

How International Organizations Change National Media Coverage of Human Rights

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Abstract

How do international organizations (IOs) change the discussion of human rights violations and how does their message reach the broader public? I show how national media is a key conduit channel. I analyze media coverage from the Philippines to show that the International Criminal Court changed the content of coverage of the war on drugs. I find that the ICC did *not* significantly increase total coverage of the war, contrary to arguments about how IOs spotlight issues. However, the ICC triggered contestation between pro- and anti-human rights actors, which increased the proportion of media coverage focusing on human rights. This highlights an indirect role for IOs in shaping media coverage and helps explain why they have struggled to win public opinion battles. Though their actions amplify human rights supporters, media coverage concurrently amplifies the voices of their opponents. The ultimate result is likely to be increased polarization of opinions about the underlying issue.

In 2016, Rodrigo Duterte became the 16th President of the Philippines, winning a free and fair election among a divided field. He promised a tough stance on drugs, pointing to his intensely anti-crime record as longtime mayor of Davao City. Immediately after his election, he delivered by launching a brutal “war on drugs” with extra-judicial killings claiming over 12,000 lives by 2018. The war on drugs continues to be a pressing, ongoing human rights disaster.¹

Particularly striking is that Duterte’s administration has conducted the war on drugs (WOD) directly in the shadow of international law. The Philippines ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2011, which exposes Duterte and other nationals to prosecution for crimes against humanity. In February 2018, the ICC announced a preliminary examination into the WOD, though progress has been slow and often stymied. Despite the devastating human consequences of the WOD and clear international legal ramifications, the WOD and Duterte, personally, remain very popular among many segments of the population.²

The ICC’s struggle to gain traction in the Philippines is not unique. The recent pushback against international institutions in developed countries, exemplified by Donald Trump’s election and Brexit, is well-documented.³ Yet, an equally important, different battle has been waged in developing countries, where leaders bristle at the perceived imperialism of Western institutions, especially those focused on human rights, like the ICC. The time period 2016 to the present has seen many setbacks, with ICC cases collapsing after losing public opinion battles in polarized settings, as in Kenya. Five countries have either withdrawn or threatened to withdraw from the Court. Other ICC members have flaunted their obligations to arrest suspects traveling abroad. Prominent academic and policymaker voices have cited these events when questioning the value

¹“If you are poor, you are killed.” Amnesty International Report. 2017. https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/philippines_ejk_report_v19_final_0.pdf Accessed 6-4-19. See also Ravanilla, Sexton and Haim (Forthcoming).

²<https://www.bworldonline.com/understanding-president-dutertes-approval-ratings/>. Accessed 6-4-19.

³De Vries, Hobolt and Walter (2021).

of these institutions.

What explains the difficulty facing international organizations (IOs) in these public opinion battles? Understanding how an IO's actions can amplify competing voices in the media within the targeted country provides an important part of the answer. This study joins recent work arguing that national media are a crucial conduit channel through which the messages of IOs and pro-compliance actors actually reach mass audiences.⁴ Media coverage and its content represent the main point of contact for citizens with political events concerning human rights situations like the WOD. Even though public support is critical for the effectiveness of many IOs, the vast majority of citizens will not come in direct contact with an IO or NGO representative. Yet, their statements, messages, frames, and arguments are discussed in the media, which can affect public opinion and ultimately policymaker choices.⁵ The media is thus an important link between IO actions, elite politics, and any subsequent effects on mass politics.

Here, I provide systematic evidence about how the ICC has affected media coverage of the WOD in the Philippines. The ICC remains almost entirely in the background of the politics of the WOD until the announcement of a preliminary examination. From a research design perspective, this creates a unique opportunity to observe the media discussion of the WOD from before and after an important, external IO action. The Philippines political and media environments also share characteristics with many countries where IOs operate. The Philippines is an imperfect democracy with a partially free media ecology that isn't completely controlled by the state.

Empirically, I examine a corpus of thousands of documents from Philippine online newspapers. I use machine learning to classify articles based on their relevance to the WOD. This allows me to assess whether the ICC increased coverage of the WOD. I then use topic modeling to assess how the ICC changed the content of coverage of the WOD.

I find that the Court's actions are *not* associated with increased coverage of the core underlying

⁴Brutger and Strezhnev (2017); Creamer and Simmons (2019).

⁵Soroka (2003). See Chilton and Linos (Forthcoming) for a recent survey of the effects of international law on public preferences.

issue of the WOD. The WOD was high salience from its inception, so the Court's action had a limited effect on the extensive margin of WOD coverage and the Court did not reverse declines in its coverage. This is in contrast with theoretical arguments where IOs spotlight and heighten coverage of an issue that was previously unknown to the public or previously low-salience.

I do, however, find evidence of subtle IO effects on the qualitative features of coverage. The Court's actions are associated with an increase in the proportion of WOD coverage that relates to human rights. After the ICC's examination, a greater proportion of the coverage incorporates topics related to human rights. This increase in the proportion of WOD coverage pertaining to human rights is not simply a result of coverage of the ICC itself. The additional human rights content pertains to topics distinct from the ICC and its examination.

This effect of the ICC on the content of media coverage is most consistent with a theoretical framework that treats IOs as triggers of contestation.⁶ The ICC examination results in greater coverage of pro-human rights voices who seize on the opportunity to amplify their advocacy. But this is accompanied by increased coverage of the retorts and countervailing efforts of actors supporting the WOD. The increased human rights content consists mainly of coverage of public spats between human rights advocates and their political opponents. To the extent that the ICC shifts the conversation towards voices that espouse human rights and respect for international law, it also amplifies their detractors. While the Court has amplified certain pro-human rights voices, media coverage has focused on the back-and-forth, action-reaction cycle of public statements from those supporting and opposing the WOD.

These findings help us better understand the political frictions IO generate and the challenge they face moving forward - beyond just the ICC and the Philippines. Ultimately, IOs will enjoy their greatest ability to compel compliance from recalcitrant states when they have public support and can help sway opinion on a particular issue. Amplifying human rights voices helps with that goal. However, to the degree that this goes hand in hand with amplification of contrary voices, the

⁶Chaudoin (2016); Deitelhoff and Zimmermann (2019); Terman (2019).

end result is likely to be further polarization of public opinion. The IO sparks heated contestation that is reflected back to the population through the media, causing opposing sides dig in further. It is possible that these are only short term effects. But the short and medium term effects of IOs on the media framing of an underlying issue can affect the trajectory of longer term persuasion efforts, as public opinion and media narratives calcify. This study enhances our understanding of why IOs have had such a difficult time using their platforms and prominence to sway popular opinion, even in relatively open and democratic societies, like the Philippines.

These findings also highlight a key difference between the politicization of IOs in different contexts. For many contexts - like the populist surges associated with Brexit in Europe or the election of Donald Trump in the United States - the recent backlash against IOs can be best understood within a framework of politicization.⁷ There, political entrepreneurs seize on a low salience issue and politicize it, molding ambivalent public opinion against international cooperation. Yet, in many developing world contexts, IOs act where the underlying issue is already high-salience. The IO steps into the fray of pitched political contests with well-drawn battle lines.

The future effectiveness of many IOs will require figuring out how to win - or at least not fan the flames of - public opinion battles over the issues they seek to address. Contestation can catch IOs like the ICC flatfooted, as they spend a small proportion of their budgets on public relations and lack coordinated communication strategies.⁸ They often operate at an arms length deliberately, to avoid appearing political. The last decade has shown that IOs cannot avoid contestation or limit politicization. We are unlikely to see a return to days when IOs and international cooperation fly under the public radar. IOs and their proponents will need to find rhetorical and political strategies that can compete in the open marketplace of ideas, argumentation, and public opinion. Since the past is prologue, IOs experiencing increasing levels of politicization and contestation, like the EU or WTO, can learn from lumps taken by the ICC.

⁷De Vries, Hobolt and Walter (2021).

⁸Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System Final Report. 2020.

1 International Organizations and Media Content

Theories of IOs and Mass Politics

International organizations lack direct power to enforce compliance with their rules by sovereign member states. Yet, IOs can influence member state behavior indirectly, by changing the behavior of subnational actors. Several overlapping types of theories link an IO's action with reactions from subnational actors.

In one set of theories, an IO acts like a spotlight that provides information about the policies or practices of a government. Governments may be tempted to defect from their promises, and IOs act as an informational alarm. The information reveals a defection or helps subnational actors discern bad policies from stochastic shocks. The information helps subnational actors, like interest groups or voters, better demand that politicians implement their preferred policies.⁹ Specific to the ICC, Chaudoin (2016) develops a model of the ICC in which the Court action transmits information about the culpability of a government actor. This induces pro-compliance actors at the subnational level to increase their efforts to influence government policies, such as whether to remove or retain the accused politician. This increases the probability of compliance, but the marginal effect of the IO on compliance is moderated by the response of anti-compliance actors.

A related set of theoretical arguments highlights how IOs alter the social and institutional context in which governments make decisions. In the spiral model, IOs and transnational advocacy networks empower and legitimate subnational groups supporting human rights. Shaming from international actors and pressure “from below,” from domestic actors, pushes policymakers towards compliance with existing commitments.¹⁰ International law can shape citizens' interests and identities, casting certain practices into the light of legality and human rights.¹¹ According to Simmons (2009), “human rights accords will contain highly attractive principles for a quite receptive mass

⁹Eg Dai (2005); Mansfield, Milner and Rosendorff (2002).

¹⁰Risse-Kappen et al. (1999a); Murdie and Davis (2012).

¹¹Barnett and Finnemore (2005).

audience segment” (141), enhancing the IO’s ability to fuel mobilization.

Specific to the ICC, Jo and Simmons (2016) argue that: “When community norms [against crimes and impunity] are challenged in a clear way (signaled, for example, by ICC actions or statements), there is significant potential for a social reaction to law violations” (449). Nouwen (2013) calls this a “catalytic effect” of the ICC, where ICC actions can potentially catalyze general public debate over transitional justice. Each of these theories describe ways in which an IO can affect subnational politics. Subnational actors, be they voters or interest groups or NGOs, play a critical role. Their pressure from below encourages accountability and reform.

However, in many instances, few citizens come in direct contact with the actors in these theories.¹² Outside of victim communities, litigants, or activists, IOs rarely interact with citizens. Many legal institutions like the ICC intentionally operate at an arms length, for fear of appearing political. If IOs affect mass politics, what forms the connection between the two? And if specific subnational actors are mobilized by an IO, how do their ensuing campaigns reach the public at large?

The provision of information via the media in the targeted country is a critical intermediate step for each of these theories. The vast majority of citizens “experience,” the events in those theories through media coverage. The media is a complex actor in any political situation, acting as both a conveyor of information and a reflection of citizen interests.¹³ The media delivers direct, factual information about events. It also conveys messages and frames from political actors and elites.¹⁴ Simultaneously, it responds to the demands of citizens, reflecting a marketplace equilibrium between the media, the public, and politicians. Media members choose among actions and frames supplied by political actors, keeping in mind how their readers demand different types of coverage. To be sure, a country’s level of media freedom moderates the degree to which IOs might

¹²Dutton (2017).

¹³The literature on the media is vast, so I focus on the key points relevant to my argument. For a broader survey, see Baum and Potter (2008).

¹⁴Entman (2007).

affect media coverage. The theoretical arguments here apply best to countries without complete state control of the media or domestic politics. As described below, these are features common to many of the places where IOs like the ICC operate.

The Effect of IOs on Media Coverage

How, then, might IOs affect media coverage? First, and most directly, an IO's action is an event that can be an input into the media marketplace, possibly receiving its own coverage. Theories in which IOs spotlight particular issues emphasize this effect, where the IO increases the extent of coverage of an issue. The IO action itself is newsworthy for higher-profile institutions. For example, some refer to the ICC's preliminary examinations as "atrocities alerts."¹⁵ As the Court has gained more fame and notoriety on the world stage, its decisions have gained greater prominence in the public's eye. An IO's action raises the profile of the underlying issue that the IO action addresses, making it more newsworthy. Many of the worst human rights abuses are hidden and denied by state perpetrators. IOs can bring those issues to the foreground. Some issues related to human rights are long-simmering or ongoing; if they have faded into the background of public consciousness, attention from an IO might rekindle interest in those issues. For example, Nouwen (2013) found that the ICC increased awareness of the severity of the conflict in Darfur among Sudanese citizens.

Second, and more importantly, an IO's action can have an indirect and less ephemeral effect on the *content* of media coverage, which is distinct from the extent of coverage. By content, I mean the angles, frames, and voices emphasized in coverage of an issue. For example, the United States' use of waterboarding was framed as "torture" at some times and "enhanced interrogation" at others, which affected public opinion.¹⁶ Media coverage of LGBT issues in Eastern Europe alternatively highlighted the rights of LGBT citizens and the right to defend the nation against

¹⁵Stahn (2017).

¹⁶McKeown (2009).

hyper-liberal external interference.¹⁷ The discursive framing of human rights norms that takes place in the media can mediate the degree to which those norms take root.¹⁸ This effect of IOs goes beyond the mere number of articles covering an issue.

I argue that IOs can affect media content indirectly, through their downstream effects on actors with conflicting views of the underlying issue. IOs create or reignite contestation between opposing groups over the human rights framing of the issue. The media covers this contestation, shifting part of the media discussion towards the countervailing messages and actions of each group. This action-reaction cycle, and subsequent media coverage, can persist even after coverage of the ICC's action itself has faded.

Consider first the effect of IOs on actors supporting the aims of the IO. Research on transnational politics describes a variety of possible activities for subnational and transnational actors who want to advance human rights and use the language of human rights to counteract violations. These actors can provide information in the form of reports or testimonies. They can protest, give awards, or incite shame. They can lobby or leverage other governments or international institutions. Norm entrepreneurs work to provide information directly to the media.¹⁹

IOs facilitate each of these dynamics. Simmons (2009: p. 146) argues that treaties can engage previously inactive legal interest groups or “internationalist” groups to “take a new interest in the issues covered by the treaty.” The same argument should apply to supranational legal institutions like the ICC. Dancy and Montal (2017) describe how ICC actions can spur litigation from reformer coalitions.

IOs can drive attention to previously under-represented voices. A high death toll from police operations may be reported on as a crime issue by law enforcement. But when an organization of local lawyers is emboldened to label those deaths extra-judicial killings, their announcement may receive coverage highlighting the legal and human rights-based aspects of the issue at hand.

¹⁷Ayoub (2014).

¹⁸Wiener (2004).

¹⁹Keck and Sikkink (1998); Risse-Kappen et al. (1999b); Finnemore and Sikkink (1998).

An IO and subsequent subnational reactions may change the way an issue is discussed, even if the overall amount of coverage stays constant. Each of these triggered actions can elicit media coverage, which allows these actors to advance their preferred argumentation and framing using the discourse of human rights.

Consider the following two excerpts from articles about the Philippines' WOD:

The human rights group Karapatan hailed the ICC move, calling it a positive step towards establishing accountability and finding justice for victims of the drug war and their families. (*Interaksyon* 2-8-18)

A United Nations human rights expert urged the government to see the preliminary examination of the ICC into alleged extra judicial killings in the war on drugs as an opportunity to turn a definite page in the bloody campaign and undertake impartial and independent investigations ... Human Rights Watch said the ICC's announcement should spur efforts by United Nations member countries to push back against Duterte's efforts to legitimize his bloody drug war... (*Interaksyon* 2-9-18)

In both excerpts, the IO's action gave pro-accountability voices a chance to emphasize their stances in the media. In the former, Karapatan, a domestic human rights NGO, linked the WOD with human rights and accountability. In the latter, Human Rights Watch, an international NGO, emphasized similar content. The IO's action created a space for a break from the usual day-to-day coverage of an issue, creating a distinct event around which human rights advocates could coalesce. These voices filled this space with their own preferred frame, casting the WOD in human rights and accountability terms.

Additionally, a growing body of work theorizes how IOs trigger contestation between pro- and anti-human rights groups, which can manifest in a variety of ways.²⁰ State actors and elites may openly resist or defy the norms espoused by an IO (Terman, 2019). Leaders facing powerful "defiance constituencies" respond to external pressures by openly increasing their non-compliant behavior, gaining legitimacy from their intransigence. Some naming and shaming efforts trigger

²⁰Chaudoin (2016); Deitelhoff and Zimmermann (2019); Terman (2019).

backlash from those defending “traditional” values²¹ or accusing outside and foreign actors of bias against the target country.²²

The media often presents both sides of a particular issue, so the amplification of pro-human rights voices goes in tandem with corresponding weight placed on the response of accused politicians and their backers. Actors supporting the status quo and norm “anti-preneurs,” get to argue in favor of current policies.²³ The inclusion of a new actor, the IO, in the debate also opens up a front where opposing voices can criticize the IO itself. Rather than defending the status quo policy, an elite can instead shift the debate towards the appropriateness of an IO’s action.²⁴ These actors engage with the human rights frame, but with the goal of downplaying or discrediting it.

To again see this in practice, consider Duterte’s response to the ICC. The following is from the same article above, demonstrating how coverage of a pro-human rights voice is often paired with coverage of the opposing view:

[Then Presidential Spokesperson Harry] Roque also dismissed the view that the thousands of deaths in the war on drugs constituted a crime against humanity, because the war against drugs is a lawful, legitimate operation and a lawful use of force against a threat to national security and therefore cannot be characterized as an attack against (the) civilian population because they are civilians. (*Interaksyon* 2-8-18)

Duterte also frequently attacked the institution itself, demeaning or threatening his detractors. The ICC, Chief Prosecutor Bensouda, and UN Special Rappateur, Agnes Callamard, received the bulk of his ire. He stated that Prosecutor Bensouda would “get her comeuppance” if she pursued the examination.

Still unfazed by criticisms ... [Duterte] told [Bensouda and Callamard] not to mess with him. ... Duterte ridiculed Bensouda and Callamard, describing them as “black” and “undernourished,” respectively. “Go ahead, you investigate me. But I assure you – I tell them – you will never have jurisdiction over my person. ... if I meet

²¹Bob (2012).

²²Dutton et al. (2017); Snyder (2020).

²³Bloomfield (2016).

²⁴Lugano (2017).

them, especially the black lawyer, (Bensouda) and the slim one, Callamard, who is undernourished and not eating, do not f*** with me, girls,” he added. (*SunStar* 3-8-18)

In related sociological research, Bail (2012) refers to this dynamic as a discursive field, which is “the public (battleground) where collective actors compete to give meaning to an issue” (857). The ensuing framing contests attract media attention as the actors attempt to “influence the way journalists themselves interpret or classify social issues.” Contestation between these groups can persist well after their initial clash over an IO’s action. If the IO is the spark, contestation between opposing groups is the simmering fire, and media coverage reflects its heat.

Even when they are no longer focused on the trigger of an IO action, human rights supporters and opponents continue their discursive contestation, which keeps human rights content in the media. Both amplifying the voices of pro-human rights actors and also the retort of opposing groups are ways that an IO can shift the media discussion towards human rights topics. Both effects will manifest in an increased presence of coverage pertaining to human rights, positively and negatively. And I expect this content shift to endure even beyond the initial triggering event from the IO.

The above theoretical arguments imply two hypotheses about the effects of IOs on media. The first, most associated with theories about the spotlighting role of IOs, focuses on the *extent* of coverage. An IO action can increase the extent of coverage of a particular issue as it directly focuses on that issue and as it activates subnational actors to focus on that issue.

Hypothesis 1. *Extent: An IO’s action increases the extent of media coverage of a particular issue.*

The second, focuses on the *content* of coverage. An IO action can shift the discussion of an issue towards frames and topics preferred by pro-compliance actors, in this case, those related to human rights. This effect is amplified by the back and forth between actors contesting the framing

of a particular issue. Given the context examined in this study, I specify this hypothesis for an IO like the ICC, which focuses on human rights. I return in the conclusion to the generality of this argument for other IOs.

Hypothesis 2. *Content: An IO's action increase the proportion of media coverage about an issue that focuses on human rights.*

Philippine Media and the ICC Examination

From a research design perspective, the WOD and subsequent ICC actions represent a good place to assess arguments about the effects of an IO on media coverage and content. Freedom House classifies the Philippines as “partly free,” with leaders chosen by free and fair elections.²⁵ Popular opinion can affect the government either through direct pressure or through replacement of elected representatives. Citizens can protest and many human rights NGOs operate relatively freely. While not perfectly open, the Philippines is the type of country where an IO can feasibly mobilize meaningful action by subnational actors.

The Philippines also hosts a diverse media ecology that is appropriate for this type of study. Private media companies produce widely read newspapers, TV, and radio content. The largest broadsheet newspapers, like the Daily Inquirer and Manila Times, also have significant online presences and apps. By web ranking, the top outlets were the Inquirer, Philippine Star, Manila Bulletin, Sun-Star and Manila Times.²⁶ Media outlets can and do criticize the government. Though outlets slant coverage along political lines, they generally cover “both sides” of an issue. However, journalist killings and targeted campaigns against certain outlets have marred media freedom. Duterte publicly campaigned against some outlets for criticizing the WOD, labelling them “fake news.” One

²⁵<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/philippines> Accessed 6-9-19.

²⁶Four out of these five are included in the analysis below. Rankings according to 2016 data. <https://www.4imn.com/ph/>. Accessed 6-12-19.

website, Rappler, received his strongest ire, with the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission revoking Rappler's license. Rappler continues to publish, though Duterte has also targeted its founder with litigation.

In other words, the Philippine media environment is free enough to see coverage and content from competing political actors - per the theory above - yet it shares the imperfections found in many countries with an ICC situation. Overall, the Philippine media is "imperfectly free" according to the Global Media Freedom Dataset, which is similar to other countries with ICC situations.²⁷ The Philippines has the same GMFD score as Kenya, Georgia, Colombia, Uganda, Libya, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.²⁸

The Philippines has also experienced a distinct interaction with the ICC. Shortly after the WOD began, the chair of the Philippine Human Rights Commission, Chito Gascon, testified before the Senate that the WOD could fall under ICC jurisdiction as a crime against humanity.²⁹ Afterwards, the ICC was rarely discussed in the Philippines until late 2017, when the lawyer of an alleged hitman submitted a brief to the ICC. Following its practice of not commenting on specific countries, the ICC itself did not mention the Philippines and the WOD until February of 2018, when it makes a major announcement: that the Chief Prosecutor had initiated a preliminary examination of the situation. Preliminary examinations are the precursor to full ICC investigations.

In sum, the Philippine WOD constitutes an ongoing human rights issue that experiences a distinct action by an IO. This creates an opportunity to study the effects of the "shock" of an IO action in a place that shares many features with countries where IOs hope to have influence.

The above hypotheses about the extent and content of media coverage can be directly translated to this empirical domain. The two hypotheses imply that: (1) The ICC's preliminary examination announcement will increase the extent media coverage of the war on drugs and (2) The ICC's

²⁷Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle (2017).

²⁸Though it has a better score than Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Afghanistan, Burundi, and CAR, according to 2012 data, places where the effect of an IO on media may matter less because of more strict constraints.

²⁹<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/808902/chr%2Dicc%2Dmay%2Dexercise%2Djurisdiction%2Dover%2Dph%2Ddrug%2Dkillings%2Dif>. Accessed 6-4-19.

preliminary examination announcement will change the content of media coverage by increasing the proportion of coverage about the war on drugs that focuses on human rights.

Closest Related Empirical Research

A handful of studies document media coverage of IO actions. Feinstein (2009) argues that media coverage of the Special Court for Sierra Leone contributed to the success of the Court. She argues that outreach to the local media aided the court's mission by providing publicity for the trials and creating greater accountability for the judiciary. Dancy (2020) finds that ICC investigations spur increased Google searches about human rights, which could direct internet users towards media reports as part of the search results. Ramos, Ron and Thoms (2007) find that worse rights abuses and attention from Amnesty International can increase the amount of Western media coverage of human rights practices, though they do not analyze coverage within the targeted country.

Creamer and Simmons (2019) find that in the year of a Committee Against Torture (CmAT) review, Latin American news outlets have approximately 8 more articles that mention the CmAT or torture. They find that this effect endures, with an additional 3 articles in the ensuing year. Their study is impressive for its depth and scope, covering 15 countries over a number of years. I build on this work by taking a very fine-grained look at all media coverage of a particular issue, seeing how the content of that coverage evolves. I zoom in on coverage of a high salience issue, with hundreds of relevant articles per year, at a finer temporal level, to see how coverage content changes at the daily, rather than yearly level.

I also focus on the possibility that increased media coverage - even when it shifts towards human rights content - might not engender support from the public for accountability. The content of increased coverage matters. In the aforementioned study, Bail (2012) shows how pro-Muslim mainstream and anti-Muslim fringe groups entered the discursive media field after the rupture of 9/11. The media's emphasis on covering "both sides," led to an overrepresentation of the latter group's views, which those groups used to consolidate and deepen their influence. In the context

of IOs, Brutger and Strezhnev (2017) show how the media coverage of another legal body, investor state dispute settlement, more heavily covers investment disputes lost by the home state, which biases readers against ISDS. If the ICC triggers public contestation, there is no guarantee that pro-human rights actors will win this contest, especially since they are perceived as on the same side as a foreign, unpopular institution.³⁰

2 Corpus Construction

I begin with a large corpus of 33,458 articles collected from the RSS feeds of major Philippine news outlets, collected by The [University Center name removed for anonymity].³¹ As with most electronic article databases, one challenge is limiting attention to sources and a time window where content generation is stable over time. News feeds sometimes change which sections are included; feeds go offline or change location. This can create gaps or changes in the data generating process that might bias comparisons of content over time.

To ensure that I examine a stable set of news feeds, I focus on four outlets: The Manila Times, The SunStar, Interaksyon, and the Philippine Daily Inquirer, and use articles published from 9-10-2017 to 4-1-2018. During this window, the feeds for these outlets produced a steady stream of articles, without any obvious changes to the quantity or content of their coverage. These outlets represent a large share of the Philippine broadsheet and online media market, which is dominated by English-language media. The Inquirer is the most popular broadsheet and also the most visited Philippine news website. In terms of web traffic, the Manila Times and Sun Star are among the top five outlets, as well.³² Though it would obviously be best to expand the sample timeframe and to expand the list of media outlets, this is the maximal subset with stable coverage.

³⁰Snyder (2020).

³¹The appendix describes the full pipeline in greater detail.

³²Source: <https://www.4imn.com/ph/> and <https://www.m2comms.com/blog/the-9-top-broadsheets-in-the-philippines/>, accessed 8-30-19. Interaksyon was the online news portal for TV5, but was absorbed into the PhilStar media group, which is another major outlet.

Next, I used a dynamic, supervised machine learning approach to create a classifier for whether an article is relevant or not relevant to the WOD. Within 10 week intervals, I randomly chose 500 articles that contained the term “drug.”³³ I then manually coded a binary measure of relevance to the WOD for each of these articles.³⁴ I then used the term frequency - inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) scores for each article as predictors of an article’s WOD relevance.³⁵ Hand-coded articles are then divided into a training and test set. I use a Support Vector Machine algorithm to search for the relationship between TF-IDF data and a document’s hand-coded relevance classification, using the training data. That relationship is then used to predict the relevance classification in the test data. I repeat this process over different permutations of test and training data to search for the most accurate model.

This process is most clearly explained with an example. Many articles about the WOD use the term “shabu,” referring to a type of methamphetamine. Among articles about the WOD, this word appears frequently – it has a high term frequency. The term “shabu” is rarely found in articles that are not about the WOD – it has a high inverse document frequency. The classifier detects that an article’s TF-IDF score for “shabu” is a good predictor that an article is relevant to the WOD.

I call an article *WOD-relevant* if the classifier categorizes the article as relevant and it contains the term “drug.”³⁶ This results in very accurate out-of-sample coding. To check this, I hand coded

³³For a full description of the corpus construction processes, see the Appendix. I used this dynamic approach, by windows, because the events and language used to describe the WOD can change over time and I want an accurate classification, within a particular time window. For example, the police killing of young boy, Kian de los Santos, was a major topic around the time of his death. This dynamic approach helps get more accurate classifications by accounting for events whose coverage “spikes” and then fades.

³⁴I used a broad rule to determine relevance to the WOD: if the WOD was mentioned in the title, the first third of the article, or if there were at least three total references to the WOD, I counted the article as relevant. I used this relatively low threshold for relevance for two reasons. First, it allows for the possibility that discussions of the WOD could permeate even seemingly “distant” topics in media coverage. For example, an article may be predominantly about foreign investment. But if that article mentions how the WOD affects investor perceptions, I want to include it as relevant because that linkage might be a subtle way in which the WOD is tied to other issues. Second, the broader coding rule makes coding more consistent over time. By decreasing the number of ambiguous decisions, I decrease the severity of measurement error and make it less likely to change over time.

³⁵Term frequency refers to the number of times a word occurs divided by the number of words in that document. Inverse document frequency refers to the total number of documents divided by the number of documents containing a particular word. TF-IDF therefore measures a term’s frequency, weighted by how discriminatory that term is among documents. A vector of these scores for each term describes each article.

³⁶The second criteria decreases false positives - articles classified as relevant that are not actually related to the

another 1,995 articles randomly selected from the full corpus. Table 1 reports the high accuracy scores for a variety of standard metrics.³⁷

Table 1: Accuracy Scores for War on Drugs Relevance Coding, using additional articles

	Hand Code		
	Not relevant	Relevant	Total
Classifier			
Not relevant	1,887	15	1,902
Relevant	15	78	93
Total	1,902	93	1,995
Accuracy	$\frac{\text{true pos.} + \text{true neg.}}{\text{total}}$	0.985	
Precision	$\frac{\text{true pos.}}{\text{true pos.} + \text{false pos.}}$	0.839	
Recall	$\frac{\text{true pos.}}{\text{true pos.} + \text{false neg.}}$	0.839	

3 Empirical Analysis

Extent of Coverage of the WOD

Did the ICC’s announcement increase the extent of coverage of the war on drugs, per Hypothesis 1? Surprisingly, the data give generally weak support for Hypothesis 1. As a simple first cut, I look at trends in the number of WOD-relevant articles by day, shown in Figure 1. There is an overall secular decline in WOD-relevant articles, reaching its nadir around New Year’s Day. The ICC’s announcement does not reverse this trend.

As a deeper look, I next use topic models, which are descriptive techniques for a corpus made up of separate documents – here, articles. Topic modeling helps infer the prominence of a theme or issue in an article, based on how words co-occur. The approach first infers a set of topics from the WOD.

³⁷I also include the definition of each metric. They differ in their emphasis on false positives versus false negatives. Another metric, F1, balances both. The F1 score is $\frac{2 * \text{Prec.} * \text{Rec.}}{\text{Prec.} + \text{Rec.}} = 0.839$, since the precision and recall scores both equal 0.839.

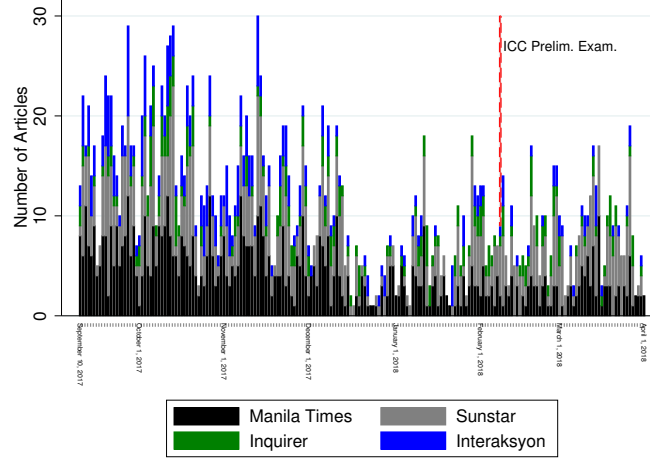


Figure 1: WOD Articles Per Day, Four Outlets, 9-10-2017 to 4-1-2018

text. Each topic consists of a mixture of word probabilities describing the likelihood of observing that word for a particular topic. For example, a topic related to the WOD may assigned a higher probability that the words “shabu” or “killing” appear, compared to their likelihood of appearing in an article about sports.³⁸

A topic model describes each article as a made up of a mixture of topics. The mixture of topics describes the proportion of that article associated with each topic. For example, a document about Trump’s comments on the Philippine WOD may be half associated with a topic about the WOD, half associated with a topic about Trump, and not at all associated with a topic about sports.

I denote the set of topics as $k \in K$ and the set of articles as $a \in A$. I measure the *prevalence* of a particular topic on a particular day as the proportion of the coverage on day t that pertains to topic k . Let $\theta_{a,k} \in [0, 1]$ denote the proportion of article a associated with topic k . Let A^t refer to the subset of articles from day t and let N^t denote the number of articles on day t . I define the average prevalence of topic k on day t as:

³⁸Topic models treat articles as bags of words, without syntax, and stem words to create tokens, eg “drugs” and “drugged,” are associated with the token *drug*. To improve the coherence of the topic model output, I combined certain sets of tokens into one single token so that their semantic relationship would not be lost. For example, I replace “International Criminal Court” with “ICC” to create a distinct token and to avoid ambiguity in the token “court.” I repeated this process for other commonly used proper nouns and the term “war on drugs.”

$$\text{Average prevalence: } \pi_{k,t}^{av} = \sum_{a \in A^t} \frac{\theta_{a,k}}{N^t}$$

Average prevalence therefore describes the mean proportion of a particular topic, across all articles for a day.³⁹

Figure 2 shows the prevalence of WOD topics in the entire corpus over time. I labelled topics that pertained to the WOD based on the words with the highest probability of being associated with a particular topic and several other similar measures. Within that set of topics, I also labelled four *Core WOD* topics, which are topics predominantly focused on the general, day-to-day aspects of the WOD, such as arrests or assessments of the death toll. For example, one *Core WOD* topic pertains to Oplan Tokhang, the official name for the first phase of the WOD, and general policing operations in the WOD. Another pertains to reports of specific arrests, often in “buy-bust” operations. In practice, the topics were fairly distinct and straightforward to identify.⁴⁰

Figure 2 shows a modest increase in coverage of the WOD after the ICC’s announcement (red line), though there is an initial dip. The increase in WOD coverage comes approximately two weeks after the ICC’s announcement. This increase is not from coverage of Core WOD topics, either. The ICC does not seem to have put a brighter spotlight on the day-to-day operations and reporting of the WOD. The increase in total WOD coverage comes mainly from specific, more ephemeral topics pertaining to the WOD. The next section analyzes these in much greater detail.

This weak result that does not support Hypothesis 1 is surprising given existing arguments

³⁹Of course, the total number of articles pertaining to the WOD or a particular topic can change over time. In the appendix, I repeat all analyses here with a measure of *total prevalence* which equals the sum of proportions across all articles: $\pi_{k,t}^{sum} = \sum_{a \in A^t} \theta_{a,k}$. Trends are similar using both measures. For estimation, I use the well-known approach in Roberts et al. (2013). I set the number of topics is set to 300. Below, I show results where an algorithm chooses the number of topics.

⁴⁰The appendix provides more examples and greater detail on topic labelling. I used four commonly reported metrics that describe the words associated with a topic: (1) words with the highest probability of being associated with a particular topic, (2) FREX (Bischof and Airolidi, 2012), (3) lift (Taddy, 2013) and (4) score (Chang, 2011). The first metric is straightforward; it measures the likelihood that a word appears in a particular topic. The other three metrics up-weight words that are more likely to be associated with a topic *and* up-weight words that are more exclusively associated with a topic.

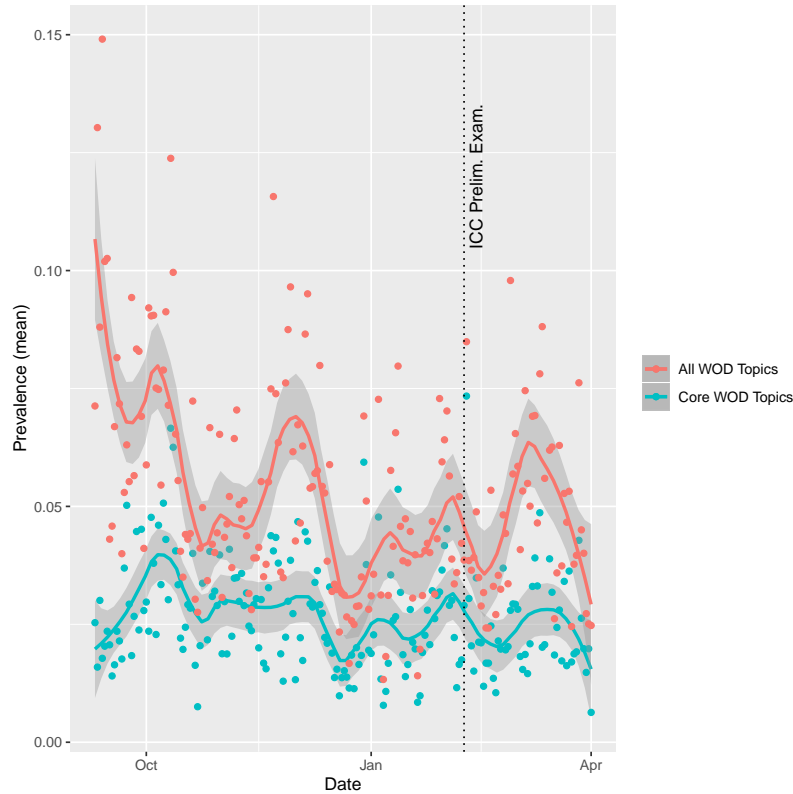


Figure 2: Average Prevalence of War on Drugs Topics, Sep. 2017 - Apr. 2018

about how IOs can spotlight particular issues. However, this (null) result is worth emphasis because it shows a key difference between theory and reality in many contexts. Many theories argue that an IO can increase awareness of and attention to a previously hidden issue policy. These theories have in mind low-salience or technocratic issues. While this is often appropriate, many prominent issues, like the WOD receive extensive coverage *before* any IO scrutiny. Incumbent politicians may have already deliberately placed the issue on the public political stage. This is not unique to the Philippines. In Kenya, violence in 2010 (which would be the later focus of an ICC investigation) was well-covered before any ICC involvement. In Columbia, the civil war and subsequent peace efforts were and remain frequent topics of media coverage. Since the wheels of international justice turn slowly, it is possible that many human rights situations have already received or continue to receive coverage from local media. Media outlets also allocate finite space to a particular issue. So

if one aspect of the WOD gains in prominence, it likely displaces another WOD article that might have been published at that same time.

3.1 Human Rights Content of Coverage

If the ICC didn't change the total coverage of the WOD, did it change the qualitative focus - or content - of that coverage? To assess Hypothesis 2, I again estimate a topic model, using only the 2,218 WOD-relevant articles. I labelled two categories of topics, those pertaining to the ICC and those pertaining to human rights. Only one distinct topic covers the ICC. It emphasizes the ICC, its examination, and Duterte's withdrawal.

The ten human rights topics are those with "human rights" among their highest probability score words. Topics containing the term "human rights" were also more likely to contain words associated with a related frames, like "extra-judicial killing" or "crimes against humanity," indicating that these are topics with an overall framing that is geared towards human rights-related content. Figure 3 shows abbreviated examples of articles associated with the ICC topic (left side) and one of the other prominent human rights topics (right side). The example human rights topic pertains to a series of high profile public spats between Duterte and UN Commission on Human Rights officials, namely Zeid al-Hussein and Agnes Caillamard. Here, too, the words with the highest probability of appearing in a topic lend credence to the coherence of the topics and my labels.⁴¹

The left pane of Figure 4 shows the average prevalence of the ICC and human rights topics by day, marked with the blue and red dots and smoothed loess lines, respectively. Looking at the ICC topic, the ICC receives very little coverage until the announcement of the examination. Once the examination is announced, the ICC is a major component of coverage of the WOD, but for a relatively narrow window of time. ICC topics make up over 30% of the coverage of the WOD

⁴¹I use a topic model with 75 topics to again allow for fine-grained topics. I choose a smaller number of topics, since this is a subset of the broader corpus. Below, I again allow an algorithm to choose the number of topics and find similar results. See appendix for more details about topic labelling.

ICC	UN/HRO Spats
Harry Roque s former NGO rebuts Malaca ang arguments on ICC March 15, 2018, 10:28 PM Centerlaw, former humanrights NGO of now Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque, The Center for International Law (Ce	DEFINITELY NOT AGNES Palace rejects Iceland exec s call for Callamard to probe alleged EJKs in PH Jelly Musico, Philippine News Agency February 27, 2018, 3:19 PM Reuters file photo of UN Special
The Philippines government has urged the ICC (ICC) not to allow itself to be used by some sectors that are out to destabilize President Rodrigo Duterte s administration. Speaking before the Genera	Malaca ang on Wednesday called United Nations (UN) special rapporteur on extra judicial executions Agnes Callamard incompetent and unfair in assessing the Philippines war on illegal drugs. Palace s
The Philippines may pull out its membership from the ICC (ICC) if it would not observe the principle of complementarity, which states that it will only exercise jurisdiction if a state is unwilling	Malaca ang on Saturday slammed the United Nations humanrights chief for his remarks against President Rodrigo Duterte. Palace spokesman Harry Roque said the UN s High Commissioner for humanrights Ze

Figure 3: Example Documents from the ICC topic and one Human Rights Topic

for about a week after the announcement, which is substantial. But then this topic fades to the background relatively quickly. Coverage of the ICC also increases substantially several weeks after the examination announcement. This corresponds with Duterte’s decision to withdraw from the Rome Statute. With the withdrawal announcement, the ICC returns as a focus of coverage to an even greater than with the examination announcement, with the ICC making up 40-60% of the WOD coverage and fading less quickly.⁴²

More importantly, how did the prevalence of human rights topics change after the ICC’s examination announcement? These figures show systematic evidence that actions by IOs can *indirectly* affect the media conversation about violations of international criminal law. Overall, coverage of the WOD pertaining to human rights topics fades over time, as shown in red. Human rights topics decline around Christmas 2017, which also corresponds with a general decrease in coverage of the WOD during the religious holiday. In terms of average prevalence, human rights coverage declines steadily and reaches its lowest points in the month before the ICC examination announcement.

However, after the ICC examination announcement, human rights returns to greater prevalence

⁴²From a measurement perspective, the fact that the ICC topics are well-concentrated at a time that lines up with the corresponding events lends credence to the claim that the topic model is performing well at distinguishing topics.

in media coverage - *distinct from any coverage of the ICC itself*. In the weeks following the ICC announcement, the proportion of WOD coverage pertaining to human rights topics reaches its highest level, over the whole time window. On average, 15-25% of the WOD coverage after the ICC announcement pertains to human rights, which is a level not sustained since the earliest parts of the analysis window.

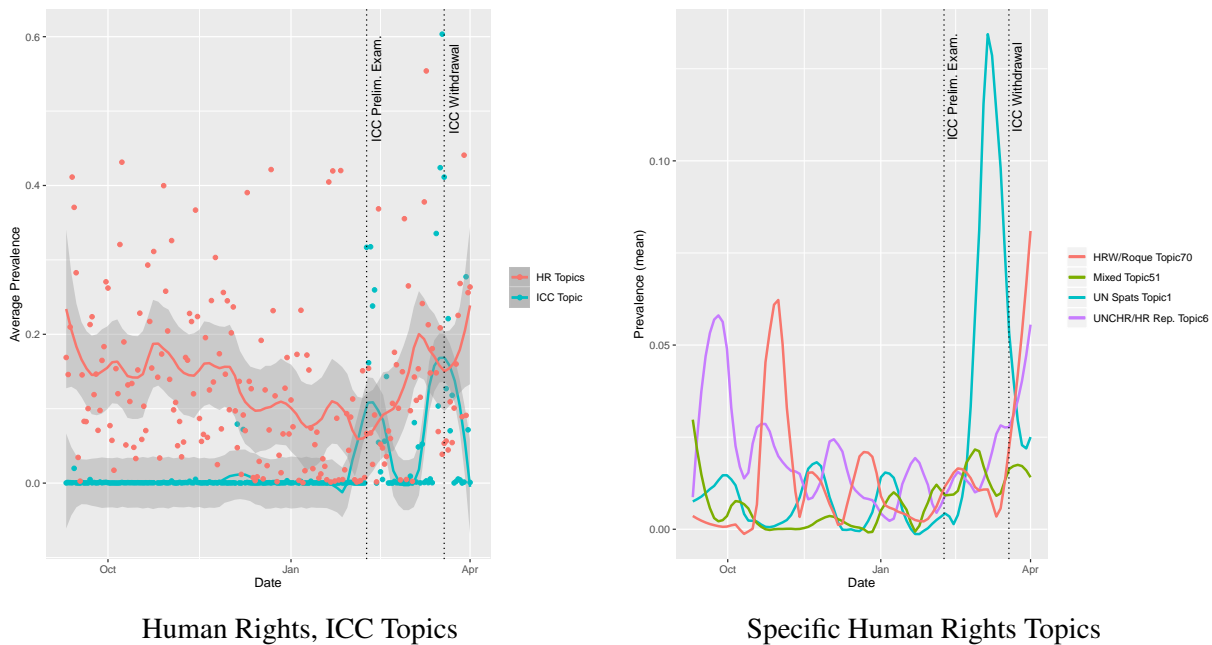


Figure 4: Effect of ICC on Human Rights Topics and ICC Topics,, Sep. 2017 - Apr. 2018

Why did coverage of human rights topics increase after the ICC's announcement? The increased coverage is associated with a subset of the human rights topics which chronicle contestation between human rights advocates and Duterte. The right pane of Figure 4 show smoothed lines for the prevalence of several human rights topics over time. For clarity, I focus on those that increase most after the ICC's announcement.⁴³

The blue and purple topics that spike after the ICC examination pertain to a highly public spat between Duterte and U.N. officials, notably High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad al-Hussein.⁴⁴ On March 1, 2018, Duterte instructed police to ignore the UN Special Rapporteur,

⁴³The appendix shows the full set of Human Rights topics over time.

⁴⁴The blue is the same topic with example documents in Figure 3, right side.

Agnes Callamard. Later that week, his spokesman invited her to “swim in the Pasig River.”⁴⁵ On March 7, 2018, al-Hussein condemned Duterte in a speech before the Human Rights Council.⁴⁶ During a later news conference, he suggested that Duterte needed “psychiatric evaluation.” Duterte responded by calling al-Hussein an “empty-headed... son of a wh* * *.”⁴⁷

While the trends in topics are apparent with visual inspection, Figure 5 shows a statistical assessment of the prevalence of topics in articles before versus after the ICC’s examination announcement.⁴⁸ Each point and corresponding 95% confidence interval shows the expected change in topic prevalence for an article after the ICC’s announcement compared to before. Appropriately, comparing coverage after the ICC announcement to before, there is a large and statistically significant increase in ICC coverage. The increase in coverage of spats between Duterte and human rights officials is also large and significant. The only other topic with a statistically significant increase after the ICC is the topic labelled “HRW/Roque.” This topic pertains to Harry Roque, Duterte’s spokesperson who many of the official statements in response to the ICC’s examination and the subsequent withdrawal.⁴⁹

3.2 Threats to Inference, Robustness Checks

Exogeneity

I have treated the ICC examination as an exogenous shock to media coverage. It is possible that coverage of the WOD anticipated the ICC’s examination, or vice versa. If the former were the case, media members might have changed coverage in anticipation of an ICC announcement. If the latter were the case, the ICC might be strategically timing its announcement based on changes

⁴⁵<https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/inside-track/197333-harry-roque-agnes-callamard-pasig>

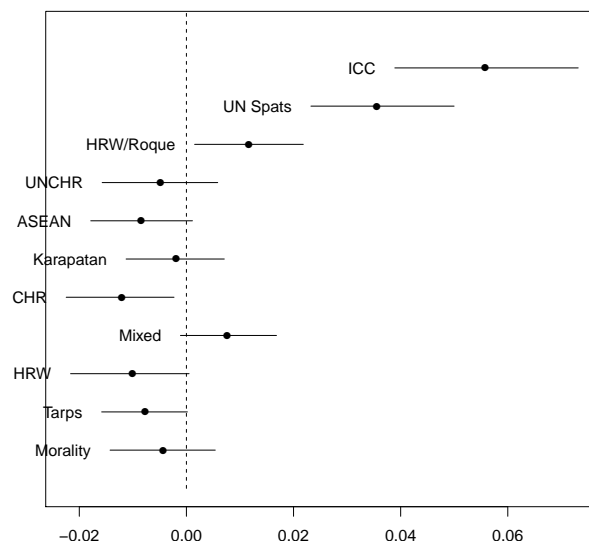
⁴⁶<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22772&LangID=E>.

⁴⁷<https://www.rappler.com/nation/199543-duterte-calls-un-rights-chief-empty-headed>.

⁴⁸Roberts et al. (2013).

⁴⁹This topic also spikes a little bit before the ICC examination announcement. This corresponds with Roque’s initial appointment, which was met with intense skepticism, since, ironically, Roque was a former human rights attorney.

Figure 5: Topic Prevalence Before/After ICC, Structural topic model estimates



in public opinion about the WOD and/or changes in the favorability of media coverage.

However, both are very unlikely. With respect to whether the media anticipated an ICC announcement, the ICC is a notoriously close-lipped institution. Journalists covering the WOD, even those that focused on the ICC, received little forewarning. One journalist, who had cultivated extensive contacts with the Court, said that [they] had less than two days forewarning. And even still, their outlet held the story until the official announcement.⁵⁰ In many other ICC situations, government officials and NGOs have complained about the lack of communication between the Office of the Prosecutor and individuals in the country in question. The 2020 External Report by experts on the ICC lambasted the Court for its poor communication and outreach.⁵¹ The “distance” between the ICC and discussion and realities on the ground has been a focus of recent scholarly work as well.⁵² In qualitative interviews in the Republic of Georgia with 10 individuals from 8 governmen-

⁵⁰ Author’s interview, 9-9-19.

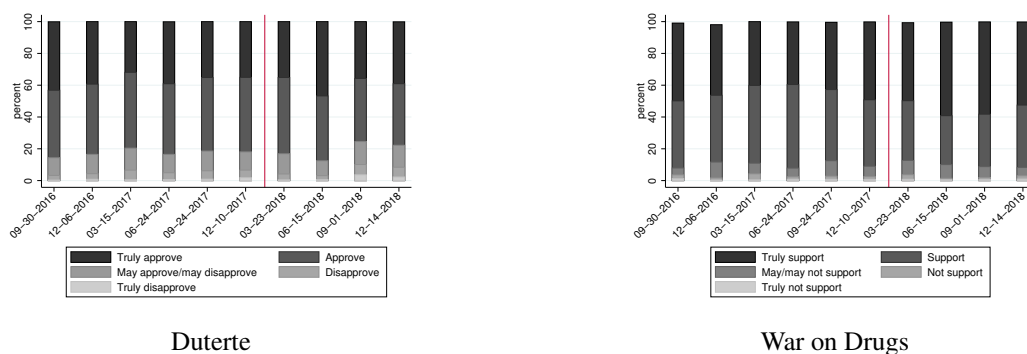
⁵¹ Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System Final Report. 2020.

⁵² Clark (2018).

tal and non-governmental organizations, almost every single person mentioned how the ICC does not communicate much, and certainly not about the timing or content of an examination.⁵³ This secrecy is by design. Since the OTP is an investigative body, they do not disclose anything about the timing or content of their actions.

With respect to strategic anticipation by the ICC, this too is unlikely. Figure 6 summarizes responses from nationally representative, quarterly surveys about Duterte’s approval rating (left pane) and approval of the WOD (right pane).⁵⁴ Both remain very popular, without any substantial changes in the run up to the ICC’s announcement. It is therefore unlikely that the ICC timed their examination based on an underlying trend in political support for Duterte or the WOD.

Figure 6: Approval of Duterte, War on Drugs



Source: Pulse Asia Ulat Ng Bayan Surveys. Questions were: “Do you support the campaign against illegal drugs?” and “Do you approve of the performance of Rodrigo Duterte?”

Placebo Testing

Are the spikes in human rights coverage after the ICC’s announcement coincidental? It is possible that spikes in the human rights content of WOD coverage simply occur over time, and they might coincidentally occur after the ICC’s examination. There are three pieces of evidence that make

⁵³ Author’s interviews, May 2019.

⁵⁴ Ulat Ng Bayan (translated roughly, “Report on the Nation”), from Pulse Asia. See appendix for similar evidence from Social Weather Stations polling data.

my interpretation of results more plausible: an IO triggered contestation which shifted coverage towards human rights topics. First, the topics that gain prevalence after the ICC are indirectly tied to the Court. The UN officials at the center of the topic related to public barbs between Duterte and the UN explicitly mention the ICC. One of the largest triggers in the spats between Duterte and international human rights actors - al Hussein's remarks at the UN Human Rights Council - directly referenced the ICC. Earlier in that same UN session, Iceland's foreign minister had also provoked the ire of Philippine officials with his remarks about the ICC and the WOD.⁵⁵

Following the ICC's announcement of plans to open a preliminary examination, the authorities announced their willingness to work with the UN on drug-related challenges. I deplore President Duterte's statement last week to elite police units that they should not cooperate [with international actors].⁵⁶

Second, the other large spike in Human Rights topics that occurred was also tied to an international institution: ASEAN. In November of 2017, the prevalence of a topic related to the ASEAN meetings in Manila increases. Many international observers took this opportunity to criticize the WOD. The Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, explicitly linked the summit with concerns about the WOD and human rights violations. When asked about Trudeau, Duterte said "I will not answer to any other bulls***, especially foreigners. Lay off."⁵⁷

Third, spikes of the magnitude of the al-Hussein spat and the ASEAN summit are not especially common. No other topic in the WOD-relevant corpus spikes to above 0.125 in mean coverage. Few topics even spike above 0.100 at any point in time. I show these three other spiking topics in Figure 7. These topics tended to be specific, concentrated coverage of a very important event,

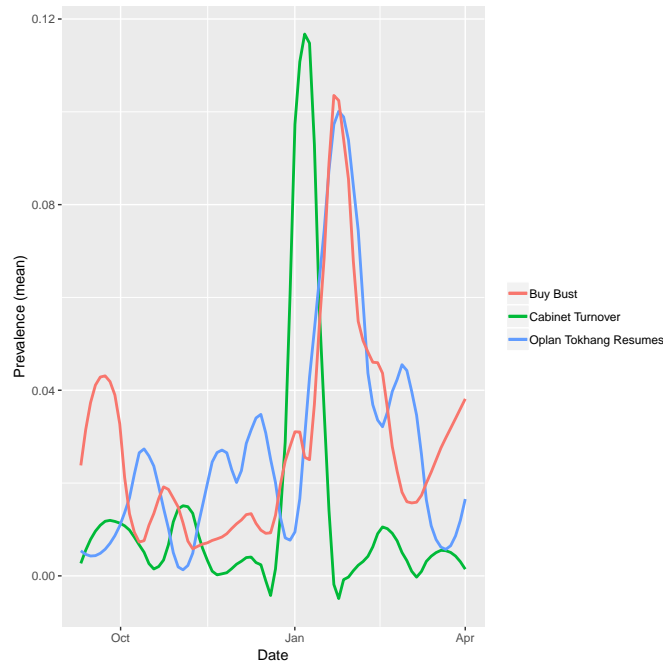
⁵⁵"Iceland to PHL: Allow human rights review by UN special rapporteur." GMA News Online. February 27, 2018. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/644805/iceland-to-phl-allow-human-rights-review-by-un-special-rapporteur/story/>. Accessed 8-14-2019.

⁵⁶"High Commissioner's global update of human rights concerns," March 7, 2018. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22772>. Accessed 8-14-2019.

⁵⁷<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-summit/duterte-berates-canadas-trudeau-at-end>. Accessed 6-11-19.

such as the resumption of Oplan Tokhang and Duterte’s decision to replace two prominent cabinet members. The only other topic to spike above 0.100 pertained to specific buy-busts. This makes it more plausible that the spikes highlighted in the analysis of human rights topics are meaningful, not merely coincidences.

Figure 7: Average Topic Prevalence by Day, non-HR Topic Spikes



Number of Topics

As with all topic models, the researcher choose the number of topics, *ex ante*. I chose the number of topics with a desire to have fine-grained topics that were still recognizable. There is not a statistical quantity that identifies the “correct” number of topics. The algorithm described in Mimno and Lee (2014) selects the number of anchor words for topics, and therefore the number of topics, from a lower dimensional space, which can improve topic coherence and interpretability. I used this algorithm for the full corpus, yielding 76 topics; for the WOD corpus, this results in a model with

99 topics. I again categorized topics in the same manner as above. For the full corpus, there are two topics that are about the core, day to day operations of the WOD and there are two other WOD topics. For analysis limited to the corpus of WOD-relevant articles, the ICC is covered in three topics and there are twelve human rights topics.⁵⁸

Figure 8 show trends in coverage in the full corpus, as in previous sections. As before, the ICC examination is not associated with a substantial increase in overall coverage of the WOD or coverage of core WOD topics. There is again an increase in coverage of particular parts of the WOD, occurring a few weeks after the ICC announcement. The downward trend in coverage of the WOD is again apparent, though with an increase in November of 2017.

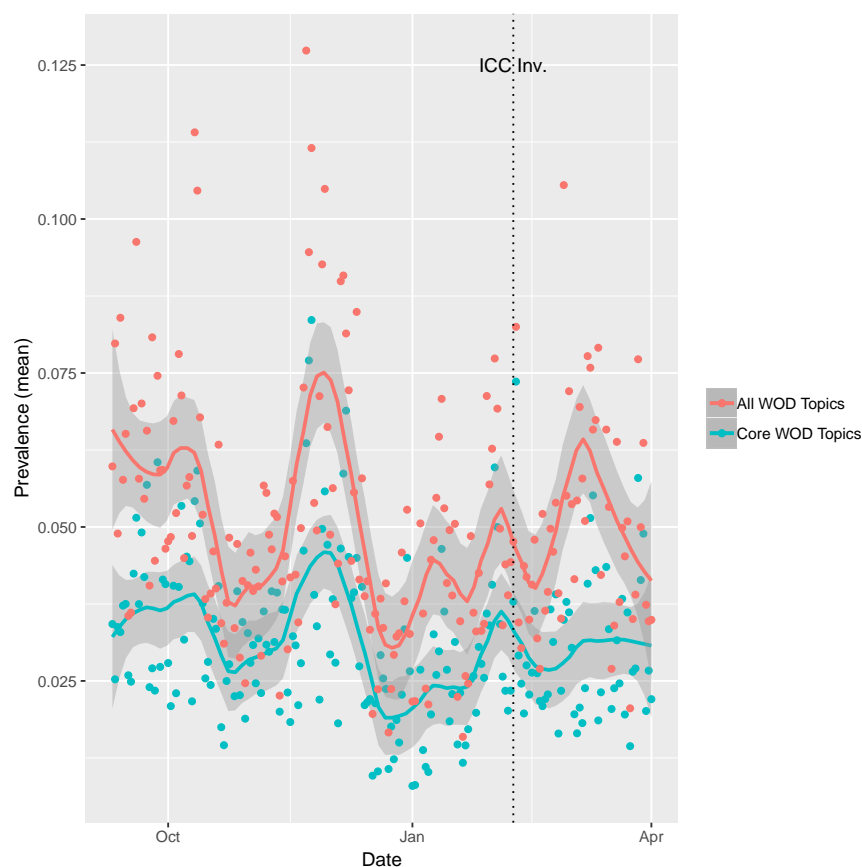


Figure 8: Average Prevalence of WOD Topics, Number of Topics Chosen by Algorithm ($k = 76$)

⁵⁸This model has separate topics for the ICC examination and the Philippines' withdrawal. The third topic is a less distinct hybrid of those two.

The increase in in WOD coverage occurring a few weeks after the ICC announcement again consists mainly of human rights-related content. Figure 9 shows this more precisely, focusing on trends in topics with the WOD-relevant corpus, as above. The left pane shows trends in the ICC and aggregated human rights topics. The right pane shows trends for each of the ICC and human rights topics individually. Increased coverage of the ICC is again apparent, with two spikes at the announcement and withdrawals. Importantly, the increase in human rights coverage is again apparent. Coverage of human rights-related topics makes up 20-55% of coverage after the ICC, on several days, levels which are comparable to peaks from before the ICC. These results give comfort that trends in human rights content are not artifacts of the topic model’s sensitivity to the chosen number of topics.

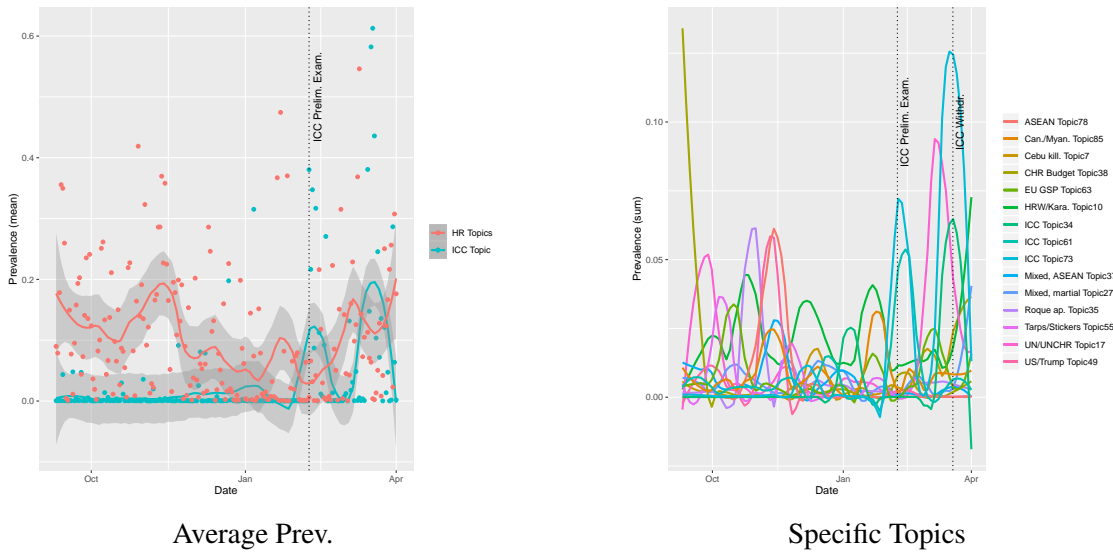


Figure 9: Prevalence Measures for ICC and Human Rights Topics, Number of Topics Chosen by Algorithm ($k = 99$)

4 Conclusion

Many core arguments describe how international organizations’ actions change public opinion and mass politics. This study provides systematic analysis of how IOs affect national media,

which is a crucial interlocutor between IOs and the public. The empirical domain, the Philippines' war on drugs and the ICC's preliminary examination, shares many features with other human rights situations that have attracted IO attention. I find that the ICC did not substantially increase media coverage of the overarching issue of the war on drugs. The ICC did, however, increase the proportion of media coverage of the WOD emphasizing human rights content. This mainly resulted from increased coverage of contestation between groups supporting and opposing the WOD.

The results help us better understand the potentially subtle, positive effects of IOs and also the tough sledding they face in shifting public opinion. The last few years have been discouraging for IOs, especially the ICC. Facing populist, right-wing, and anti-colonial blowback, many institutions have struggled to add and retain members. Their inability to convince large subsets of the general population about the worthiness of their goals has limited their ability to put political pressure on actors committed to non-compliance. The competing effects of IO actions on the media debate over controversial issues explains one reason why. An IO might help amplify one side of the debate, but this also amplifies the other side of the debate, too.

These arguments fit best in settings where pro-compliance actors have clear frames for their messages, such as those espousing human rights. It is possible that IOs in other contexts have a similar effect, though additional research would be needed. As work on IO politicization has highlighted,⁵⁹ even lower-salience IOs like the World Trade Organization are being drug into public spats. It is not hard to imagine a future discursive field where a WTO ruling against a steel tariff, for example, could amplify the messages of free trade firms and politicians espousing frames related to the economic gains from globalization or the importance of legal rules. Their messages would likely be paired with those of protectionist actors lamenting the loss of native manufacturing or economic dislocation.

How can IOs avoid this effect? This may not be possible since the deck is stacked against them in two ways. First, IOs operate at a distance and are foreign actors. Just as human rights NGOs

⁵⁹De Vries, Hobolt and Walter (2021).

face amplified backlash when they are perceived as cultural outsiders condemning a local practice (Snyder, 2020), IOs will always appear foreign. The ICC makes some local outreach efforts, but these are inconsistent and limited in scope. Second, IOs like the ICC face an “inescapable dyad” (Robinson, 2015) with respect to political engagement. If an IO “stays out” of public opinion battles to retain the appearance of impartiality, then it cedes a critical arena to potential opponents. But if it actively engages in this arena, then it will be charged with “playing politics” and abandoning its objectivity.

The scope of this study suggests two avenues for future research. First, the effects of IOs via persuasion and socialization are longer term, gradual processes. This study focused on the short to medium term effects on national media. This focus is important because the frames, voices, and narratives that emerge initially after an IO action can shape the future trajectory of media coverage. Issue framing, like public opinion, is sticky, which makes early coverage critical. Yet, it is possible that initial contestation and its coverage in the media can plant seeds that later bear fruit. While a pro-human rights voice may react to an IO’s action, only to be drowned out on the pages of the newspaper by opposing groups, that voice may gain traction gradually. This study has provided an approach to looking for those longer term effects.

Second, the Philippines and the war on drugs are emblematic of many settings where IOs seek to have an impact, imperfectly democratic countries with partially free medias. These settings may be the ones where IO actions are most likely to induce media-covered contestation. IOs effects on media coverage and public opinion may be heterogenous, different in settings that do not share these characteristics. In a more closed political setting, like Sudan, IO actions may fail to move media coverage at all. Or they may be the necessary spark that opens the door for previously-closed venues to host pro-human rights voices. In more open polities, IOs may only magnify voices that already occupied a large part of public discourse. These predictions would also need to be systematically analyzed.

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Appendix Sections

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A Corpus Construction

Due to space constraints, the main manuscript gives an abbreviated version of the full corpus construction and classification process. Here, I explain each step of the pipeline in greater detail. The full pipeline is shown in Figure A.1 .

I began with a corpus collected by the [University Center]. The complete corpus is massive, currently containing over 75 million documents and adding an average of 30,000 new articles per day from approximately 5,000 RSS news feeds. I began with all documents from RSS feeds originating from the Philippines and a broad time window. The full list of RSS feeds was: Manila Standard, Philippine Inquirer, Manila Times, SunStar, ABS-CBN news.com, Interaksyon, GMA Network and The Philippine Star. The initial search covered the dates 1-1-2016 to 12-20-2018.

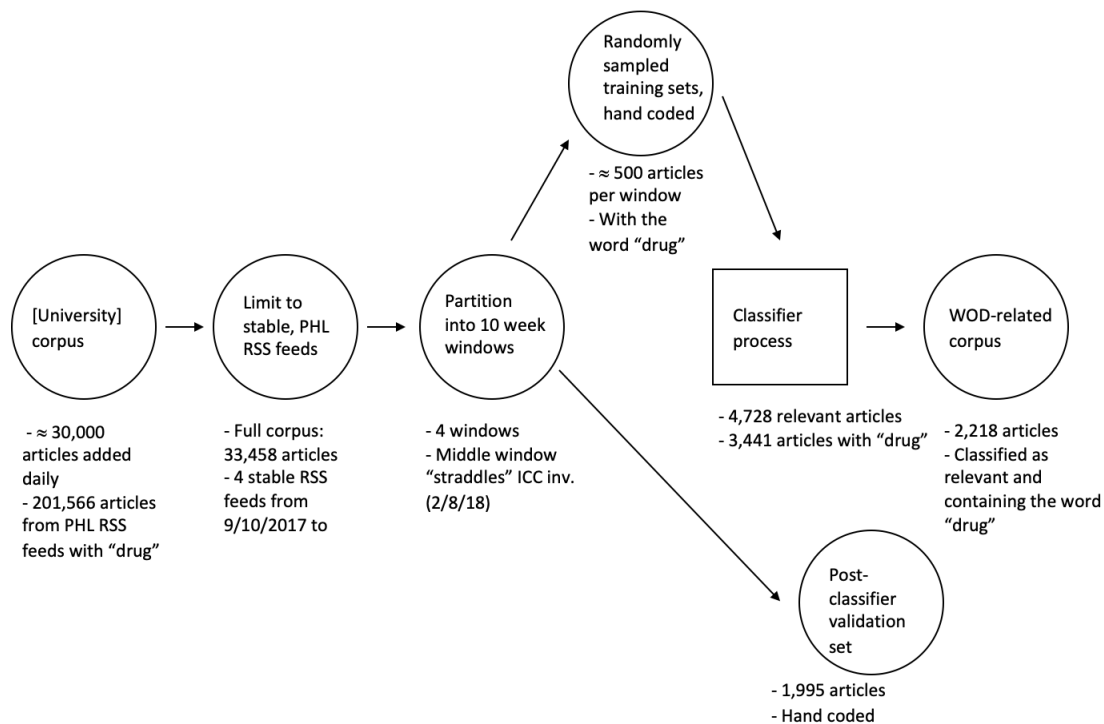


Figure A.1: Pipeline for Corpus Construction

As with many electronic article databases, the coverage of RSS feeds can be uneven over time.

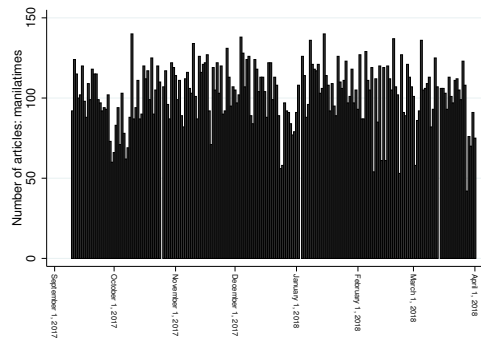
For example, the main RSS feed for a newspaper might contain all of the subnational or metro sections for certain months, but then move those articles offline or to another RSS feed. To ensure that I worked with a stable set of feeds, I focus on four outlets: The Manila Times, The SunStar, Interaksyon, and the Philippine Daily Inquirer. I also focus on articles published from 9-10-2017 to 4-1-2018. During this window of time, the RSS feeds for these four outlets produced a steady stream of articles, without any obvious changes to the quantity or content of the RSS feeds' overall coverage.

A.1 Feed Coverage

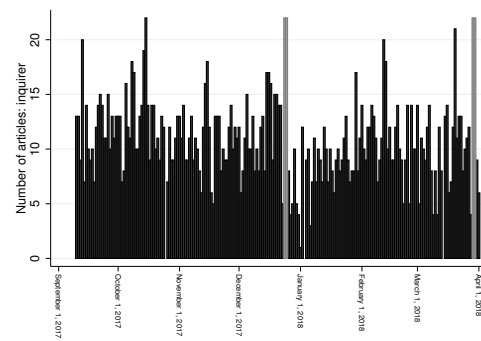
Figure A.2 shows this coverage for each outlet over time. The vertical black lines show the number of articles contained in that RSS feed for a particular day. In general, these RSS feeds are stable over this time period. There is cyclicality in total over the course of a week, which is why feeds rise and fall every seven days. There is also a lull that is common to all of the feeds that occurs from Christmas to New Years; all four media sources decreased their output over that time period. There is a downward trend in total output for Interaksyon in the last month of this time window. This corresponds with an internal reorganization in the PhilStar Media Group. Interaksyon operations wound down around March of 2018 as the outlet's content was moved under a larger umbrella. There are some common gaps across the RSS feeds (eg in late October 2017). These are times when the [Center]'s RSS crawler was briefly offline for maintenance. The vertical grey lines in the Inquirer's figure, pane (c), show days where the RSS feed produced zero articles. This was likely from the Inquirer RSS feed being offline for a short period of time.

A.2 Classification Process for Identifying WOD-Relevant Articles

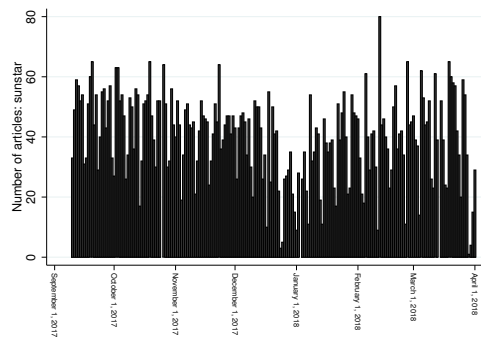
Next, I classify documents according to whether they are likely to be related to the war on drugs or to a different topic. Since I am interested in how coverage pertaining to the WOD changes



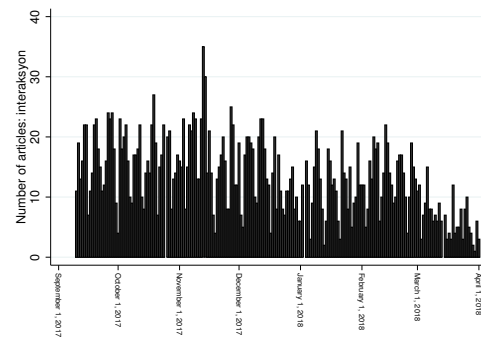
(a) Manila Times



(c) Inquirer



(b) SunStar



(d) Interaksyon

Figure A.2: RSS Feed Coverages

over time, I need to focus on that subset of the corpus. The whole set of articles averages 168 total articles per day for a total of 33,458 articles. This makes hand-coding the entire corpus impractical. Relying solely on keywords for classification also risks misclassification. While a majority of articles that are about the WOD contain common words, like “drug,” using search terms as the only classification criteria risks false positives. For example, a scandal erupted in the Philippines concerning a vaccine for dengue fever, with corresponding articles often containing the word “drug.” Similarly, sports scandals related to doping also appeared in the articles returned from a simple term search.

I took a dynamic classification approach rather than using one classifier for the entire time window. I first divided the window of time covered by the corpus into 10 week intervals. I centered the intervals so that the ICC’s announcement of the Philippine examination is in the middle of one of the windows.⁶⁰ For each window, I randomly chose 500 articles that contained the word “drug.”⁶¹ I used this as the training data and manually coded each article as relevant to the war on drugs or not.

As described in the main manuscript, I used a broad rule to determine whether the article was related to the WOD: if the war on drugs was mentioned in the title, the first third of the article, or if there were at least three total references to the war on drugs, I counted the article as relevant. I then used supervised machine learning to train a document classifier that was specific to each window. I also identified and removed common “junk” text, like an ending to an article that asked readers to sign up for news alerts. Since particular outlets have different strings that are junk text, removing this decreases the likelihood that outlet-specific idiosyncrasies affect the classifier or later analysis.

Each document is first converted to a bag of words. I then calculate term frequency - inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) scores for each word in each document. Term frequency refers to the number of times a word occurs in a document divided by the number of words in that docu-

⁶⁰The examination was announced on 2-8-2018; one of the windows covers 1-4-2018 to 3-15-18.

⁶¹I sampled from all news outlets, not just the four with stable coverage over time. Any time I refer to using the term “drug,” I also used wildcards to include words like “drugs,” “drugged,” etc.

ment. Inverse document frequency refers to the total number of documents divided by the number of documents that contain a particular word. TF-IDF measures a term's frequency, weighted by how discriminatory that term is among documents. A vector of these scores for each term describes each document. Hand-coded documents are then divided into a training and test set. I use a Support Vector Machine algorithm to search for the relationship between TF-IDF data and a document's hand-coded classification as relevant or irrelevant to the WOD, using the training data. That relationship is then used to predict the relevance classification in the test data.

I repeated this algorithm in two ways: (1) limiting the corpus to the stable sources *before* classifying and (2) limiting to stable sources *after* classifying. I used approach (1) in the main manuscript. The case for approach (2) is that media outlets that weren't included in the stable corpus may contribute information that helps in the classification process. In practice, both approaches yield very similar results. Limiting the corpus before classification - as used in the main manuscript - yielded higher accuracy scores.

As mentioned in the manuscript text, I combined some keywords and names into single tokens so that their tokens would consistently refer to the correct entity. In addition to those mentioned in the manuscript, I also combined "Human Rights Watch" (original) into "humanrightswatch" and "Kian Lloyd de los Santos" (original, with variations) into "KianLloydDelosSantos." I also combined the term "war on drugs" into a single token "warondrugs."

To further ensure that the classifiers were doing a good job of classifying documents, I checked the output against another set of hand-coded data, not just the training data. I coded another 1,995 documents, randomly sampled from the corpus, excluding documents used to train the classifier. The left hand side of Table A.1 shows accuracy scores for these documents. Overall, the classifier does a good job, correctly classifying over 92% of documents. However, the classifier was initially prone to false positives, which drive down the precision score⁶² and F1 scores.⁶³ Looking more

⁶²Precision equals: $\text{True Pos.} / (\text{True Pos.} + \text{False Pos.})$.

⁶³F1 scores are weighted averages of the precision and recall scores.

closely at these documents, the false positives are very frequently articles that do *not* contain the term “drug.” This is unsurprising, since there are topics that are sometimes, but not always, related to the war on drugs. For example, an article about the use of police dogs in the WOD might be correctly hand-coded as relevant. But the trained classifier may then think *all* articles about dogs are WOD-relevant.

Table A.1: Accuracy Scores

Original Classifier				With “drug” Criteria			
Hand Code				Hand Code			
	Not relevant	Relevant	Total		Not relevant	Relevant	Total
Classifier				Classifier			
Not relevant	1,751	5	1,756	Not relevant	1,887	15	1,902
Relevant	151	88	239	Relevant	15	78	93
Total	1,902	93	1,995	Total	1,902	93	1,995
Accuracy	0.922			Accuracy	0.985		
Precision	0.368			Precision	0.839		
Recall	0.946			Recall	0.839		
F1	0.530			F1	0.839		

I therefore added an additional criteria for relevance: the article must be classified as relevant *and* it must contain some form of the word “drug.” Accuracy scores are recalculated with this change and shown in the right hand side of Table 1. The number of false positives decreases from 151 to 15; all but 15 of the original false positives lacked the word “drug.” This change comes with a cost of a few additional false negatives, increasing from 5 to 15. This additional criteria yields a higher accuracy score, 98%, and much higher precision and F1 scores, with a smaller decrease in the recall scores.

There are 2,218 total articles classified as relevant to the WOD. The Sun Star and Manila Times average per day 4.25 and 4.14 WOD-relevant articles per day, respectively, versus 1.48 and 1.24 for Interaksyon and the Inquirer. The differences in the number of articles per day across outlets

stems from the breadth of each RSS feed. The Manila Times and Sun Star RSS feeds cover more regions and have more sections.

To more succinctly summarize the empirical approach, Table A.2 describes the corpus used for each hypothesis and the types of categories I look for within each corpus.

Table A.2: Corpus and Topics Used for Each Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Corpus	Categories of Topics
Hyp. 1: The ICC increased coverage of the WOD	All articles (33,458)	Core WOD topics (4), Non-core WOD topics (8), other topics not about the WOD (288)
Hyp. 2: The ICC increased human rights coverage within articles about the WOD	Articles classified as relevant to the WOD (2,218)	ICC topic (1), Human rights topics (10), other topics not about the ICC or human rights (64)

B Alternate Measure of Topic Prevalence

The main manuscript focuses on the average prevalence of a particular topic across a day's articles:

$\pi_{k,t}^{av} = \sum_{a \in A^t} \frac{\theta_{a,k}}{N^t}$. An alternate measure takes into account the number of articles pertaining to the WOD from a particular day: $\pi_{k,t}^{sum} = \sum_{a \in A^t} \theta_{a,k}$. I called the former *average prevalence* and the latter *total prevalence*. Total prevalence is (weakly) increasing in the number of articles, while average prevalence is not. For example, if one particular day had two articles, each with a topic proportion of 0.5 about topic 1 and 0.5 about topic 2, then the average prevalence measure for either topic would equal 0.5 and the total prevalence measure would equal 1.0.

In practice, trends for both are similar. Based on the context studied here, this is not surprising. The WOD is an important topic that receives near daily coverage from each major news outlet over this time period. Here, I show how the trends described in the main manuscript are similar when using the *Total Prevalence* measure. Figure B.1 shows this measure over time in the left pane, with the main manuscript's figure using the Average Prevalence measure in the right pane for direct comparison. As in the main manuscript, Hypothesis 1 receives only partial support using the Total Prevalence measure. The preliminary examination precedes a modest increase in the total coverage of the WOD (red line), but does not precede a substantial increase in coverage of Core WOD topics (blue line).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the ICC examination would increase coverage of human rights topics, even apart from direct coverage of the ICC itself. This prediction received support using the average prevalence measure. Here, I repeat the analysis from that part of the main manuscript, using the total prevalence measure (left panes). I again include the figures using the average prevalence measure (right panes), for comparison.

In the main manuscript, I presented fewer topics to make these figures easier to read. In Figure B.2, I also include the complete set of all ten human rights topics. Of note, Topic 36 pertains to the ASEAN summit, showing one of the other spikes in coverage associated with an IO.

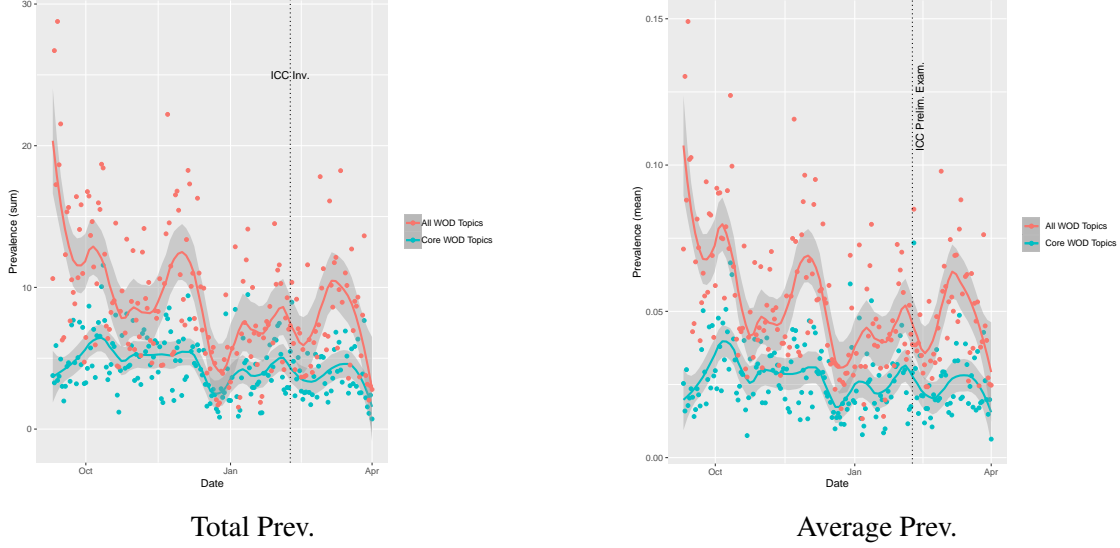
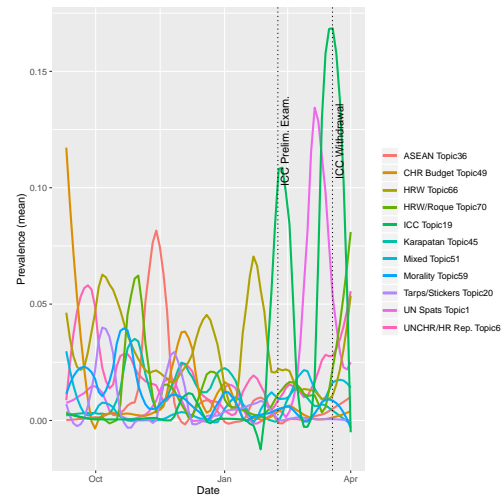
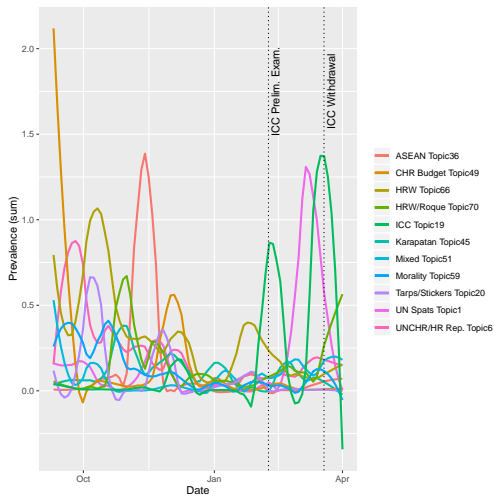
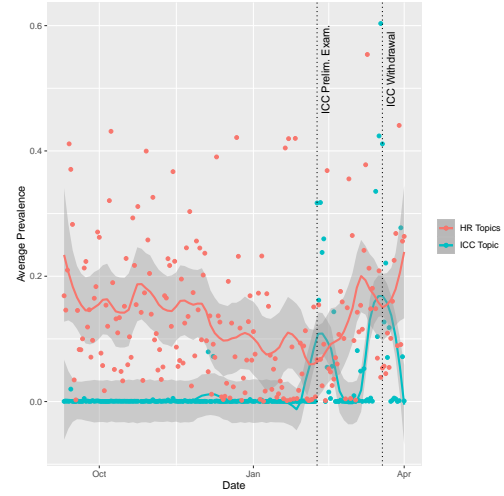
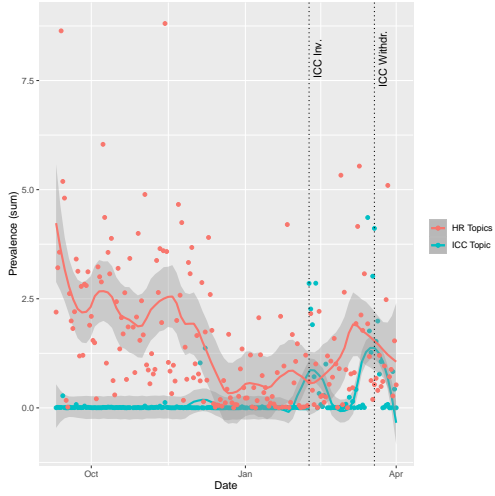


Figure B.1: Prevalence of War on Drugs Topics, Both Measures, $k = 300$

As in the main manuscript, coverage of human rights topics generally declines in the months leading up to the ICC’s examination announcement. The decline is especially pronounced in the total prevalence measure, potentially because few articles about the WOD were published during the Christmas and New Year’s holidays, both of which are of major significance in the Philippines. The spike in the UN Spats topic is less pronounced using the total prevalence measure, though similar in relative magnitude to the other major increases, like that surrounding the ASEAN summit.

B.1 Total Prevalence Measure, Algorithm-chosen Number of Topics

In the main manuscript, I presented robustness checks where I let an algorithm choose the number of topics in the topic model. I repeat that analysis here, showing the trends in total prevalence along with average prevalence. Again, the results are similar. Figure B.3 shows the analysis of Hypothesis 1, using a topic model with 76 topics. The left pane shows total prevalence and the right pane shows average prevalence. Trends are very similar using both measures. Figure B.4 repeats the main manuscript’s figure showing trends in coverage of the WOD corpus, corresponding to Hypothesis 2. Here, the algorithm chose a topic model with 99 topics. Again, trends are similar

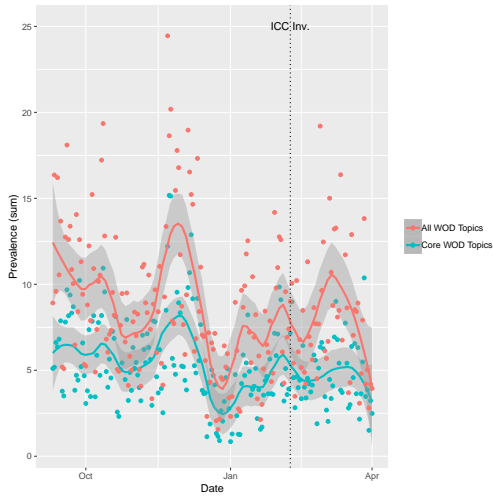


Total Prev.

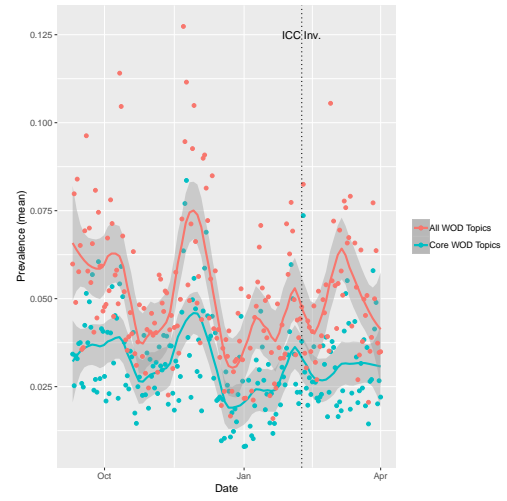
Average Prev.

Figure B.2: Prevalence Measures, $k = 75$

using both measures of prevalence.

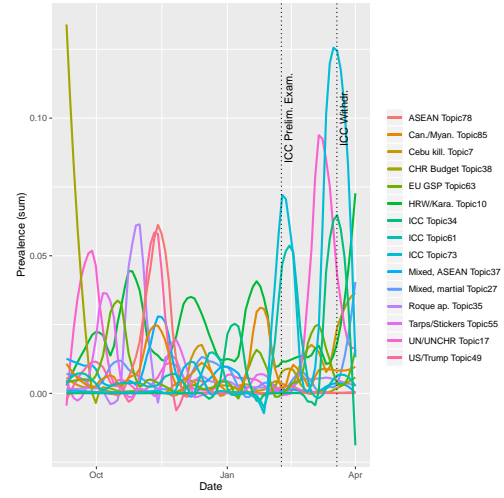
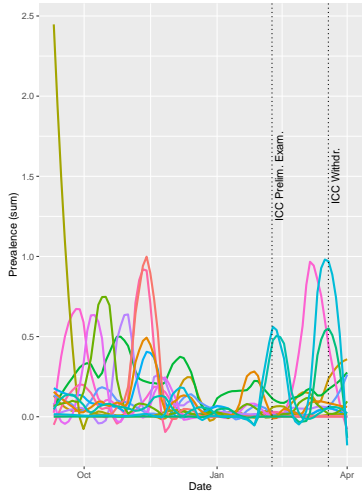
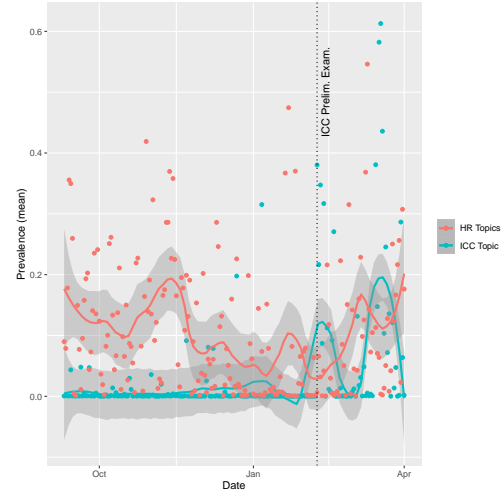
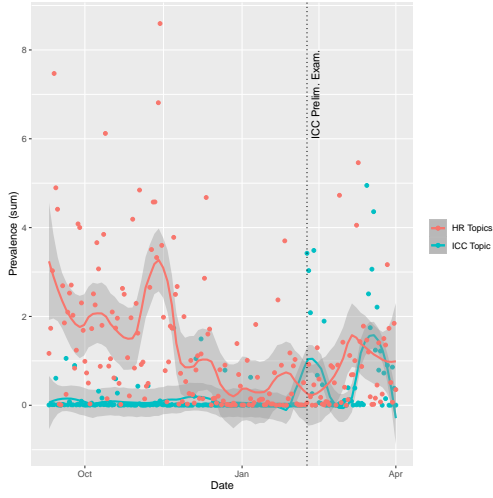


(a) Total Prevalence



(b) Average Prevalence

Figure B.3: Prevalence Measures, $k = 76$



Total Prev.

Average Prev.

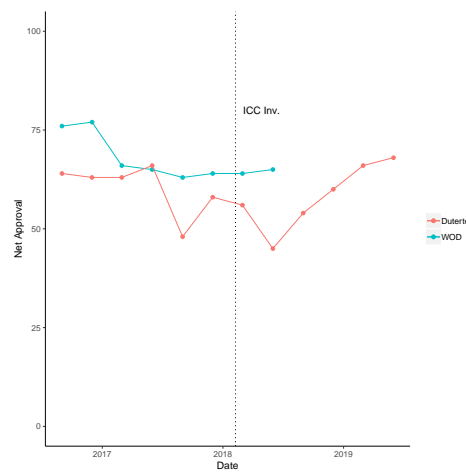
Figure B.4: Prevalence Measures, $k = 99$

C Alternate Public Opinion Data

Figure C.1 shows data from nationally representative, quarterly surveys conducted by Social Weather Stations (SWS). SWS is another national, well-known polling company that conducts regular surveys of citizens in the Philippines. They use slightly different questions from the Pulse Asia surveys presented in the main manuscript, but trends are similar. I chose to present the Pulse Asia data since they provide a longer time series for questions about approval of the WOD. The two lines show net satisfaction rates (percent approving minus percent disapproving) for President Duterte and for the WOD.⁶⁴ Before the ICC examination, approval for both remained strong, with 60-70% more citizens expressing approve of Duterte and the WOD, compared to those disapproving. Approval for Duterte drops in the third quarter of 2017, but is trending upwards before the ICC examination, with only a slight dip before the examination. Approval for the WOD drops in the first quarter of 2017, but remains strong, with a slight upward trend until the end of the available data, June of 2018.

⁶⁴www.sws.org.ph. Accessed 8-14-2019.

Figure C.1: Net Satisfaction with Duterte, War on Drugs



Source: Social Weather Stations. Questions were: “Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are in the performance of Rodrigo Duterte as President of the Philippines” and “Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the performance of the administration in its campaign against illegal drugs.” Net satisfaction equals the proportion answering very or somewhat satisfied minus the proportion answering very or somewhat dissatisfied.

D War on Drugs Topics

The main manuscript described how I labelled topics from the full corpus, identifying core and non-core WOD topics. Here, I give greater detail about those topics and categories to show their content and coherence.

To start, the words that score highest on the various metrics for a core WOD topic (topic 19, about Oplan Tokhang) are below.⁶⁵ Figure D.1 then shows abbreviated examples of articles most highly associated with those topics.

- “Oplan Tokhang,” A Core WOD Topic (#19): Top Words

- Highest Prob: drug, illeg, oper, polic, campaign, pdea, said, agenc, pnp, enforc, anti-drug, tokhang, will, war, suspect, conduct, person, warondrug, anti-illeg, oplan
- FREX: tokhang, anti-drug, anti-illeg, pdea, drug-fre, oplan, drug, warondrug, pusher, badac, surrender, anti-narcot, illeg, menac, enforc, pnp, allatog, nnpdea, campaign, droga
- Score: drug, pdea, tokhang, pnp, anti-drug, illeg, polic, anti-illeg, oplan, warondrug, enforc, suspect, drug-fre, pusher, oper, surrender, agenc, badac, war, campaign
- Lift: doppo, drug-depend, dspo, nncualop, sukod, allatog, badac, rehabinasyon, -budget, abduction-slay, abejuela-corrall, adac, adzhar, badeo, bodycam, cbdrp, cualop, cvppo, dilg-bacolod, drug-affect

Non-Core WOD topics refers to the 8 topics that are related to the WOD but that are about specific events or peripheral effects of the WOD. For example, Duterte’s persecution of Supreme Court Justice Maria Sereno stems from her vocal push for due process for drug suspects. However, this particular topic is not about the WOD, *per se*, but rather about Justice Sereno. Some articles chronicle various events in her legal saga without mentioning the WOD directly. Other non-core WOD topics correspond to specific events that related to the WOD but that are not about the war

⁶⁵Translates to “Operation Knock and Plead,” referring to the idea that the police knock on a suspect’s door and the suspect pleads for his life.

in general. For example, a prominent defense attorney for an accused drug lord was assassinated, an event which received significant media coverage for a particular window of time, but was not about the broader WOD.

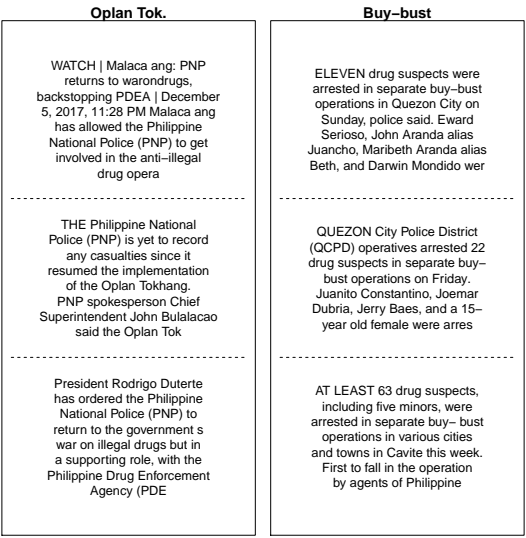


Figure D.1: Example Documents from Two Core WOD Topics

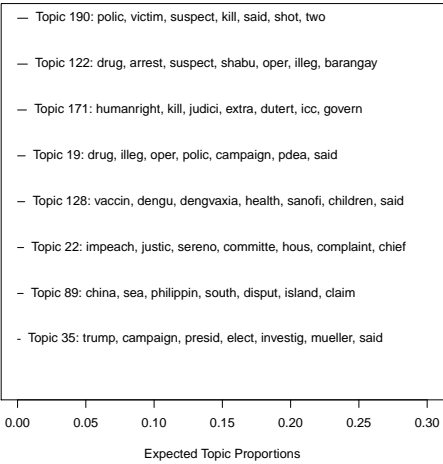


Figure D.2: Highest Prob Words

To demonstrate the degree of coherence of these topic labels, below, I list the most frequently occurring words for the four Core WOD topics. Recall that words are stemmed, eg the stem of “police” and “policing” is “polic.” I compare these to the most frequently occurring words of four other topics: topic 22, which is the Non-Core WOD topic pertaining to Justice Sereno, topic 128 pertaining to a vaccine scandal, topic 89 pertaining to the South China Seas, and topic 35 pertaining to Trump and the Mueller report. The words associated with each topic demonstrate a high level of coherence. While identifying topics is an inherently subjective exercise, the words associated with the most important topics for the present analysis generally correspond to coherent, distinct concepts. Their coherence resembles that of other distinct topics, like the South China Seas disputes or coverage of Trump. Having read thousands of these articles, I am encouraged that the topic models generally reflect features of the corpus.

• Examples of most frequently occurring words

- Core WOD Topics:

- Topic 19: drug, illeg, oper, polic, campaign, pdea, said
- Topic 122: drug, arrest, suspect, shabu, oper, illeg, barangay
- Topic 171: humanright, kill, judici, extra, dutert, icc, govern
- Topic 190: polic, victim, suspect, kill, said, shot, two

- Non-Core WOD Topics:

- Topic 22 (Justice Sereno): impeach, justic, sereno, committe, hous, complaint, chief

- Topics not about WOD:

- Topic 128 (Dengue): vaccin, dengue, dengvaxia, health, sanofi, children, said
- Topic 89 (S. China Seas): china, sea, philippin, south, disput, island, claim
- Topic 35 (Trump): trump, campaign, presid, elect, investig, mueller, said

E Human Rights Topics

The manuscript gave examples of human rights-related topics in its assessment of the qualitative features of the WOD coverage. I focused on topics pertaining to the ICC and other topics pertaining to human rights. To first give greater detail on the words for each of the ICC and human rights topics, I list here their most frequently occurring words. Figure E.1 then shows the proportion of the WOD sub-corpus that consists of the main ICC and human right topics focused on in the manuscript.

- Examples of most frequently occurring words for ICC and Human Rights Topics

- Topic 19 (ICC): icc, dutert, presid, said, crime, philippin, withdraw
- Topic 1 (UN Spats): dutert, humanright, rapporteur, philippin, said, callamard, special
- Topic 36 (ASEAN): humanright, said, dutert, summit, asean, philippin, countri
- Topic 6 (HR Reports): humanright, philippin, govern, countri, report, intern, law

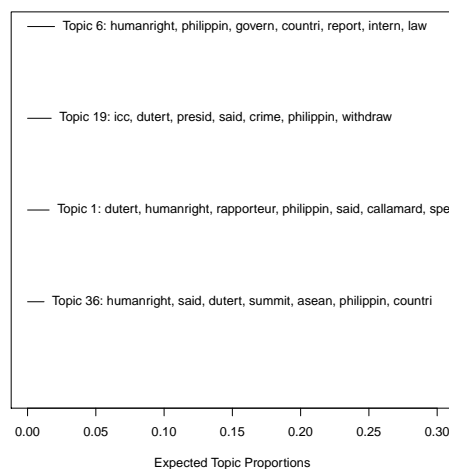


Figure E.1: Highest Prob Words

Next, I give the full list of human rights topics: the ICC topic (topic 19) and the ten other human rights topics. I re-ordered them here to start with the ICC topic, then present the words

associated with the four human rights topics focused on in the main manuscript's figures. Here, too, the topics are generally coherent.

Topic 19 (ICC) Top Words:

- Highest Prob: icc, dutert, presid, said, crime, philippin, withdraw, court, statut, examin, will, preliminari, state, investig, rome, countri, human, case, nation, alleg
- FREX: icc, statut, withdraw, rome, sabio, preliminari, bensouda, examin, jurisdict, treati, fatou, jude, human, hagu, squad, tribun, prosecut, prosecutor, africa, crime
- Lift: congo, cote, gambia, ivoir, kenya, overseen, pangalangan, pillag, sudan, uganda, viotti, complementar, gazett, hague-bas, iccn, nnsabio, asean-australia, colonialist, comeupp, dar-fur
- Score: icc, statut, rome, withdraw, preliminari, sabio, bensouda, examin, treati, fatou, prosecutor, jude, jurisdict, tribun, roqu, human, africa, unwil, complementar, hagu

Topic 1 (UN spats) Top Words:

- Highest Prob: dutert, humanright, rapporteur, philippin, said, callamard, special, presid, investig, govern, countri, zeid, nation, agn, unit, high, peopl, commission, war, will
- FREX: callamard, rapporteur, zeid, agn, nnzeid, hussein, special, psychiatr, iceland, expert, nncallamard, insult, languag, commission, impart, remark, fisher, jordan, high, evalu
- Lift: -say, callamrd, diego, garc, nncolvill, overstep, rupert, tauili-corpuz, unansw, unhrc, colvill, undernourish, uninvit, -certain, carpuz, decades-old, disinterest, estonia, execution-snmanila, foulest
- Score: callamard, rapporteur, zeid, agn, hussein, humanright, iceland, psychiatr, nnzeid, commission, nncallamard, roqu, indigen, colvill, tauili-corpuz, fisher, insult, expert, cayetano, dutert

Topic 6 (UNCHR) Top Words:

- Highest Prob: humanright, philippin, govern, countri, report, intern, law, nnthe, nation, said, right, protect, state, kill, violat, concern, unit, statement, dutert, judici
- FREX: humanright, unhrc, upr, oblig, impun, recommend, abella, review, protect, intern, concern, nnabella, adopt, cayetano, assembl, uphold, council, sovereignti, labor, univers
- Lift: android, breadth, hrao, kick-, nations-supervis, siervo, unhrc, upr, download, aip, nnl-lanesca, paraguay, pcoonmanila, nngive, tres, army-n, derecho, humanrights-rel, unwav, joan
- Score: humanright, upr, unhrc, cayetano, abella, nnabella, oblig, sovereignti, impun, geneva, review, adopt, labor, recommend, extra, assembl, judici, humanrightswatch, intern, deleg

Topic 51 (Mixed human rights) Top Words:

- Highest Prob: kill, said, polic, cebu, humanright, investig, citi, chr, will, case, offic, drug, suspect, can, right, govern, public, person, victim, oper
- FREX: chr-, villarino, acero, tampus, odron, chr, ibp, nnvillarino, umpad, spate, nncebu, assail, olano, chapter, alarm, solv, coalit, feb, unknown, cebu
- Lift: elain, overzeal, bathan, lepiten, betaganzo, bojo, espinosanespenido, ex-albuera, fionah, gonzalez, magdalena, myrfi, nnlepiten, patrimoni, pujan, nnacero, anathema, subangdaku, nalua, overkil
- Score: chr, chr-, cebu, acero, odron, villarino, tampus, umpad, humanright, ibp, nnvillarino, nncebu, olano, bathan, kill, david, assail, arvin, pro-, lapu-lapu

Topic 70 (HRW/Roque) Top Words:

- Highest Prob: roqu, humanright, presid, said, dutert, harri, drug, statement, spokesman, administr, nnroqu, govern, group, presidenti, lord, critic, spokesperson, palac, right, secretari
- FREX: roqu, harri, nnroqu, spokesman, spokesperson, lagman, humanrightswatch, palac, presidenti, nnpresidenti, unwit, advoc, kabayan, centerlaw, party-list, advisor, tool, destabil, journalist, edcel
- Lift: palawan-bas, refocus, reinterpret, barter, bunganga, chaff, charad, decay, malikot, pembedtonnnaddress, pmnnewli, pretens, tokhang-styl, salo, kabayan, hollow, nroqu, gerri, jennif, non-stop
- Score: roqu, harri, nnroqu, humanright, spokesman, lagman, humanrightswatch, palac, unwit, centerlaw, presidenti, destabil, kabayan, nnpresidenti, edcel, spokesperson, malaca, lord, party-list, panelo

Topic 20 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: barangay, said, drug, rupinta, ermita, campaign, captain, offici, will, illeg, villag, drug-fre, hous, citi, tarpaulin, humanright, imok, zafra, den, also
- FREX: ermita, rupinta, nnrupinta, tarpaulin, imok, zafra, captain, tanod, drug-fre, shame, felicisimo, chr-, carbon, den, label, sticker, vendor, barangay, nnzafra, abc
- Lift: abstain, bo-pk, kadtong, nnrupinta, tarp, nnermita, -pundok, daluz, ermitan, ermitan-disclaim, gabuya, guardo, labot, suyopanan, tuyo, well-lov, rizaldi, eastland, nnmiral, ermita
- Score: rupinta, ermita, tarpaulin, nnrupinta, imok, barangay, captain, zafra, drug-fre, chr-, felicisimo, tanod, sticker, vendor, shame, nnzafra, carbon, osm, abc, den

Topic 36 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: humanright, said, dutert, summit, asean, philippin, countri, presid, myanmar, issu, trudeau, kill, leader, nation, rohingya, world, asia, southeast, minist, region
- FREX: rohingya, trudeau, myanmar, canada, summit, kyi, minist, prime, suu, southeast, justin, canadian, asean, asian, asia, host, guterr, nntrudeau, prize, receipt
- Lift: rakhin, buddhist, burmes, cambodian, chan-ocha, deforest, delhi, hearten, mistreat, nnsuu, nntrudeau, prayuth, trudeaun, rohingya, ruckus, trudeau, kyi, suu, tillerson, aung
- Score: trudeau, rohingya, myanmar, asean, canada, summit, kyi, minist, humanright, suu, southeast, trump, asia, prime, canadian, nntrudeau, asian, justin, guterr, vietnam

Topic 45 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: humanright, kill, lawyer, peopl, said, group, dutert, right, law, violat, defend, justic, state, philippin, govern, also, presid, karapatan, case, extra
- FREX: nupl, karapatan, palabay, counterinsurg, lawyer, peasant, defend, activist, regim, harass, humanitarian, presumpt, profess, manlaban, diokno, struggl, nnkarapatan, atti, impun, flag
- Lift: bolinget, cadiz, gubat, iadl, magbubukid, paraleg, acha, ana-yongco, arbet, jubian, lawyersn, manticajon, nupl, tagdumahan, annalisa, ciampi, ephraim, otacan, jona, karap-atann
- Score: nupl, karapatan, humanright, palabay, peasant, counterinsurg, lawyer, pura, activist, nnkarapatan, manlaban, paraleg, forst, atti, olalia, attack, iadl, humanitarian, regim, petit

Topic 49 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: budget, chr, hous, senat, said, commiss, gascon, humanright, propos, will, nnthe, billion, million, constitut, govern, nation, repres, fund, committe, mandat
- FREX: gascon, budget, chr, alloc, propos, bicamer, alvarez, nogral, version, legarda, cut, realign, commiss, pantaleon, dpwh, billion, chito, mandat, p-trillion, slash
- Lift: nnablan, ablan, marcoleta, nnnogral, bicam, chalk, ched, chrs, darn, ill-advis, miscel-lan, mooe, mup, ncip, nha, pro-yellow, right-way, rodant, sagip, settler
- Score: chr, budget, gascon, senat, bicamer, alloc, propos, nogral, dpwh, billion, legarda, constitut, vote, version, p-trillion, alvarez, humanright, congress, chito, ncip

Topic 59 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: govern, can, constitut, one, presid, state, like, right, polit, even, law, power, time, now, revolutionari, humanright, will, without, peopl, just
- FREX: revolutionari, digniti, constitut, concept, nndu, proclaim, rather, absolut, seem, nnnnad-dress, charact, therefor, much, revgov, moral, oust, idea, legitimaci, enem, sereno

- Lift: fuhrer, innat, sordid, tantrum, coteri, government-mand, hobb, immers, leviathan, pattern, preambl, theoret, triumphant, warmest, crept, devil-may-car, udhr, offensen, pervert, civilian-support
- Score: revolutionari, constitut, digniti, marco, nndu, concept, democraci, film, proclaim, polit, udhr, revgov, sereno, nnnnaddress, cabinet, european, charact, oust, europ, legitimaci

Topic 66 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: kill, drug, polic, dutert, said, judici, extra, death, suspect, ejk, peopl, administr, campaign, warondrug, war, govern, philippin, investig, presid, oper
- FREX: ejk, extra, judici, humanrightswatch, kill, vigilant, definit, toll, cayetano, death, poor, warondrug, thousand, resist, dealer, violent, drug-rel, advoc, victim, war
- Lift: -face, airbrush, al-jazeera, denier, hasan, implaus, mehdi, rebuf, rehash, uninvestig, skew, walsh, nnsingh, cover-up, ranocnnmanila, nations-l, nnkine, hypocrisi, caucus, ipa-papatay
- Score: ejk, extra, kill, judici, humanrightswatch, cayetano, death, warondrug, vigilant, toll, victim, nncayetano, dutert, abella, definit, poor, war, filipino, critic, violenc

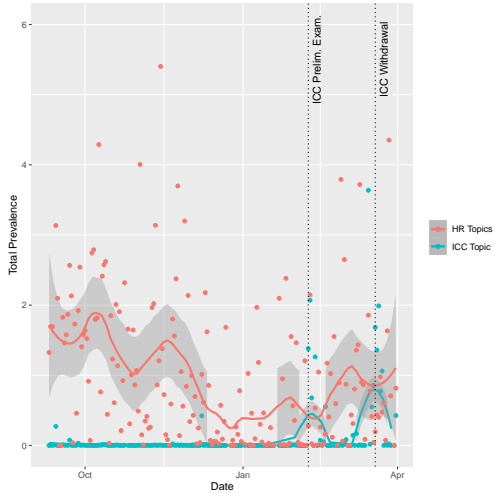
F Results Including/Excluding Manila Times

The owner of the Manila Times, Dante Arevalo Ang, has close ties with the Duterte administration. In May 2017, Duterte appointed Ang to the position of “special envoy for international public relations.”⁶⁶ It is possible that the Manila Times plays an outsized role in magnifying contestation over the ICC and human rights, regarding the WOD. Here’s I replicate the previous analyses, excluding The Manila Times, and find similar results.

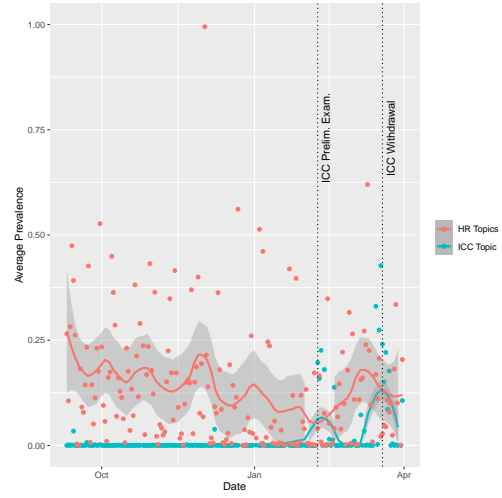
Figure F.1 replicates the first part of the main analysis of Hypothesis 2, about the prevalence of the ICC and Human Rights topics over time. The left side uses the total prevalence measure, and the right side uses the average prevalence measure. The top panes exclude the Manila Times. The bottom panes use only articles from the Manila Times. The trends are all similar to those in the main manuscript’s analysis. Coverage of Human Rights topics increases after the ICC’s preliminary examination. In some cases, this is less pronounced in the Manila Times, compared to other outlets, as in the total prevalence figure (bottom left). In other cases, this is more pronounced in the Manila Times, as in the bottom right figure of average prevalence.

Figure F.2 replicates the second part of the main analysis of Hypothesis 2, showing trends in specific topics. Here, too, the trends are similar. Both the Manila Times and the other outlets display similar increases in coverage of spats and related topics after the ICC’s preliminary examination announcement.

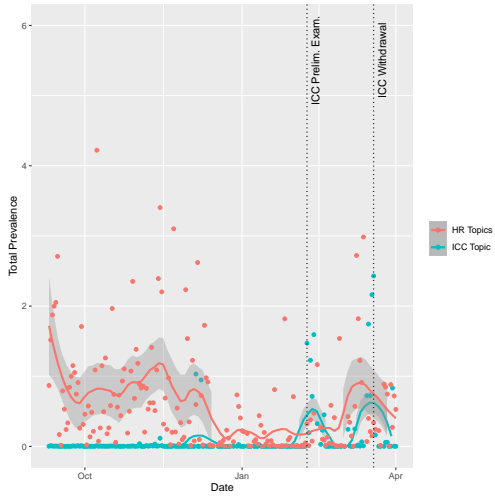
⁶⁶<https://www.rappler.com/nation/170038-manila-times-dante-ang-appointed-envoy-public-re>



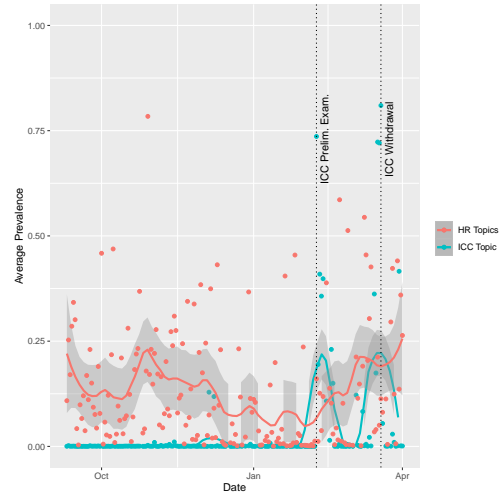
Total Prev., No Manila Times



Average Prev., No Manila Times

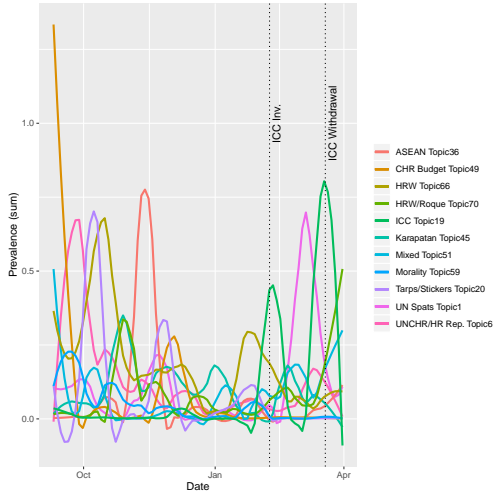


Total Prev., Manila Times Only

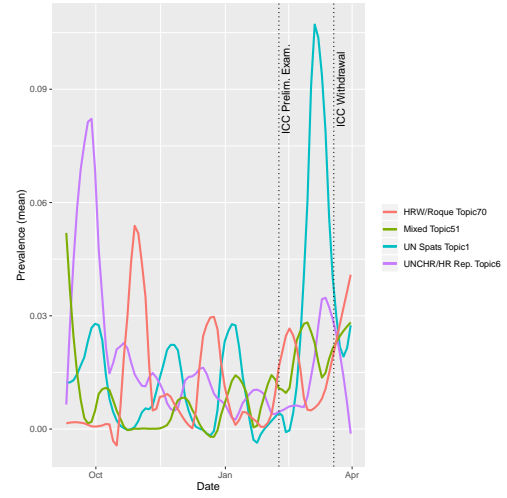


Average Prev., Manila Times Only

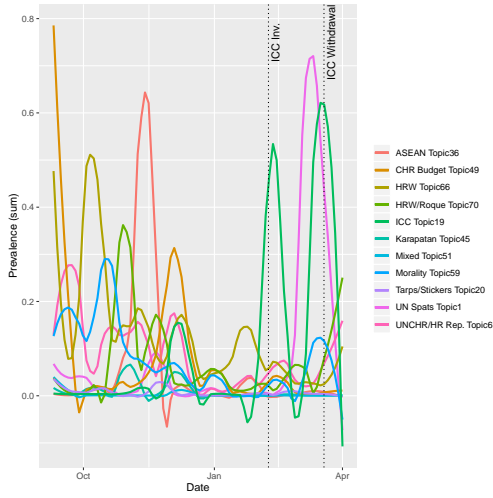
Figure F.1: Prevalence Measures, $k = 75$



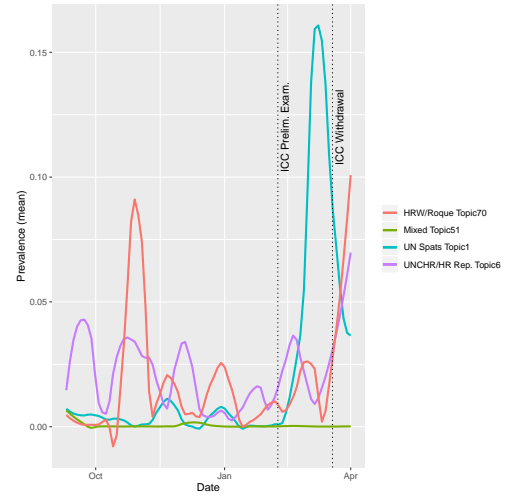
Total Prev., No Manila Times



Average Prev., No Manila Times



Total Prev., Manila Times Only



Average Prev., Manila Times Only

Figure F.2: Prevalence Measures, $k = 75$