some mismatch affects oil. Oil motivates individuals to support more aggressive responses (especially sanctions), yet the observational evidence suggests that sanctions are less effective against oil-exporting autocracies due to low leverage (Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015). Another problematic incongruity affects linkage, the key dimension in Levitsky and Way's (2010) framework. Several works show that sanctions' success is more likely when the sender and target have an alliance or trade linkages, and when sanctions are imposed by the sanctioned country's main trading partners (Dashti-Gibson, Davis and Radcliff 1997; Allen 2005; McLean and Whang 2010).²² Nevertheless, our findings reveal that Americans are very unlikely to choose the use of coercive policies against allies, while trade relationships have no significant effect.²³

Concerning autocracies' institutional features, a clear mismatch is identified. Overall, our findings indicate that punitive action is seen by citizens as more appropriate in contexts where, according to the comparative evidence, it is actually unlikely to foster democratization, namely, under-institutionalized, consolidated, and personalistic regimes. Indeed, cross-national studies show that foreign pressure against such regimes is costlier to local population and that, instead of spurring democratization, it is likely to result in autocratic transition, internal conflict, or failed state (Downes and Montén 2013; Oechslin 2014; Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015). If, in addition, these regimes have little (or no) links to the U.S. or are oil-exporting countries, the prospects of fostering liberalization are even flimsier (Escribà-Folch and Wright 2015).²⁴ The few instances of successful forced-democratization are cases where Western forces targeted unconsolidated military regimes that had replaced democratic governments and competitive authoritarian regimes (Grimm 2008; Levitsky and Way 2010; Marinov and Nili 2015).

²² Furthermore, two of the very few U.S. military interventions that resulted in democratization targeted allied countries in a strategically relevant region: Haiti (1994) and Panama (1989).

²³ Note also that Levitsky and Way's logic applies to competitive authoritarian regimes, regimes against which individuals refuse the use of coercive measures too.

²⁴ External pressure against Muslim countries might trigger anti-Western backlash, which might thwart liberalization efforts. Foreign policy decisions guided by cultural stereotypes could thus negatively affect success. Nevertheless, religion is not generally a factor pinpointed as conditioning the effectiveness of democracy promotion.

Conversely, we find that respondents' support for democracy aid increases if target autocracies have multi-party elections, weak militaries, are trade partners and, especially, allies. This set of preferences is fairly congruent with the comparative evidence, which suggests that promotion efforts are more successful in countries with links to the West (Levitsky and Way 2010), and in countries with small militaries (Savage 2017). Furthermore, observational research shows that assistance is more likely to foster democratization if used in party regimes with regular elections, some pluralism and participation, and functioning state institutions (Carothers 1999, 2002; Wright 2009; Kalyvitis and Vlachaki 2010; Cornell 2013; Donno 2013; Lührmann, McMann and van Ham 2017).

To illustrate the importance of this, we ran a series of simulations based on the estimates reported in Figure 3. We assigned specific values to all attributes to create combinations that seek to be proximate descriptions of real autocratic countries and thus highlight the distinct levels of support that any policy towards them would potentially have. A first profile describes a Libya-like or Iraq-like regime under Gaddafi and Saddam, respectively. That is, regimes characterized by oil-wealth, no links to the U.S., relatively weak militaries, Muslim populations, with long-lasting, personalist, military rulers that had no elections. A second profile is Saudi Arabia-like, i.e., an oil-rich, long-lasting, Islamic, highly exclusionary monarchy but with important connections to the U.S. The third profile is meant to capture a regime like Egypt, an important predominantly Muslim, regional autocratic ally with only a few years in power, semi-competitive elections, and deep military involvement. Lastly, we have created a fourth profile resembling a set of non-democracies common in sub-Saharan Africa – such as those in Tanzania, Mozambique or Botswana – characterized by competitive party regimes, weak militaries, predominantly Christian populations, and few links to the U.S. Figure 4 reports the substantive effects: the predicted probabilities of supporting the three policies for each country profile.

[Figure 4]

Interestingly, among all profiles, it is those targets with the characteristics of Libya or Iraq that are capable of mobilizing the highest level of support for a military intervention and economic sanctions and, hence, of creating a more authorizing environment. Indeed, several rounds of unsuccessful sanctions had been imposed against both regimes prior to the interventions. And the U.S. government enjoyed considerable popular support when it enforced, jointly with other countries, a no-fly zone in Libya in 2011, and when it invaded Iraq

in 2003 without U.N. authorization.²⁵ However, and as suggested by the cross-national evidence, the military interventions and the fall of Gaddafi and Saddam did not bring democracy; instead, both countries rapidly descended into civil conflict and state failure. In a 2016 interview, Obama admitted that the Libya intervention was the “worst mistake” of his presidency and that it “didn’t work” because of “failing to plan for the day after.”²⁶

Support levels for democracy assistance are found to be the highest if directed at targets like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, with only recent and no contestation, respectively. Countries with civilian competitive authoritarian regimes with longer histories of electoral multi-party competition such as Tanzania generate less support for this policy. Indeed, Egypt has traditionally been one of the world’s top aid recipients (Alesina and Dollar 2000). This is explained by the key role that trade relationships and especially alliances have in driving support for aid. Lacking such attributes, African electoral autocracies might be seen as less appropriate recipients of aid despite their longer history of limited electoral contestation and, hence, their arguably higher potential for democratization (Miller 2015b).

Conclusion

This research provides new empirical insights on the formation of public opinion towards democracy promotion policies. First, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first paper examining the relative impact of autocratic institutional characteristics. Second, it compares support for three different policies that vary in their degree of coerciveness and costliness. And third, by comparing these effects to the existing cross-national research, our findings contribute to understand some of the micro-foundations of governments’ target selection.

Our findings suggest that when considering action towards some unsavory foreign autocracy, public opinion may select candidates favoring the adoption of coercive democracy promotion policies because or facilitate that responsive elites adopt them. For other autocracies, citizen’s positions could steer policy towards softer approaches and facilitate the distribution of assistance to regimes with relatively good prospects of success. Our findings have important implications as they contribute to our understanding of target and policy selection contributing

²⁵ See Jeffrey M. Jones, “Americans Approve of Military Action against Libya, 47% to 37%,” *Gallup*, March 22 2011. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/146738/americans-approve-military-action-against-libya.aspx>

²⁶ “Barack Obama says Libya was ‘worst mistake’ of his presidency.” *The Guardian*, 12 April 2016. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/apr/12/barack-obama-says-libya-was-worst-mistake-of-his-presidency> [Accessed 4 February 2020].

to the failure or success of such policies. Democracy promotion policies should be guided by the precautionary principle of having reasonable prospects of success. This is stressed in the recommendations made by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty to guide potential applications of the R2P principle. A critical element influencing the prospects of success of foreign policy tools is the characteristics of target countries. If citizens are more likely to support certain types of policies against some targets but not others, the influence of public opinion may lead governments to consider action not based on such recommendation but on perceived images. Responsiveness may thus conflict with effectiveness, and governments should try to find ways to reconcile both.

Our research can be extended in several ways. First, further research could replicate our design in other contexts (most notably, European countries), in order to test the generalizability of our findings. Second, future studies could also explore the interaction of elite cues, contextual characteristics, and regimes' actions in shaping public support for different foreign policies, and thus see which one has a stronger effect as well as whether the first two attenuate or intensify the effect of the latter. Finally, more research is needed examining whether and how individuals' positions are influenced by success expectations in addition to target characteristics and, crucially, how these expectations are formed.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Attributes and Values of the Autocratic Targets in the Experiment and Theoretical Expectations

| <i>Attributes</i> | <i>Values</i> | <i>Military intervention</i> | <i>Economic sanctions</i> | <i>Democracy aid</i> |
|---|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Political power and policy are controlled by... | ▪ ...a group of top regime officials (a council, party committee or junta) | | | |
| | ▪ ...a single unconstrained individual (the leader) | + | + | - |
| The regime's leader is... | ▪ ...a civilian who heads the regime's official party | | | |
| | ▪ ...a monarch | ? | ? | ? |
| | ▪ ...a member of the military | + | + | - |
| Does the regime hold elections? | ▪ No | | | |
| | ▪ Yes but only regime candidates can run | - | - | + |
| | ▪ Yes and some opposition parties are allowed to run | - | - | + |
| Years the regime has been in power... | ▪ 4 years | | | |
| | ▪ 10 years | + | + | - |
| | ▪ 25 years | + | + | - |
| Religion. The country is predominantly... | ▪ Christian | | | |
| | ▪ Buddhist | ? | ? | ? |
| | ▪ Muslim | + | + | - |
| The regime is militarily... | ▪ Weak | | | |
| | ▪ Strong | - | ? | - |
| Natural resources: | ▪ Non-oil-exporting country | | | |
| | ▪ Oil-exporting country | + | + | - |
| International military alliance: | ▪ The country is a US ally | | | |
| | ▪ The country is NOT a US ally | + | + | - |
| Trade relationships: | ▪ The country is an important trade partner of the US | | | |
| | ▪ The country is NOT an important trade partner of the US | + | + | - |

Figure 1. An Example Screen of the Conjoint Experiment

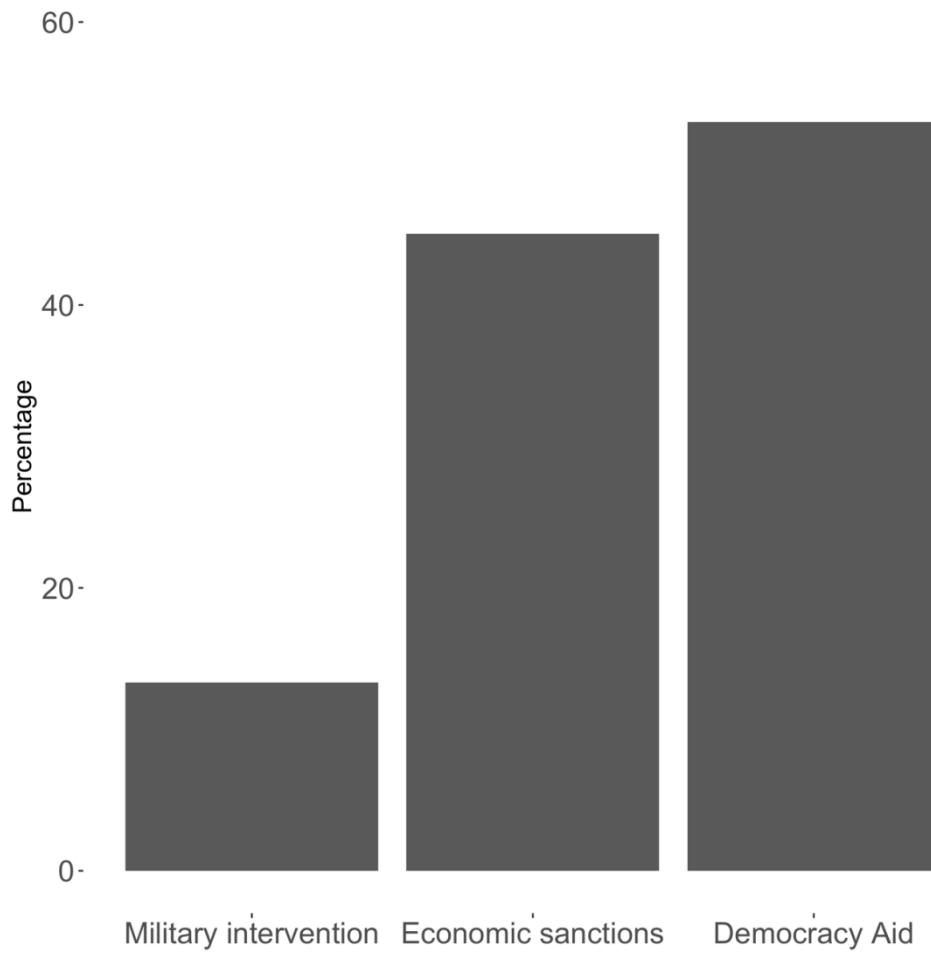
Scenario 1 out of 6

| | Country A | Country B |
|---|---|---|
| The country is predominantly... | Buddhist | Muslim |
| Natural Resources: | Non-oil-exporting country | Non-oil-exporting country |
| Years the regime has been in power... | 10 years | 25 years |
| International military alliance: | The country is a US ally | The country is NOT a US ally |
| Trade relationships: | The country is NOT an important trade partner of the US | The country is NOT an important trade partner of the US |
| Political power and policy are controlled by... | A single unconstrained individual (the leader) | A group of top regime officials (a council, party committee or junta) |
| The regime's leader is... | A civilian who heads the regime's official party | A monarch |
| The regime is militarily... | Weak | Strong |
| Does the regime hold elections? | No | Yes and some opposition parties are allowed to run |

What type of action do you think the U.S. should take to promote democracy? Select all that apply.

| | Country A | | Country B | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Military intervention | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Economic sanctions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Foreign aid | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Figure 2. Type of action respondents think the U.S. should take to promote democracy



Note: The figure shows the action respondents think the U.S. should take over the total number of tasks (6). Percentages do not add up to 100% because they could choose more than one policy instrument.

Figure 3. The effect of authoritarian's regime attributes on the likelihood of choosing a given foreign policy instrument

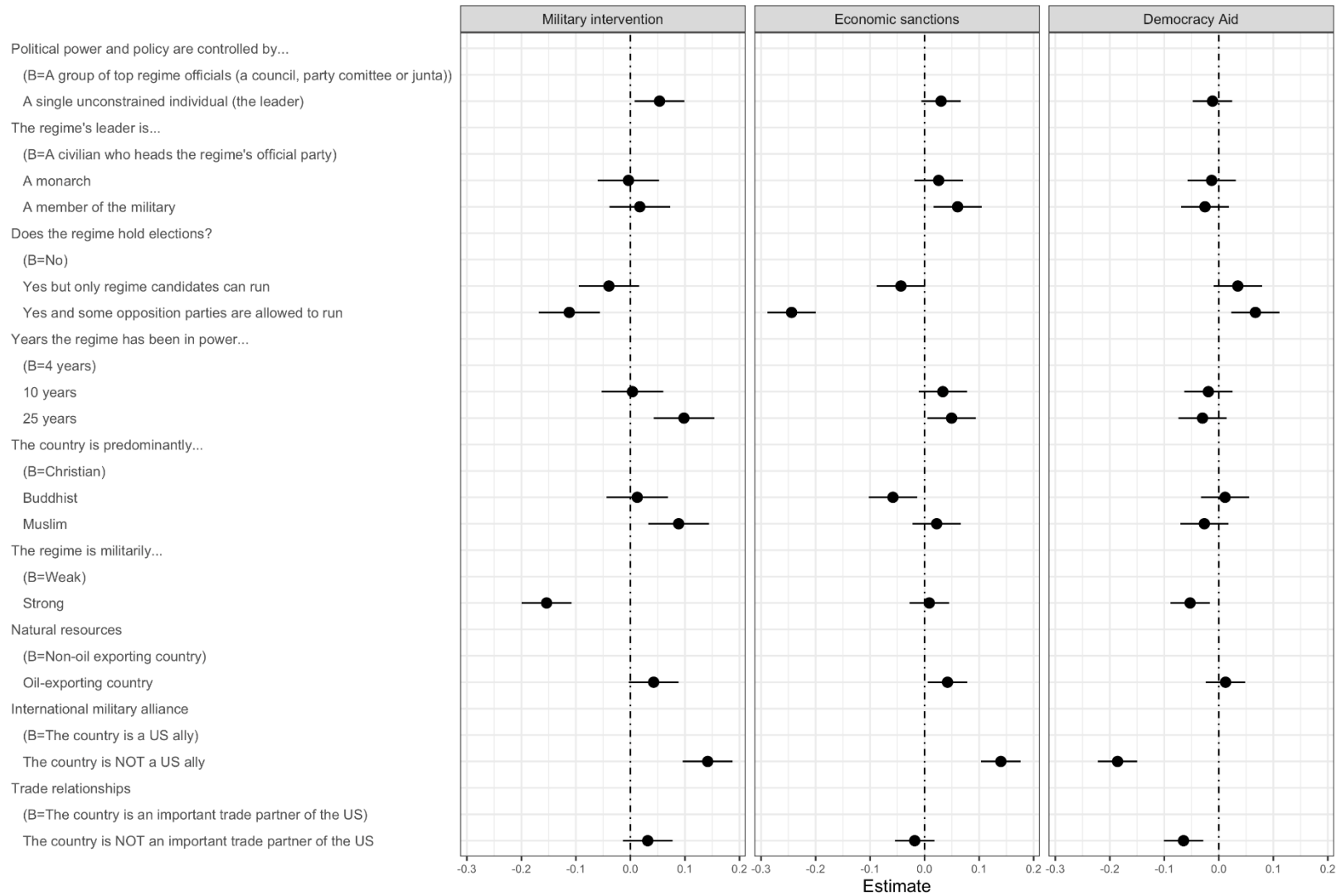
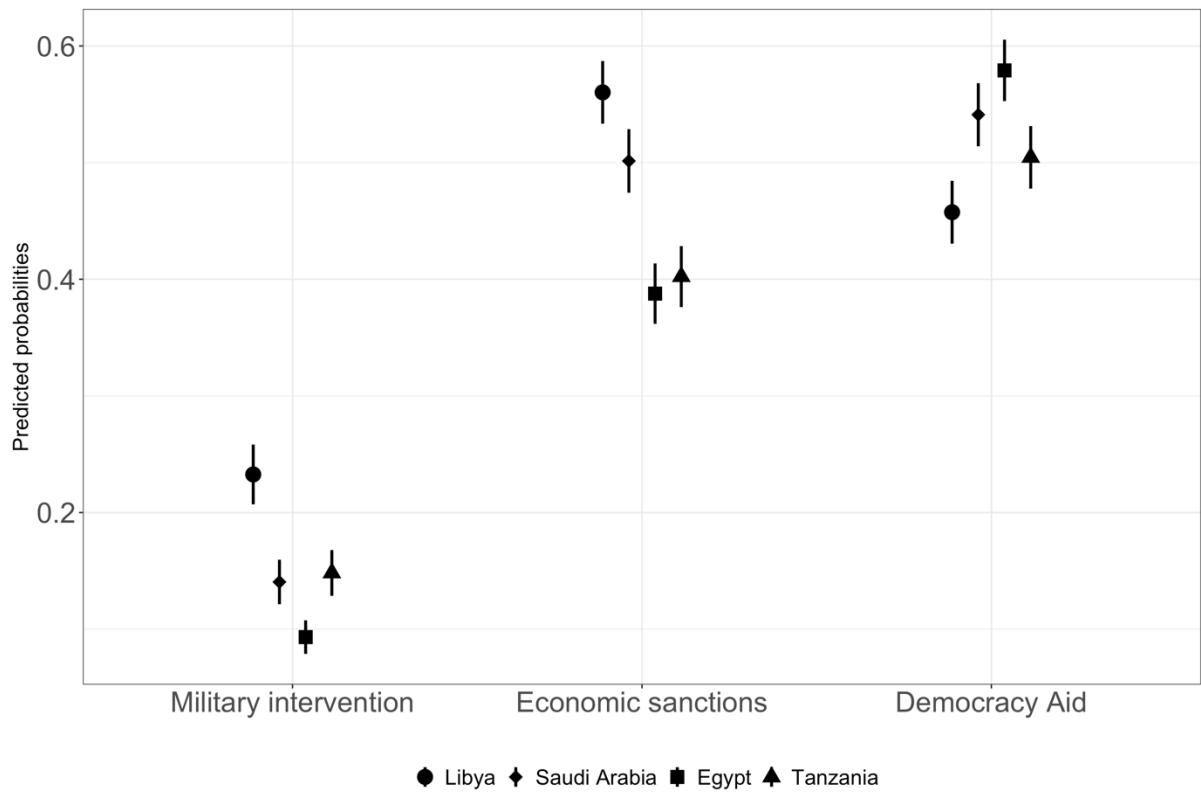


Figure 4. Predicted probabilities for alternative regime profiles



Note: The plot shows the predicted probability, together with the 95% CI, of a military intervention, economic sanction and democracy aid once the different attributes are fixed at values that correspond to each of the four countries.