

Research Question

Do developmental states engage in systematically distinct levels and forms of repression?

What Are Developmental States?

The term “developmental state” has been applied to governments of poorer countries that succeed in promoting high levels of sustained economic growth via fostering a capable bureaucracy and the strategic use of industrial policy (Amsden 1989; Evans 1992; Leftwich 1995; Wade 1990). The term is particularly associated with the East Asian “tiger” economies of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan (Evans 1995; Johnson 1982). However, it has also been applied to other countries, including Botswana, Malaysia, and Rwanda (Kelsall & Booth 2010; Routley 2014).

An important criticism of the developmental states literature has been the failure to provide a clear conceptualization of “developmental states.” In part, this is because much of the developmental states literature explicitly focused on country- and context-specific analyses of economic development, rather than producing generalizable arguments. We address this challenge by focusing on the two core aspects of developmental states. As Haggard (2015) explains, two principal features of developmental states are commonly emphasized: (1) economic policy and performance, and (2) quality/autonomy of the bureaucracy.

Repression in Developmental States

Another key feature in many anecdotes of developmental states is the high level of government repression employed during periods of growth. Indeed, in his analysis of developmental states, Leftwich (1995: 418) argues “the combinations of their sometimes brutal suppression of civil rights, their apparently wide measure of legitimacy, and their generally sustained performance in delivering developmental goods... are intimately connected.” While the majority of qualitative descriptions of developmental states describe human rights abuses, there has been little systematic analysis of how these regimes engage in repression, and whether it differs from the use of repression by other states.

As compared to undeveloped and other developing countries, developmental states are able to leverage strong bureaucratic capacity to maintain more cohesive and responsive intelligence units that facilitate selective, rather than indiscriminate, repression with agents that are less likely to deviate from the principal’s orders. Furthermore, because these developmental states exhibit growth and can provide social services that appease (and coopt) a broader spectrum of the population, the executive and his agents can rely on more targeted forms of repression to neutralize particular individuals who threaten the regime. However, developmental states still need to repress more than fully-developed democracies because they lack institutional channels to credibly accommodate opposition threats.

Hypotheses

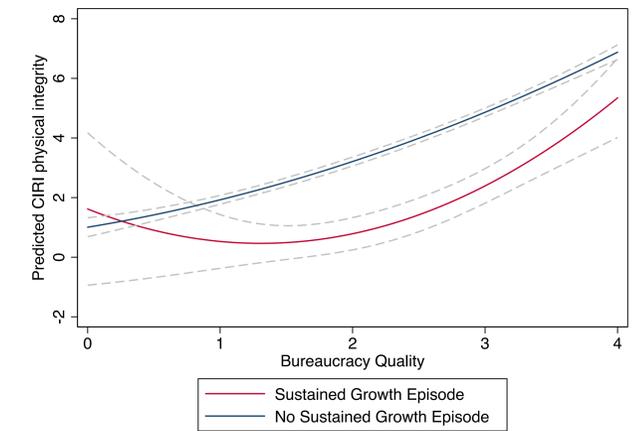
It has been shown that that factors associated with economic development such as FDI, pro-market reforms, and trade reduce repression (see e.g. Cao et al. 2013; De Soysa & Vadlamanati 2013; Richards et al. 2001). However, Huntington (1968) argues that rapid and significant growth in poor countries increases social unrest as new demands emerge and urbanization accelerates, and the potential for that unrest should concern the regime and economic elites. Building on this, we follow logic from Leftwich (1995) and expect that developmental states are *more* reliant on repression as a way to facilitate stability during considerable and sustained periods of growth, but that they will be able to leverage their more sophisticated bureaucratic institutions to use targeted forms of repression in an effort to minimize concern from potential (internal and external) investors. Accordingly, we derive the following hypotheses:

- H1: Developmental states exhibit lower levels of respect for human rights.
- H2: Developmental states are particularly likely to engage in repression focused on known/presumed threats.

Research Design

- Unit of analysis:** global country-years, 1984-2006
- Dependent variables:**
 - increasing values = increasing respect for human rights
 - CIRI Physical Integrity Rights Index (Cingranelli et al. 2014)
 - CIRI Disappearance
 - CIRI Extrajudicial Killings
 - CIRI Political Imprisonment
 - CIRI Torture
 - ITT (torture): inverted scale (Conrad & Moore 2012)
- Independent variables:**
 - measures associated w/developmental states
 - “Sustained Growth Episodes” (Hausmann et al. 2005)
 - growth rate in the current year and the preceding 7 years is 3.5% +
 - ICRG Bureaucracy Quality (Haggard 2015; Leftwich 1995)
 - 0-4 scale based on expert assessments of the degree to which the bureaucracy features (Knack 2001):
 - regular, meritocratic recruitment and advancement processes
 - insulation from political pressure
 - ability to provide services during government changes
 - Growth*B’cy Interaction = Developmental States
- Control Variables:**
 - indicator of civil conflict incidence (UCDP), level of democracy (Polity2), lagged & logged GDP per capita, logged population, lagged dependent variable

Predicted Probabilities: Respect for Human Rights



Conclusion

We find that developmental states are indeed more likely to engage in human rights abuses as compared to other types of countries. While more capable bureaucracies are generally associated with less repression, in the context of high and sustained periods of economic growth, they facilitate more abuses—especially targeted repression such as torture and extrajudicial killings.

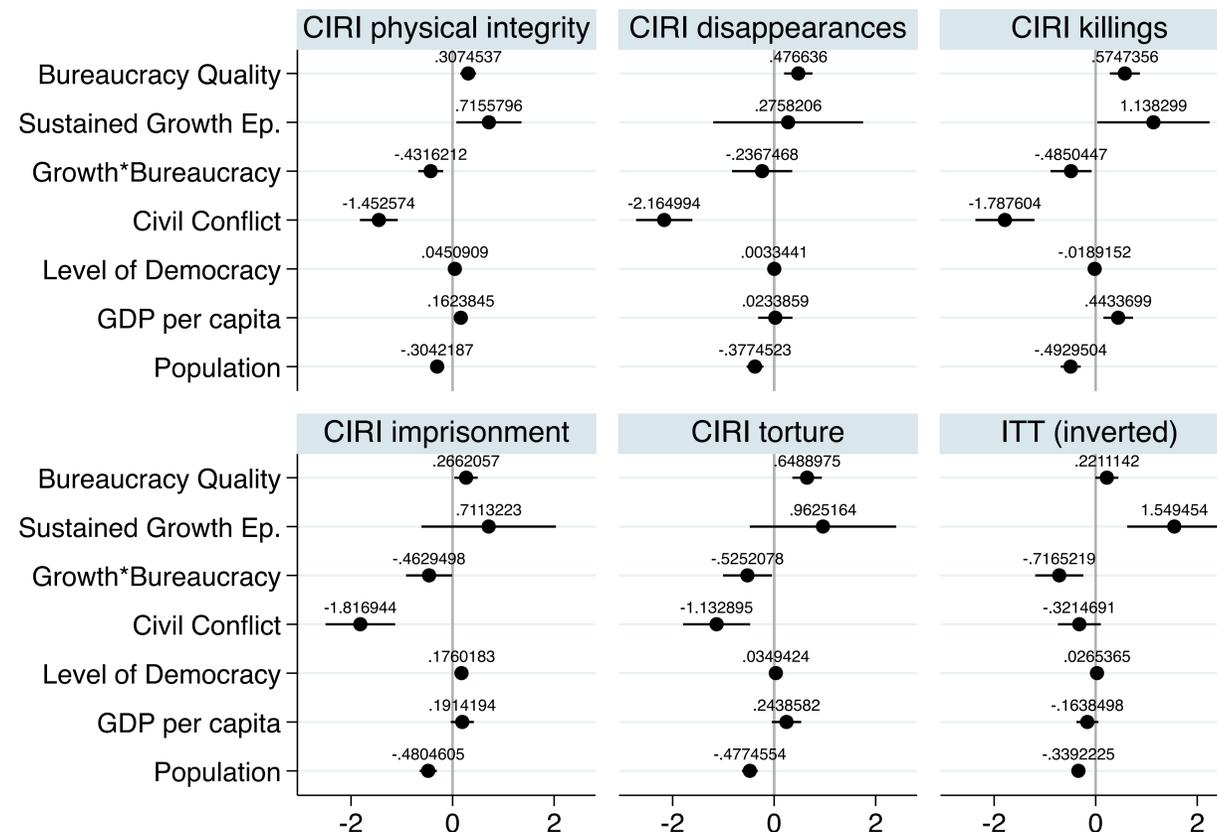
Next steps: (how) should we...

- reconceptualize developmental states?
 - trade as proportion of GDP
 - manufacturing as proportion of GDP
 - foreign direct investment
 - additional measures of bureaucracy
 - ...something else?
- incorporate additional measures of repression?
- distinguish highly-developed states from others?

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Coefficient Plots for Ordered Logistic Regressions



Constant & Lagged DVs dropped. X-axis = respect for human rights (lower to higher).