

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 content of media coverage of the war on drugs changed after a major decision by the International Criminal Court. I find that 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.

In 2016, Rodrigo Duterte was elected the 16th President of the Philippines, campaigning on a promise to take a tough stance on drugs. 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 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 and a full investigation in September 2021. Despite the devastating human consequences of the WOD and clear international legal ramifications, the WOD and Duterte, personally, remain very popular among the broader population.²

The stubbornness of public opinion and 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 of these institutions.

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).

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 media coverage of the WOD shifted after the ICC's first major action 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. I then use topic modeling to assess how qualitative features of coverage changed after the ICC's announcement. 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

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.

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 relationship between ICC actions and the content of media coverage is most consistent with a theoretical framework that treats IOs as triggers of contestation.⁶ The ICC examination is followed by 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 contend with - beyond 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, this complicates their ability to generate bottom up pressure for compliance. The IO sparks heated contestation that is reflected back to the population through the media. Related work in the context of the United States Supreme Court suggests that two-sided media coverage - like that found in coverage emphasizing contestation - blunts the effect of legal decisions on public opinion.⁷ 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 somewhat open and democratic societies, like the Philippines.

⁶Chaudoin (2016); Deitelhoff and Zimmermann (2019); Hillebrecht (2021); Terman (2019); Vilan (2018).

⁷Linos and Twist (2016).

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.⁸ 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.⁹ 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 communication and political strategies that can compete in the open marketplace of ideas, argumentation, and public opinion, as channeled through the media. 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.

1 International Organizations and Media Content

Theories of IOs and Mass Politics

International organizations generally lack direct enforcement power. Yet, IOs can influence member state behavior indirectly, through subnational actors. Several overlapping types of theories link an IO's action with reactions from subnational actors.

⁸De Vries, Hobolt and Walter (2021).

⁹Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System Final Report. 2020.

In one set of theories, an IO acts like an alarm that provides information about government practices. This helps subnational actors, like interest groups or voters, better demand that politicians implement their preferred policies.¹⁰ Specific to the ICC, Chaudoin (2016) develops a model in which the Court 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. Shaming from international actors and pressure “from below,” from domestic actors, pushes policymakers towards compliance with existing commitments.¹¹ 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,” where ICC actions spur general public debate over transitional justice. Each of these theories describe ways in which an IO can spur pressure from subnational actors, be they citizens or NGOs.

However, 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. Most international legal institutions intentionally operate at an arms length, for fear of appearing political.¹³ 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?

¹⁰Eg Dai (2005).

¹¹Murdie and Davis (2012).

¹²Dutton (2017).

¹³Clark (2018).

The provision of information via the media in the targeted country is a critical intermediate step for these theories. The vast majority of citizens “experience,” the events in those theories through media coverage. The media is a complex actor, acting as both a conveyor of information and a reflection of citizen interests.¹⁴ The media delivers direct, factual information about events. It also conveys messages and frames from political actors.¹⁵ 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. A country’s level of media freedom moderates the degree to which IOs might affect media coverage. The theoretical arguments here apply best to countries without complete state control of the media or domestic politics - 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 the content of media 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 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

I argue that IOs can affect media content indirectly, through their downstream effects on actors - politicians, NGOs, etc. - 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

¹⁴For a broader survey, see Baum and Potter (2008).

¹⁵Entman (2007).

¹⁶McKeown (2009).

¹⁷Ayoub (2014).

¹⁸Wiener (2004).

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 many activities for subnational actors who want to use the language of human rights to counteract violations. They can provide information via reports or testimonies. They 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) 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” 146). 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. 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 ... Human Rights Watch

¹⁹Eg Keck and Sikkink (1998).

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.²¹ 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 backlash from those defending "traditional" values²² or accusing outside and foreign actors of bias against the target country.²³

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.²⁴ 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.²⁵ These actors

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

²¹Terman (2019).

²²Bob (2012).

²³Dutton et al. (2017); Snyder (2020).

²⁴Bloomfield (2016).

²⁵Lugano (2017).

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... (*Interaksyon* 2-8-18)

Duterte also frequently attacked the institution itself, demeaning or threatening his detractors. The ICC, Chief Prosecutor Bensouda, and UN Special Rapporteur, 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. ... "Go ahead, you investigate me. But I assure you – I tell them – you will never have jurisdiction over my person. ... if I meet 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.

The above arguments imply the following hypothesis relating IO actions and the content of media 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 the human rights of the victims of the WOD.²⁶ This effect is amplified by the back and forth between actors contesting the framing

²⁶Note that in other contexts, IOs could also focus on the rights of alleged perpetrators, eg their right to a fair trial.

of a particular issue. 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. Given the context examined in this study, I specify this hypothesis for an IO like the ICC, which focuses on human rights.

Hypothesis 1. *Content: An IO's action increases 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 how media coverage shifts after an IO action. Freedom House classifies the Philippines as “partly free,” with leaders chosen by open elections without accusations of widespread manipulation.²⁷ 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. By web ranking, the top outlets were the Inquirer, Philippine Star, Manila Bulletin, SunStar and Manila Times.²⁸ 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 pub-

²⁷<https://freedomhouse.org/country/philippines/freedom-net/2018> Accessed 12-21-2021.

²⁸Four out of these five are included in the analysis below. Rankings according to 2016 data. <https://www.4imn.com/ph/>. Accessed 6-12-19.

licly campaigned against some outlets for criticizing the WOD, labelling them “fake news.” One 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, Maria Ressa, with criminal charges.

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.²⁹ The Philippines has the same GMFD score as Kenya, Georgia, Colombia, Uganda, Libya, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.³⁰

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 the WOD could fall under ICC jurisdiction as a crime against humanity.³¹ 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 did not mention the WOD until February of 2018, when it made 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 changes in media coverage after the “shock” of an IO action in a place that shares many features with countries where IOs hope to have influence. The above hypothesis can be translated to this empirical domain: The proportion of coverage about the war on drugs that focuses on human rights should increase after the ICC’s

²⁹Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle (2017).

³⁰Though 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.

³¹<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/808902/chr%2Dicc%2Dmay%2Dexercise%2Djurisdiction%2Dover%2Dph%2Ddrug%2Dkillings%2Dif>. Accessed 6-4-19.

preliminary examination announcement.

Closest Related Empirical Research

A handful of studies document media coverage of IO actions in targeted states. 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 people towards media reports. 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. Here, I take a 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.

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]. 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.

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, these feeds produced a steady stream of articles, without any obvious changes to the quantity or content of 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 time frame and to expand the list of media outlets, this is the maximal subset with stable coverage.

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.³³ I first hand-coded a binary measure of relevance to the WOD for a large set of randomly chosen 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. I used a Support Vector Machine algorithm to construct a classifier based on the relationship between TF-IDF data and a document's hand-coded relevance classification.

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.

³³For a full description of the classification pipeline, see Appendix A.

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.

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.”³⁵ This results in very accurate out-of-sample coding.³⁶

3 Empirical Analysis of Media Content

To assess Hypothesis 1, I analyze the content of the 2,218 WOD-relevant articles using 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 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 word “killing” appears, compared to its likelihood of appearing in an article about sports.

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. For estimation, I use the well-known approach in Roberts et al. (2013). I set the number of topics to 75.

I denote the set of topics as $k \in K$ and the set of articles as $a \in A$. I measure the *prevalence*

³⁵The second criteria decreases false positives - articles classified as relevant that are not actually related to the WOD.

³⁶See Appendix A. For analysis of the extent of WOD coverage over time, see Appendix B.

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:

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

Average prevalence therefore describes the mean proportion of a particular topic, across all articles for a day.³⁷

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. Articles most associated with these topics emphasize the human costs of the WOD and whether its conduct has violated human rights. Some topics are most associated with particular events, eg when an actor criticizes the WOD on human rights grounds. Others emphasize actors explicitly associated with or including human rights in their names, eg Human Rights Watch or the Philippines’ Commission on Human Rights. 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 1 shows abbreviated examples of articles associated with the ICC topic (left side) and one 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,

³⁷Since the total number of articles on any 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: $\pi_{k,t}^{sum} = \sum_{a \in A^t} \theta_{a,k}$. Results are similar.

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.

Figure 1: Example Documents from the ICC topic and one Human Rights Topic

ICC	UN/HRO Spats
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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</p>

The left pane of Figure 2 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, but for a relatively narrow window of time. ICC topics make up over 30% of the WOD articles for about a week after the announcement, which is substantial. But then this topic fades 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, with the ICC making up 40-60% of the WOD coverage and fading less quickly.³⁸

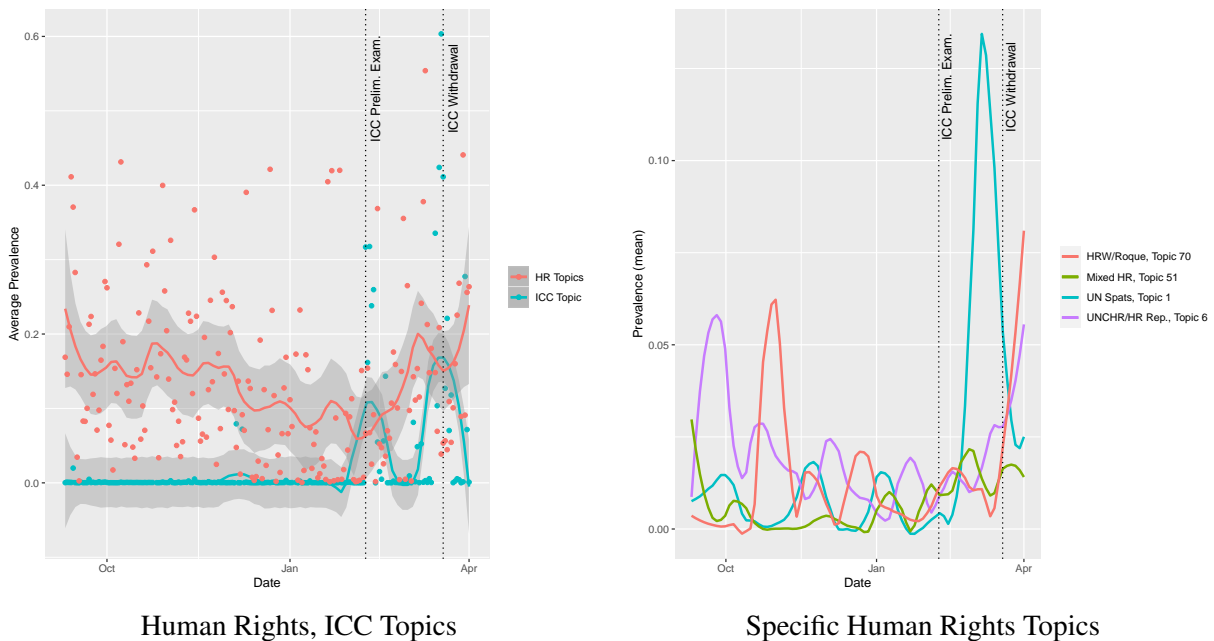
More importantly, how did the prevalence of human rights topics change after the ICC’s examination announcement? These figures show systematic evidence that actions by IOs can indirectly

³⁸The coherence and correct timing of the ICC topic lends credibility that the topic model is performing well at distinguishing topics.

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 holidays. Human rights coverage declines steadily and reaches its lowest points in the month before the ICC announcement.

However, after the ICC examination announcement, human rights returns to greater prevalence 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 2: Effect of ICC on Human Rights Topics and ICC Topics, Sep. 2017 - Apr. 2018



What aspects of human rights coverage increased after the ICC’s announcement? Of the ten human rights topics, four increased in prevalence after the ICC’s announcement and the other six did not. The four human rights topics which increased after the ICC announcement emphasize con-

testation between human rights advocates and Duterte. The right pane of Figure 2 show smoothed lines for the prevalence of these topics over time.

The blue and purple topics that spike after the ICC examination (labelled “UN Spats” and “UN CHR/HR Report”) pertain to a highly public spat between Duterte and U.N. officials, notably High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad al-Hussein.³⁹ On March 1, 2018, Duterte instructed police to ignore the UN Special Rapporteur, Agnes Callamard. Later that week, his spokesman invited her to “swim in the Pasig River.”⁴⁰ On March 7, 2018, al-Hussein condemned Duterte in a speech before the Human Rights Council.⁴¹ 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* * *.”⁴² The orange topic (“HRW/Roque”) emphasizes a public back-and-forth between Spokesman Roque and Human Rights Watch representatives. The olive topic (“Mixed”) emphasizes the WOD in Cebu; after the ICC announcement, this topic captures the Cebu City mayor’s criticism of the Human Rights Commission.⁴³

While the trends in topics are apparent with visual inspection, Figure 3 shows a statistical assessment of topic prevalence before versus after the ICC’s examination announcement.⁴⁴ 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 topics labelled “HRW/Roque” and “Mixed Human Rights” also show increases, although the estimated effect of the ICC announcement is not as strong.⁴⁵

³⁹The blue is the same topic with example documents in Figure 1, right side.

⁴⁰<https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/inside-track/197333-harry-roque-agnes-callamard-pasig>

⁴¹<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22772&LangID=E>.

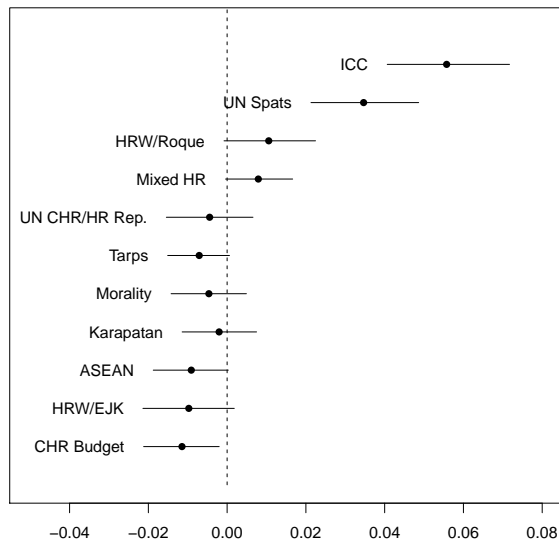
⁴²<https://www.rappler.com/nation/199543-duterte-calls-un-rights-chief-empty-headed>.

⁴³Appendix D gives greater detail on the content of all human rights topics.

⁴⁴Roberts et al. (2013).

⁴⁵This is because these topics had some prevalence before the ICC announcement, and this regression is a simple before/after comparison.

Figure 3: Topic Prevalence Before/After ICC, Structural topic model estimates



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

However, both are very unlikely. In the appendix, I describe qualitative and quantitative evidence suggesting that reporters only knew of an ICC announcement a few days in advance and held their stories until the announcement. Public opinion data also shows that Duterte and the WOD remained popular before and after the ICC’s announcement.⁴⁶

⁴⁶See Appendix E.

Placebo Testing

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. In the appendix, I consider in greater detail three pieces of evidence that support my interpretation of results, that an IO triggered contestation which shifted coverage towards human rights topics. (1) I can trace the relationship between post-ICC topic spikes and the ICC, (2) other spikes in human rights coverage are associated with IOs, and (3) spikes like those focused on here are not common. I also show that another major actor, the Catholic Church, does not trigger coverage of contestation in the same way as the ICC. Additionally, I show that coverage of human rights outside of the WOD context does not increase after the ICC's actions.⁴⁷

Number of Topics

I chose the number of topics, *ex ante*, 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. In Appendix G, I used an algorithm that first 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 found trends that were similar to those described above.

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. I find that the proportion of media coverage of the WOD emphasizing human rights content increases after the ICC's action. This mainly resulted

⁴⁷I thank the anonymous reviewers for suggesting the last two analyses. See Appendix F. In Appendix H, I also show all analyses excluding the Manila Times, since its owner has close ties to Duterte.

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 deepen or widen compliance. 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. Media coverage of IO actions give one potential explanation. An IO action might help amplify the voices of pro-compliance efforts, but this is framed largely in dialogue with vocal resistance from opposing actors.

Future research could focus on the short and longer term effects of this coverage on public opinion. Existing work on domestic courts shows how positive coverage of court decisions increases support for rulings, but that replacing this with two-sided coverage mutes those positive effects.⁴⁸ If coverage of IO actions gives prominent voice to IO detractors, then this could counteract the bottom-up effects of actors supporting human rights.⁴⁹

In the shorter run, IOs may be unable to avoid this. IOs like the ICC face an “inescapable dyad” with respect to political engagement.⁵⁰ 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 ICC has generally chosen the first approach. It makes some local outreach efforts, but these are inconsistent and limited in scope. If the ICC and other IOs change tack and lean into efforts at persuading publics, then understanding the conditions under which different arguments, messages, and frames influence opinions will be critical.⁵¹

Research on the effects of coverage on public opinion in the longer run is also important. Initial

⁴⁸Linos and Twist (2016).

⁴⁹For initial findings consistent with this argument, applied to the Philippines and the ICC, see Appendix I.

⁵⁰Robinson (2015).

⁵¹Eg Zvobgo (2019).

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. Alternatively, initial coverage frames may prove sticky and IO actions could polarize opinions across different segments of the public. This study has provided an approach to looking for those longer term effects. Doing so would require a longer temporal coverage of media content and public opinion from before and after key events.

Future research could also examine the conditions under which IO actions result in coverage emphasizing contestation, as opposed to more one-sided or pro-IO coverage. This study focused on one action (a preliminary examination) by one IO (the ICC) in one country (the Philippines). This is a good entry point for this type of research, since the ICC, the Philippines and the war on drugs are emblematic of many settings where IOs seek to have an impact, democratic countries with partially free medias. Yet, media coverage could differ as any of those features - the action, institution, or setting - change. Coverage of a less legalistic institution, like the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or a more regional institution, like the InterAmerican Commission for Human Rights, might be less emphatic of voices bemoaning global, foreign interference. 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. As work on IO politicization has highlighted,⁵² 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.

⁵²De Vries, Hobolt and Walter (2021).

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Appendix Sections

Appendix A: Corpus Construction (pp. 2-9)

Appendix B: Extent of WOD Coverage (pp. 10-12)

Appendix C: Alternate Measure of Topic Prevalence (pp. 13-17)

Appendix D: Human Rights Topics (pp. 18-28)

Appendix E: Endogeneity of ICC/Coverage Data (pp. 29-30)

Appendix F: Placebo Testing (pp. 31-35)

Appendix G: Alternate Topic Number, Alternate Preprocessing Results (pp. 36-41)

Appendix H: Results Including/Excluding Manila Times (pp. 42-44)

Appendix I: Survey Experimental Results (pp. 45-61)

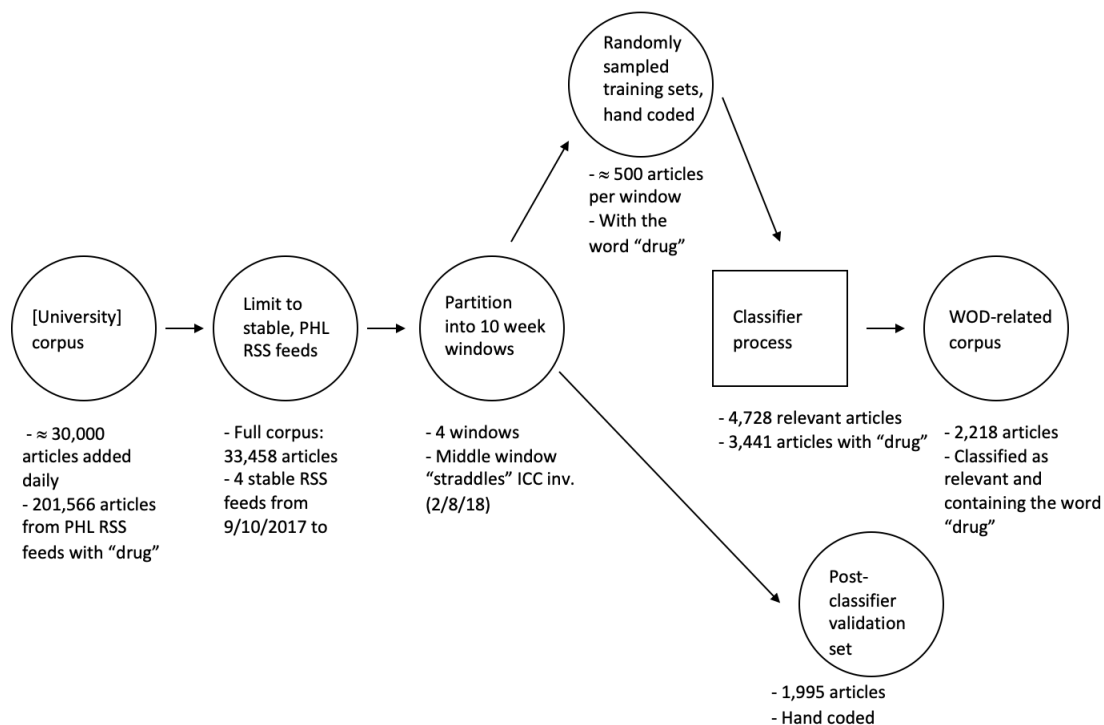
Appendix References: (p. 62)

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, 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.

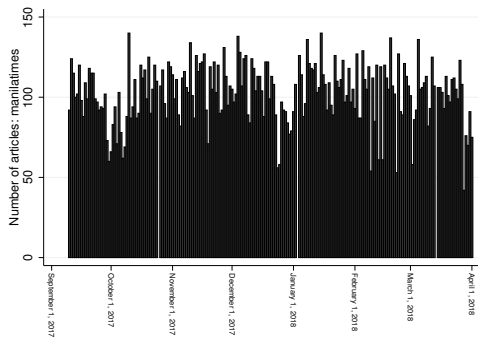
A.1 Feed Coverage

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.

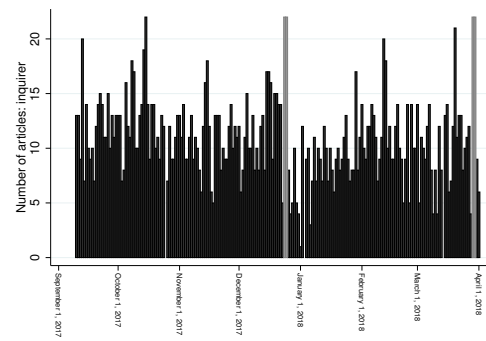
A.2 Classification Process for Identifying WOD-Relevant Articles

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

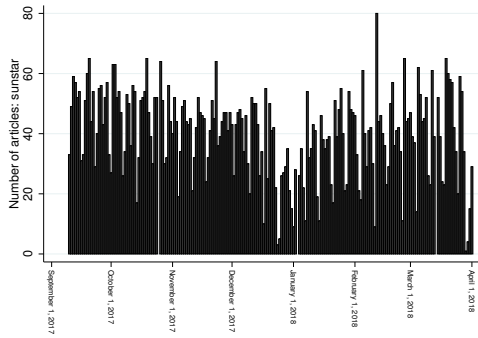
Figure A.2: RSS Feed Coverages



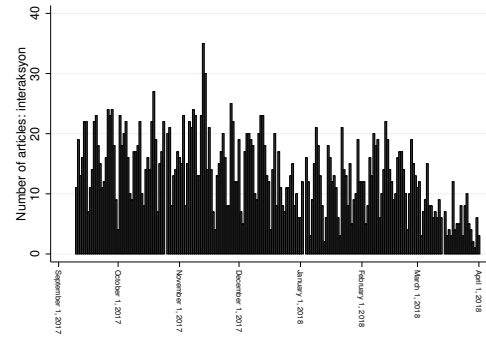
(a) Manila Times



(c) Inquirer



(b) SunStar



(d) Interaksyon

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.⁵³ For each window, I randomly chose 500 articles that contained the word “drug.”⁵⁴ I used this as the training data and manually coded each article as relevant to the war on drugs or not.

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.

I then manually coded a binary measure of relevance to the WOD for each of these articles. I 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

⁵³The examination was announced on 2-8-2018; one of the windows covers 1-4-2018 to 3-15-18.

⁵⁴I 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.

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.

I then used supervised machine learning to train a document classifier that was specific to each window. 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 document. 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.

Topic 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.” 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.” 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.

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 score⁵⁵ and F1 scores.⁵⁶ Looking more 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.

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 A.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

⁵⁵Precision equals: $\text{True Pos.} / (\text{True Pos.} + \text{False Pos.})$.

⁵⁶F1 scores are weighted averages of the precision and recall scores.

Table A.1: Accuracy Scores

Original Classifier				With “drug” Criteria			
Classifier	Hand Code		Total	Classifier	Hand Code		Total
	Not relevant	Relevant			Not relevant	Relevant	
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		

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

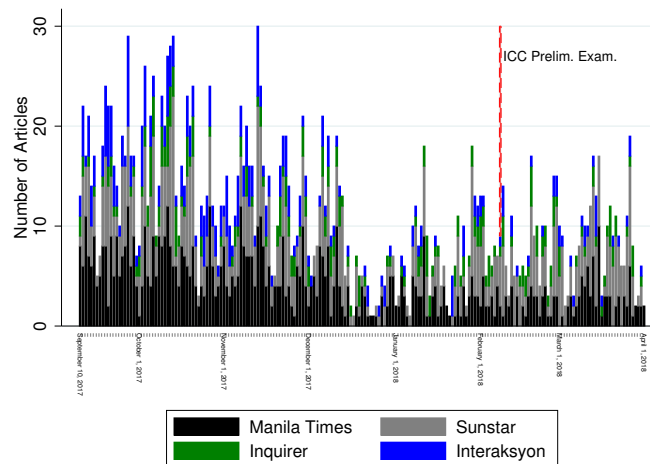
<u>Hypothesis</u>	<u>Corpus</u>	<u>Categories of Topics</u>
The ICC increased coverage of the WOD (Covered in Appendix)	All articles (33,458)	Core WOD topics (4), Non-core WOD topics (8), other topics not about the WOD (288)
The ICC increased human rights coverage within articles about the WOD (Covered in main manuscript)	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 Changes in the Extent of War on Drugs Coverage

While the main manuscript focuses on qualitative features of the WOD relevant articles, it is also worth asking whether the *extent* of coverage of the WOD changed after the ICC’s announcement? Many theories of IO effects emphasize spotlighting, where the IO brings to light a previously hidden violation of human rights or international law. They may also drive additional coverage of issues once an IO enters the media discourse. In the case of the ICC in the Philippines, this would imply greater coverage of the WOD in general after the preliminary investigation was announced.

The data give generally weak support for this conjecture. As a simple first cut, I look at trends in the number of WOD-relevant articles by day, shown in Figure B.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.

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

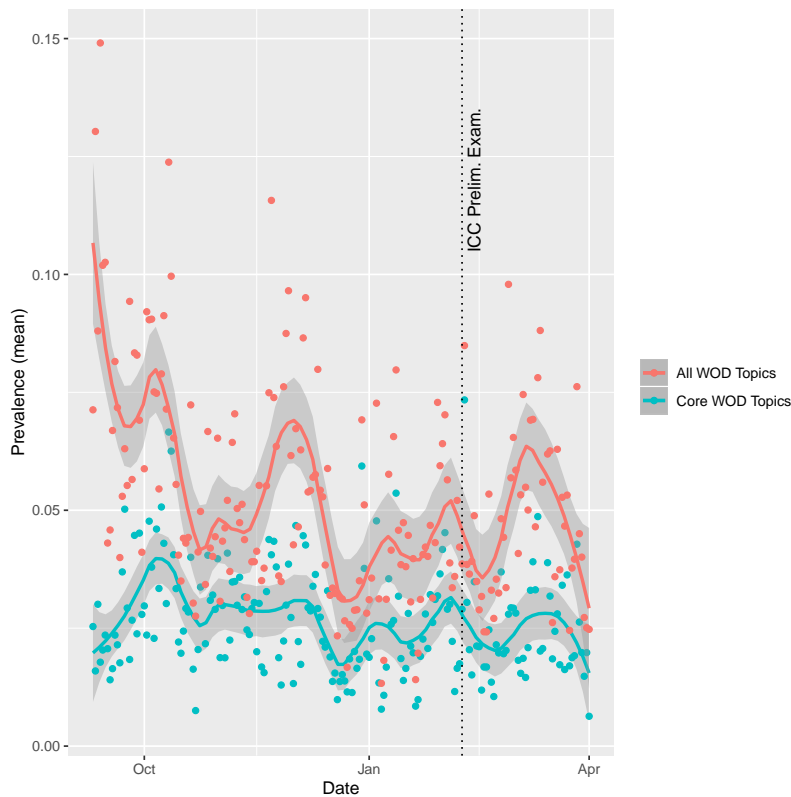


I then estimated a topic model with 300 topics on the full corpus. I labelled topics that pertained to the WOD based on the words with the highest probability of being associated with a particular topic and several other similar measures. Within that set of topics, I also labelled four *Core WOD* topics, 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.

Figure B.2 shows the prevalence of WOD topics in the entire corpus over time. It 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.

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



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.

C 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.

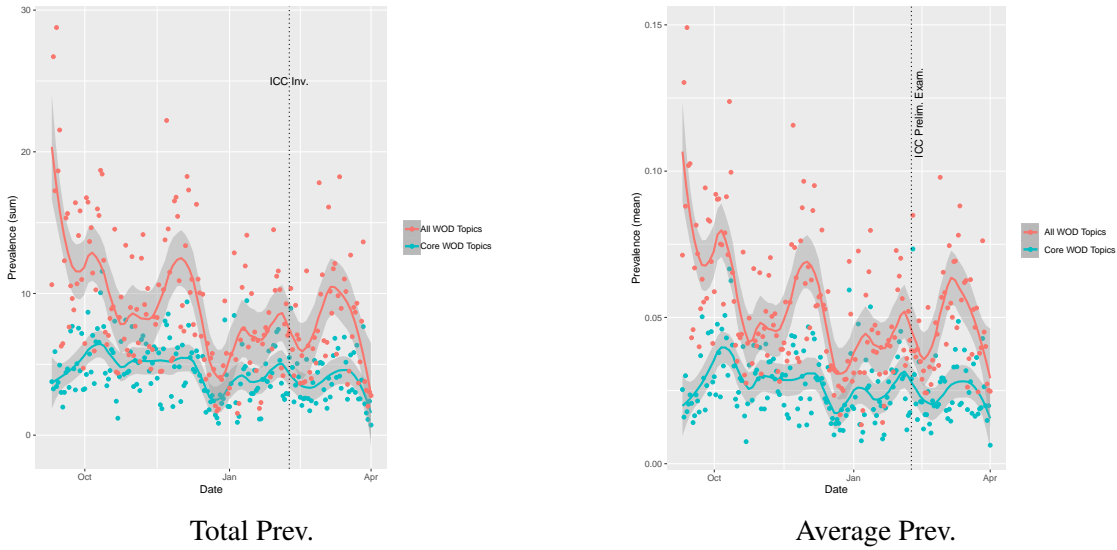
C.1 Alternate Measure: Extent of Coverage

Figure C.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 Appendix B, the conjecture that the ICC increased coverage of the WOD 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).

C.2 Alternate Measure: Content of Coverage

Hypothesis 1 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, and shown in Figure C.2, I repeat the analysis from that part

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



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.

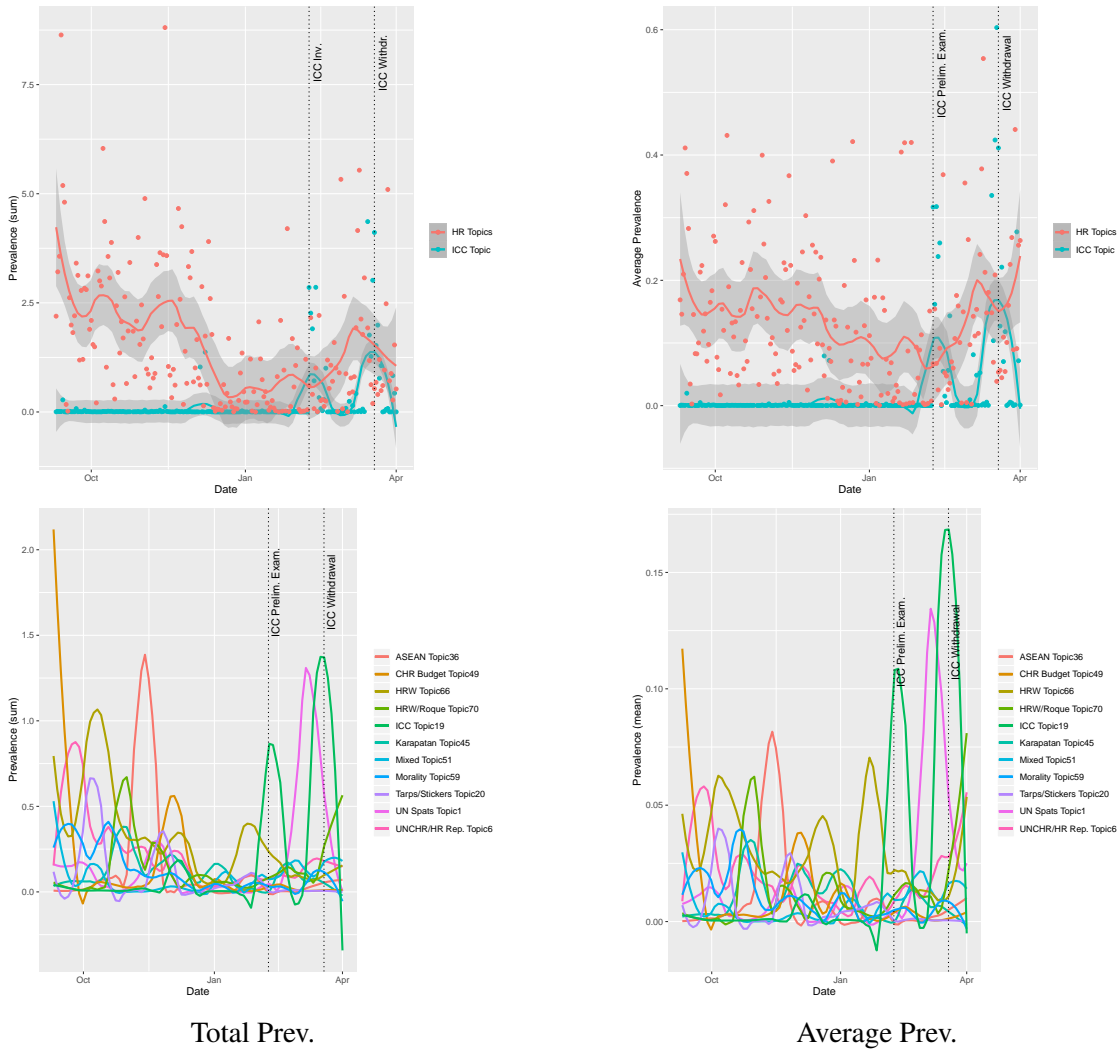
In the main manuscript, I presented fewer topics to make these figures easier to read. In Figure C.2, I also include the complete set of all ten human rights topics. Of note, Topic 36 pertains to the ASEAN summit, showing one of the other spikes in coverage associated with an IO.

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.

C.3 Total Prevalence Measure, Algorithm-chosen Number of Topics

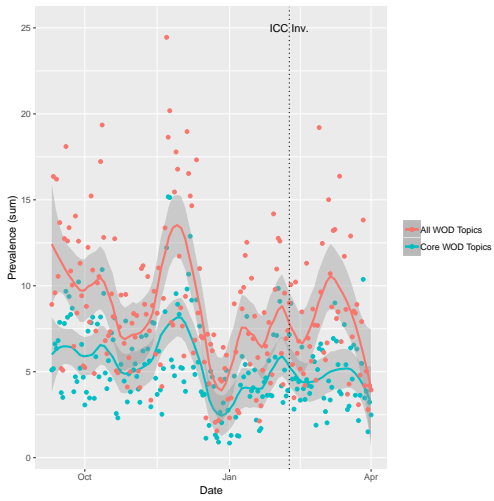
In Appendix G, I present robustness checks where I let an algorithm choose the number of topics in the topic model. I repeat that analysis here, showing the trends in total prevalence along with

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

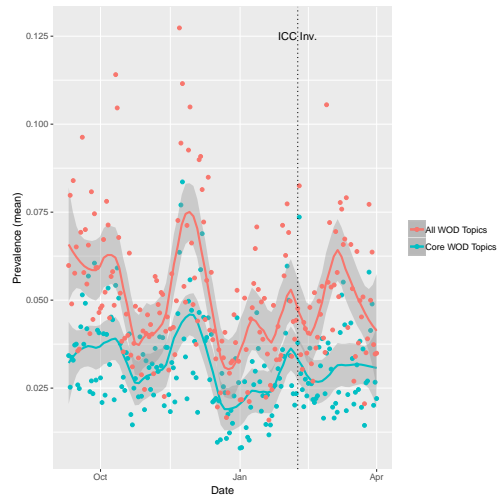


average prevalence. Again, the results are similar. Figure C.3 shows the analysis of whether the extent of coverage of the WOD increased (as covered in Appendix B), using a topic model with 76 topics. The left pane shows total prevalence and the right pane shows average prevalence. Trends are very similar using both measures. Figure C.4 repeats the main manuscript’s figure showing trends in coverage of the WOD corpus, corresponding to Hypothesis 1. Here, the algorithm chose a topic model with 99 topics. Again, trends are similar using both measures of prevalence.

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

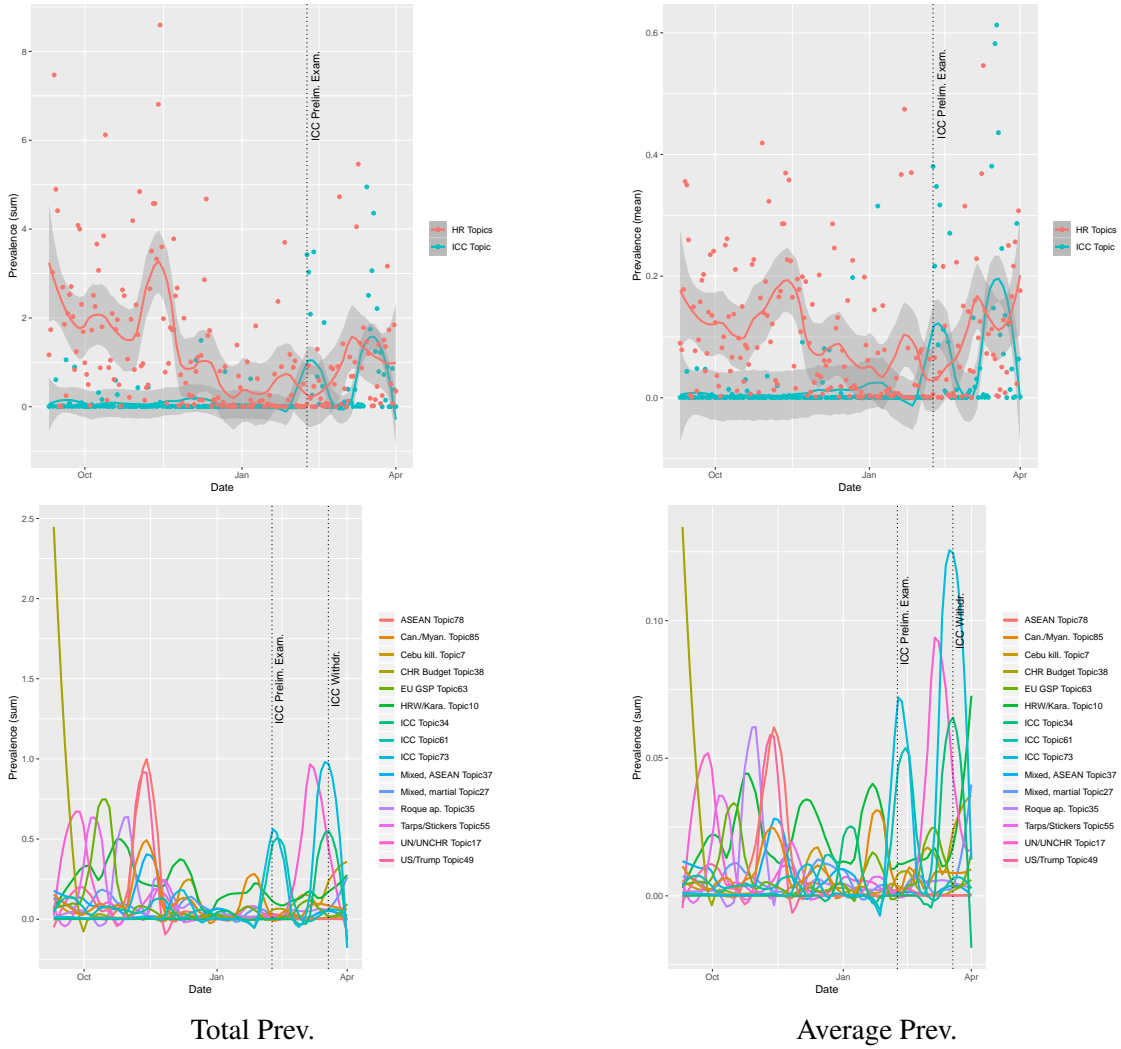


(a) Total Prevalence



(b) Average Prevalence

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



D Human Rights Topic Content

D.1 Human Rights Topics

This section gives greater detail about the content of each of the human rights topics. I focus first on the ICC topic and then the four topics highlighted in the main manuscript, in the right pane of Figure 2. I then describe the other human rights topics. For each of the human rights topics, I give a description, textual examples, and then the words most associated with the topic based on commonly reported metrics. The metrics are: (1) words with the highest probability of being associated with a particular topic, (2) FREX , (3) lift and (4) score.⁵⁷ 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.

D.1.1 ICC and Four Human Rights Topics Emphasized in Main Manuscript

ICC Topic: This topic covers the ICC and is straightforward. It covers the ICC's initial announcement of a preliminary examination and then the subsequent announcement that the Philippines was withdrawing from the Rome Statute.

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, mnsabio, asean-australia, colonialist, comeupp, darfur
- Score: icc, statut, rome, withdraw, preliminari, sabio, bensouda, examin, treati, fatou, prosecutor, jude, jurisdict, tribun, roqu, human, africa, unwil, complementar, hagu

UN Spats: This topic covers the back and forth between various international human rights actors, Duterte, and his representatives after the ICC's announcement. Agnes Callamard (then special UN

⁵⁷Bischof and Airoidi (2012); Taddy (2013); Chang (2011).

Rappateur) and Zeid al-Hussein (the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights made comments about the war on drugs, sometimes linked with the ICC. Duterte's advocates responded forcefully. For example:

- **DEFINITELY NOT AGNES** Palace rejects Iceland exec's call for Callamard to probe alleged EJKs in PH... (Interaksyon Feb 27, 2018, <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/breaking-news/2018/02/27/121284/definitely-not-agnes-palace-rejects>)
- Malacañang on Saturday slammed the United Nations human rights chief for his remarks against President Rodrigo Duterte. (Manila Times Mar 11, 2018, <https://www.manilatimes.net/2018/03/11/news/top-stories/malacanang-slams-un-commissioner/385430>).

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, unhcr, 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, tauli-corpuz, fisher, insult, expert, cayetano, dutert

HRW/Roque: This topic covers the back and forth between Harry Roque (then Presidential Spokesman) and Human Rights Watch, especially his comments about various human rights NGOs. One of the quotes that frequently appears involves Roque calling NGOs "unwitting tools" of the drug lords. Human Rights Watch and other organizations fired back. For example:

- PH law enforcement agencies have no proof yet on rights groups' links with drug lords, but Palace stands by remark (Interaksyon Mar 27, 2018, <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/breaking-news/2018/03/27/123250/ph-law-enforcement-agencies-have-no>)

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, pembedonaddress, pmmnewli, pretens, tokhang-styl, salo, kabayan, hollow, nroqu, gerri, jennifer, non-stop
- Score: roqu, harri, nnroqu, humanright, spokesman, lagman, humanrightswatch, palac, unwit, centerlaw, presidenti, destabil, kabayan, nnpresidenti, edcel, spokesperson, malaca, lord, party-list, panelo

Mixed Human Rights: This topic covers a couple of different things and tends to focus on events in Cebu, a province in the southern part of the Philippines. Before the ICC announcement, this topic tends to overlap with other topics. After the ICC, this topic tends to pick up on the Cebu City (the largest city in Cebu) mayor’s criticism of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights. For example:

- “In Cebu, criminals have human rights. The victims have no human rights.” (Cebu Daily News (via the Inquirer) Mar 27, 2018, <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/168872/osmena-sees-cebu-city-no-longer-safe-place>.)

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

UNCHR/HR Report: Before the ICC announcement, this topic tends to cover the Philippines’ acceptance of their Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report. After the ICC, this topic tends to focus on back and forth over an Amnesty International Philippines (AIP) report criticizing the war on drugs. This AIP report and other actions by HRW were part of the impetus for Roque’s remarks that human rights groups were tools of the drug lords, as in Topic 70. For example:

- Palace welcomes UNHRC adoption of PH human rights report in Geneva Cebu Daily News (via the Inquirer) Sept 23, 2017, <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/148095/palace-welcomes-unhrc-adoption-ph-human-rights-report-geneva>.
- Group cites cops’ “poor” human rights record in the Visayas SunStart Mar 9, 2018, <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/422884/Business/Group-cites-cops-poor-huma>

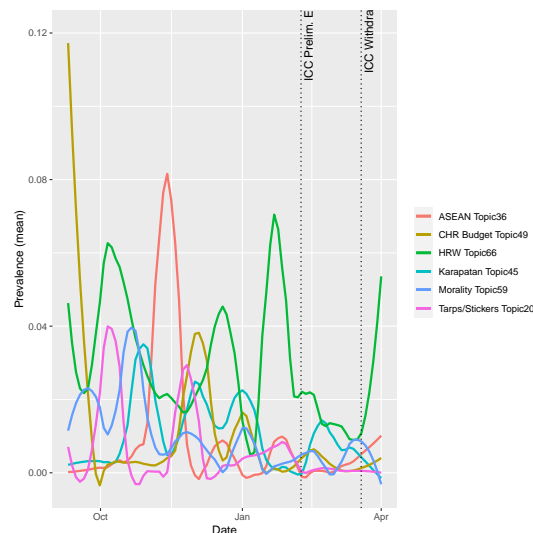
Topic 6 (UNCHR) Top Words:

- 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

D.1.2 Remaining Six Human Rights Topics Not Emphasized in Main Manuscript

Here, I describe the topics that did not see noticeable increases in their prevalence after the ICC. Figure D.1 shows the prevalence of these topics over time, in the same way as the main manuscript, in the right pane of Figure 2. The only topic that increases after the ICC (Topic 66, HRW/EJK debates) is one of the non-emphasized topics that is most associated with contestation.

Figure D.1: Prevalence of Additional Human Rights Topics



Tarps: This topic covers a barangay (barangays are local level administrative units) captain who used stickers to mark houses as “drug free” and large banners (tarps) to label other houses as drug dens. There is not a lot of contestation in the articles most associated with this topic. It gets linked to human rights because there is a relatively calm back and forth between the barangay captain and the local Philippine CHR representative over making sure not to overstep with the tarps. For example:

- “The Association of Barangay Council (ABC) in Cebu City is pushing for a dialog with the Commission on human rights in Central Visayas (CHR-7) to convince the latter to allow Barangay Ermita as well as other interested barangays to continue the (tarp) campaign. ... The gesture was welcomed by CHR-7 Director Arvin Odrón.” Cebu Daily News (via the Inquirer) Oct 8, 2017, <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/149859/brgys-want-drug-free-drive>.

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

Morality: This topic tends to pick up a series of editorials that were relatively high altitude takes about the country, its past and present. They will connect the war on drugs with broader concepts like human rights, democracy, and morality. For example:

- “DIGNITY is a concept uttered a lot in light of recent events in our country. Let us help [drug abuse victims] solve their drug abuse problems by recognizing that they are humans with dignity, too, Commission on human rights Chairman Chito Gascon said, reacting to the tragedy that befell Kian de los Santos. But what is dignity? It is one of the most powerful concepts modernity has produced.” Manila Times Sept 26, 2017, <https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/09/26/opinion/analysis/on-dignity/352845>.

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, nnnaddress, 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, nnnaddress, cabinet, european, charact, oust, europ, legitimaci

Karapatan: This is a little less coherent of a topic, but it tends to directly report on the actions of domestic human rights NGOs, like Karapatan. Some parts of this topic cover the war on drugs and will include some contestation. Other parts will focus more on conflicts between the government and peasants/farmers over land and land ownership. Some of the organizations mentioned will act in both the drugs and land issue areas. For example:

- “A human rights organization accused the Duterte government of carrying out ‘not only the massacre of urban poor communities,’ referring to the killings in the course of the war on drugs, but also ‘the systematic killing of farmers in the countryside.’ Karapatan said...” Interaksyon Oct 21, 2017 <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/breaking-news/2017/10/21/104653/with-91-peasants-slain-in-14-months-monthly-kill-rate>

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, karapatann
- Score: nupl, karapatan, humanright, palabay, peasant, counterinsurg, lawyer, pura, activist, nnkarapatan, manlaban, paraleg, forst, atti, olalia, attack, iadl, humanitarian, regim, petit

ASEAN: This topic covers the ASEAN summit hosted in the Philippines. In terms of contestation, it begins relatively calmly with coverage of the UN Chief’s remarks that gestured towards human rights. Though, the media also later covers contestation over Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s remarks about having discussed human rights with Duterte. For example:

- “President Rodrigo Duterte... [welcomed] U.N. secretary general Antonio Guterres to the opening ceremony of the 31st ASEAN summit Monday... The UN chief expressed readiness to provide technical support to ASEAN member-countries in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, as well as transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and people trafficking. But he stressed these efforts should be pursued through policies designed to protect their citizens with effective law enforcement and respect for human rights.” Interaksyon Nov 14, 2017, <https://interaksyon.philstar.com/breaking-news/2017/11/14/108826/heartened-by-marawi-liberation-un-chief>
- “When Trump did not oblige requests to badger DU30 about human rights, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada tried to grab attention for himself by claiming that he discussed human rights with Duterte...” Manila Times Nov 16, 2017, <https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/11/16/opinion/columnists/topanalysis/playing-trivialities-miss-363051>

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, nnt Trudeau, prize, receipt
- Lift: rakhin, buddhist, burmes, cambodian, chan-ocha, deforest, delhi, hearten, mistreat, nnsuu, nnt Trudeau, 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, nnt Trudeau, asian, justin, guterr, vietnam

CHR Budget: This topic covers a politically contested move by the Philippine legislative chambers to gut the budget of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights. The Commission is a constitutionally mandated independent body. The move to cut their funding was tied to the CHR's stance on the war on drugs. For example:

- “CROSSING party lines, senators on Wednesday vowed to restore the P678-million proposed budget of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) for 2018, which the House of Representatives reduced to merely P1,000 for its criticisms of rampant killings of drug suspects in the government's drug war.” Manila Times Sept 14, 2017 [https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/09/14/news/top-stories/senators-vow-restore-chr-bu-350537](https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/09/14/news/top-stories/senators-vow-restore-chr-budget-350537).

Topic 49 Top Words:

- Highest Prob: budget, chr, hous, senat, said, commiss, gascon, humanright, propos, will, nnt he, 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, miscellan, 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

HRW/EJK Debate: This topic tends to cover a debate over whether the war on drugs included extrajudicial killings. Among the topics that does not increase much after the ICC's announcement, this was the one most characterized by contestation. It sometimes includes mentions of one of the earlier Human Rights Watch reports. For example:

- “MALACANANG maintained that there were no cases of extra judicial killings during the Duterte administration despite the 3,800 suspects reported killed in its campaign against illegal drugs.” Manila Times Oct 8, 2017, <https://www.manilatimes.net/2017/10/08/latest-stories/breakingnews/malacanang-firm-pnp-claim-zero-extra-judicial-killings-355254>.

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

D.2 War on Drugs Topics

In Appendix B, I 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.⁵⁸ Figure D.2 then shows abbreviated examples of articles most highly associated with those topics.

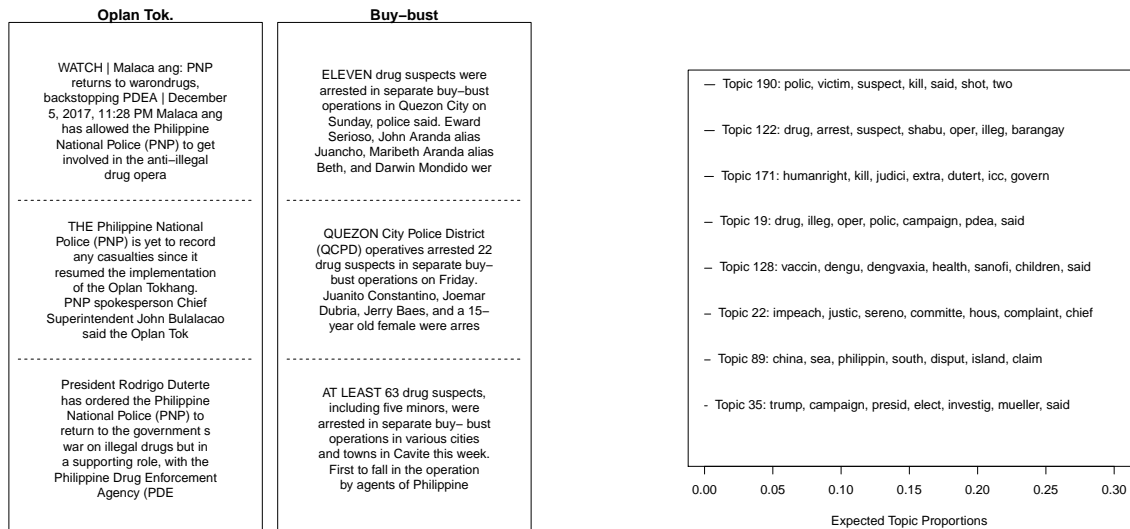
- “Oplan Tokhang,” A Core WOD Topic (#19): Top Words

- 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, dsppo, 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 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.

⁵⁸Translates 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.

Figure D.3: 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 Possible Endogeneity of Coverage and ICC Announcement

E.1 Did coverage anticipate the ICC announcement?

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.⁵⁹ 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.⁶⁰ The “distance” between the ICC and discussion and realities on the ground has been a focus of recent scholarly work as well.⁶¹ In qualitative interviews in the Republic of Georgia with 10 individuals from 8 governmental 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.⁶² 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.

E.2 Did the ICC announcement anticipate public opinion?

It is theoretically possible that the timing of the ICC announcement was deliberate and that it potentially coincided with changes in public opinion - which then might have been correlated with changes in media coverage. This, too, is unlikely. Figure E.1 summarizes responses from nationally representative, quarterly surveys about Duterte’s approval rating (left pane) and approval of the WOD (right pane).⁶³ 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 E.2 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. 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

⁵⁹ Author’s interview, 9-9-19.

⁶⁰ Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System Final Report. 2020.

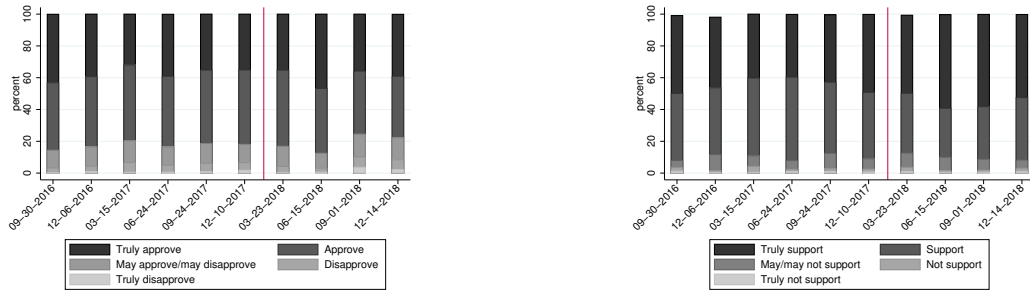
⁶¹ Clark (2018).

⁶² Author’s interviews, May 2019.

⁶³ Ulat Ng Bayan (translated roughly, “Report on the Nation”), from Pulse Asia.

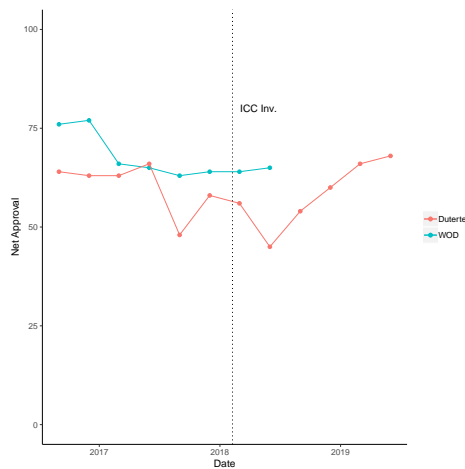
⁶⁴ www.sws.org.ph. Accessed 8-14-2019.

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?”



2017, but remains strong, with a slight upward trend until the end of the available data, June of 2018.

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.



F Placebo Testing for Topic Spikes

The main manuscript highlights how certain types of topics increased in prevalence after the ICC's announcement. There are several pieces of evidence that are more consistent with my interpretation - that the ICC announcement induced this change - rather than this being coincidental or spurious.

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.⁶⁵

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].⁶⁶

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."⁶⁷

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 F.1. These topics tended to be specific, concentrated coverage of a very important event, 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.

F.1 Human Rights content in non-WOD Articles

Looking at the content of non-WOD articles provides another piece of evidence that suggests that increasing human rights content after the ICC is not coincidental.⁶⁸ It would potentially be worry-

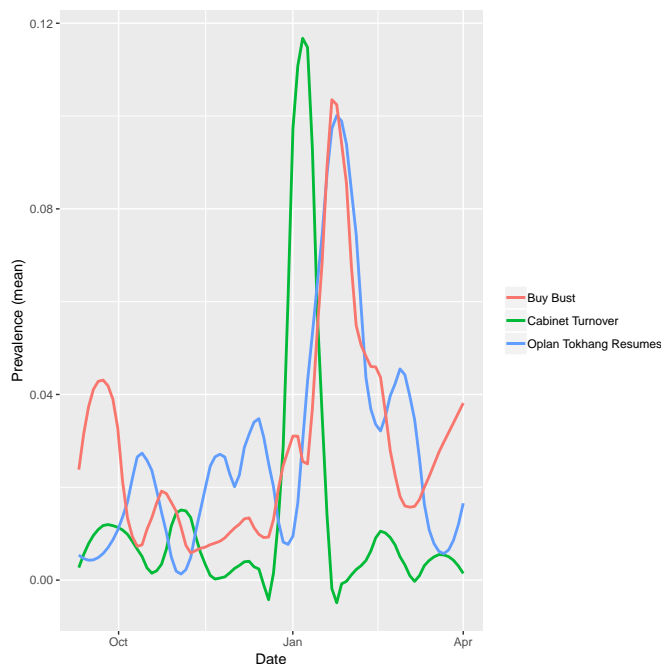
⁶⁵"Iceland to PHL: Allow human rights review by UN special rapporteur." GMA News Online. February 27, 2018. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/644805/iceland-to-phl-allow-human-rights-review-by-un-special-rapporteur/story/>. Accessed 8-14-2019.

⁶⁶"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.

⁶⁷<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-summit/duterte-berates-canadas-trudeau-at-end>. Accessed 6-11-19.

⁶⁸I thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

Figure F.1: Average Topic Prevalence by Day, non-HR Topic Spikes



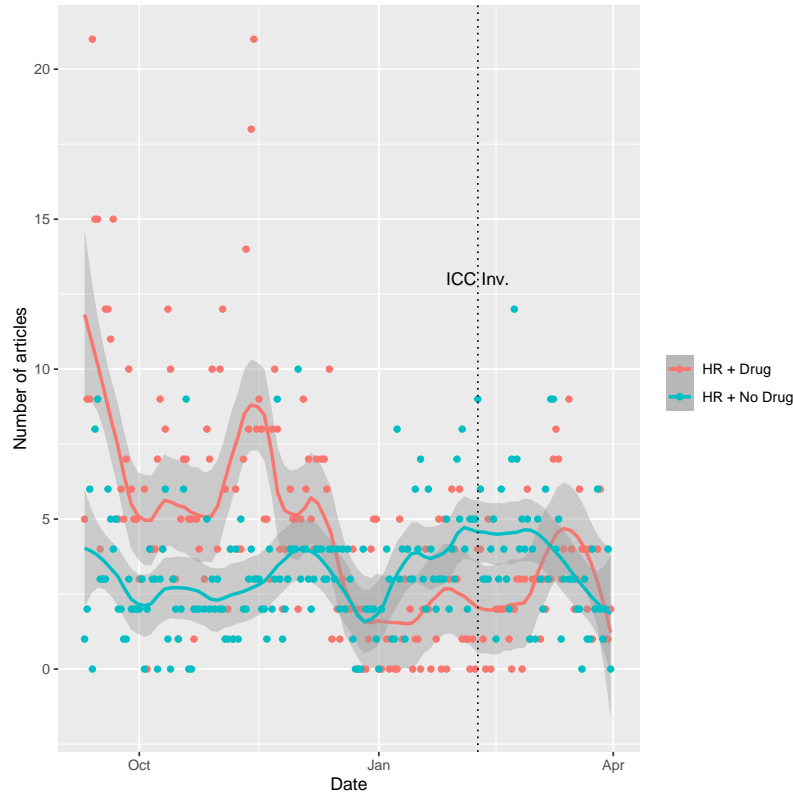
ing if human rights content of articles *not* about the WOD increased after the ICC’s announcement. This would suggest that something other than the ICC was driving an overall emphasis on human rights.

To assess this, I first took the full corpus and identified articles that did and did not contain the token “human rights.” I then looked at which of those articles were and were not classified as relevant to the WOD, and plotted the number of each type of article over time.

Figure F.2 shows the results. The red line shows the number of articles containing the term human rights that are also WOD-relevant. The blue line shows articles containing the term human rights that are not classified as WOD-relevant. It would be worrying if the blue line was increasing after the ICC’s actions.

The blue line is actually relatively flat. (Recall that the number of articles about all negative or violent topics decreases around Christmas and the New Year as outlets tend to adjust their coverage.) We don’t see the same type of increase after the ICC announcement with non-WOD articles as we do with those classified as relevant to the WOD. There is a slight increase in February of 2018. This tended to pertain to articles about a helicopter deal with Canada. Canadian human rights advocates flagged that the helicopter sales to the Philippines would potentially be used to commit human rights abuses against Maoist rebels (something Duterte was happy to admit to). So Duterte unilaterally cancelled the deal, triggering articles that had content about human rights violations in regions with Maoist rebels.

Figure F.2: Non-WOD Human Rights Articles



F.2 Catholic Church Actions

Are the actions of other actors, apart from the ICC, also associated with changes in media coverage? Here, I look at whether actions by the Catholic Church were followed by similar changes.⁶⁹ The Church is a good actor to focus on because more than 80% of Philippine citizens are Catholic. The Church has spoken out, to varying degrees, about issues concerning democracy and human rights for a long time in the Philippines.

Looking at the effect of the Church poses a challenge - while the ICC had one major announcement during the time frame of my analysis, the Church took multiple actions. It's therefore harder to compare coverage before and after an event, because there is not one, discrete event. This also means that I need to look at content within articles about the Church's actions, rather than all articles around that time period. It would be difficult to associate any Church event with changes in content, say, a week later, as I did in the main manuscript.

In general, I do not find that coverage of Church events was as likely to emphasize contestation, compared to the ICC. The rhetoric between the Administration and Church was surprisingly civil - at least during this time period. This lends additional evidence that international organizations are particularly prone to triggering contestation. I give the specific details behind this claim below.

⁶⁹I again thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

To collect the set of events pertaining to the Church, I started with all of the articles that are (a) related to the war on drugs and (b) make some reference to the Church. I used simple search terms to identify articles mentioning the Church (“catholic”, “bishop”, and “archbishop”). This resulted in 137 articles. Since this is a manageable number, I read them all and hand coded them, rather than relying on topic models. I identified the action the Church took and then looked at whether the article emphasized contestation.

Coding: I coded each article for whether it contained some form of contestation between an actor supporting and opposing the war on drugs. The key coding rules for classifying an article as containing contestation were that the article had to contain (1) some argumentation or rhetoric or statements from both sides, pro- and anti-WOD and (2) something more than a factual statement. I chose these rules to match the way I described contestation in the theory and main manuscript. In practice, (1) means that a one-sided article was not labelled contestation. Eg an article about a bishop who criticized the war on drugs would not be labelled contestation without some response or rebutting argument from an actor supporting the war on drugs. In practice, (2) means that an article reporting events without argumentation or rhetoric was not labelled contestation. Eg an article that says “The Catholic Bishops Council of the Philippines organized a march to protest the renewal of Oplan Tokhang... The Philippines National Police welcomed the renewal...” would not be labelled as contestation.

Events/Church Actions: As I read the articles, I noted each distinct action taken by the Church. With the ICC and the main manuscript, it is clear what distinct IO action to focus on, the ICC’s announcement of a preliminary examination. This is less clear with the Church, since it is comprised of different actors who do different things. I made note of any specific statement by a Church official or a specific organized event. This allows me to see whether discussions of these events are characterized by contestation.

Figure F.3: Coding of Articles about the Church

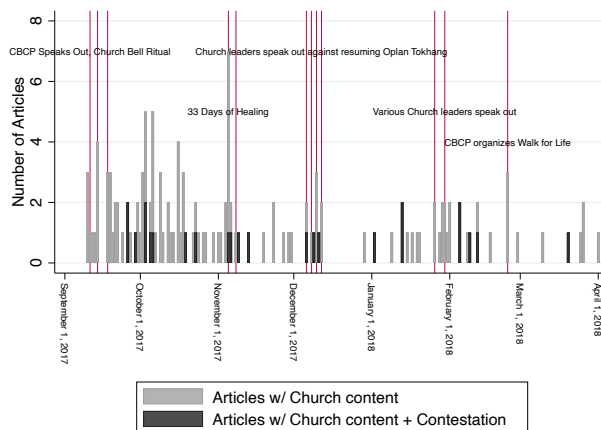


Figure F.3 shows the results. The horizontal axis shows the dates of each article or event. The most important Church events are marked with vertical red lines and are annotated to describe the

event. The grey bars show the total number of articles, by day, which had content about drugs and the Church. The dark bars show the number of those articles which contained contestation.

In general, coverage of Church actions does not often contain the same contestation found in ICC and human rights articles. Most Church actions receive some coverage, but few trigger the same back and forth found in ICC articles. The rhetoric was surprisingly civil, with Duterte (at least publicly) taking a very conciliatory tone towards the Church. For example, after the Church declared their “33 Days of Healing” actions in response to the war on drugs, Presidential Spokesman Harry Roque was quoted in some articles saying “‘wish to build better rapport with the Catholic Church and seek the cooperation of its leaders, even as we call on our Catholic brethren to pro-actively help government in our anti-illegal drug campaign, particularly in the rehabilitation and treatment of drug dependents.,’ he added.”⁷⁰

For another example, after Church leaders spoke out against the resumption of Oplan Tokhang, one article highlighted the change in Duterte’s approach to the Church: *President Duterte earlier lashed out against Catholic Church leaders and human rights advocates for criticizing his war on drugs. But early this month, Presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said the administration is open to a dialog with the Church especially following the assumption of Valles as the new president of the CBCP in December 2017.*⁷¹

When the Church organized the Walk for Life, an article covering the event said: *Roque said President Rodrigo Duterte welcomed "constructive criticism[s]" over his implemented policies and programs. ‘As we all know, President Rodrigo Roa Duterte is open to constructive criticism. He allows everyone, including the protesters, to fully exercise their right to express their grievances within the bounds of the law,’ he said.*⁷²

I am speculating, but I think that Duterte didn’t flame contestation during this time period because the Church focused its actions on some very high profile, near-universally condemned events, like the killing of Kian de los Santos and other teenagers. Police were caught on camera killing 17 year old de los Santos despite claiming self-defense. A few days later, two other teenagers were killed in similarly suspicious circumstances; one of the victims was only 14 years old. Those killings were virtually impossible to defend and by linking their actions to those tragedies, the Church could insulate itself a bit from Duterte’s usual contestation.

⁷⁰<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/631965/palace-we-wish-to-build-better-relationship-story/>. Accessed 11-12-21.

⁷¹<https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/161673/bishop-cops-avoid-bloodshed-implementing-oplan-tokhang>. Accessed 11-12-21.

⁷²<https://mb.com.ph/2018/02/25/walk-for-life-shows-lively-ph-democracy-palace/>. Accessed 11-12-21.

G Results Using Different Number of Topics

In the main manuscript, I chose the number of topics for the topic model. Here, I use the algorithm from Mimno and Lee (2014), which can be implemented within the STM package from Roberts, Stewart and Tingley (2019), to choose the number of topics and their contents. The algorithm suggested a model with 76 topics for the full corpus and 99 topics for the WOD corpus. 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.⁷³

G.1 Trends in the Extent of WOD Coverage

Figure G.1 show trends in coverage in the full corpus, as analyzed in Appendix B. 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.

G.2 Trends in the Content of WOD Coverage

The increase in in WOD coverage occurring a few weeks after the ICC announcement again consists mainly of human rights-related content. Figure G.2 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.

⁷³This model has separate topics for the ICC examination and the Philippines' withdrawal. The third topic is a less distinct hybrid of those two.

Figure G.1: Average Prevalence of WOD Topics, Number of Topics Chosen by Algorithm ($k = 76$)

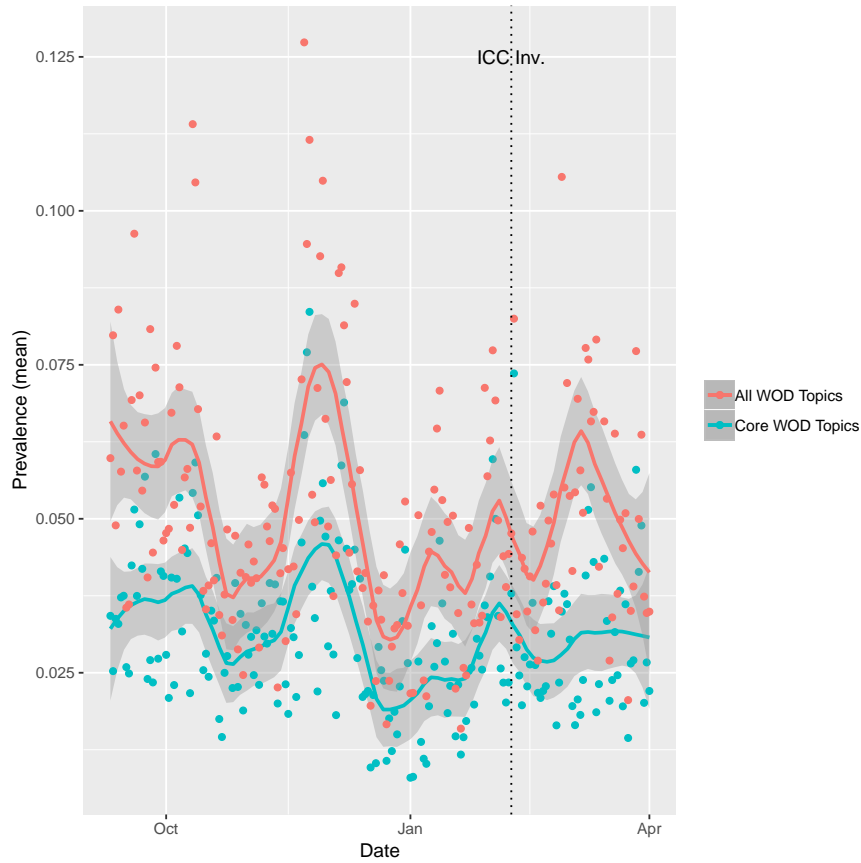
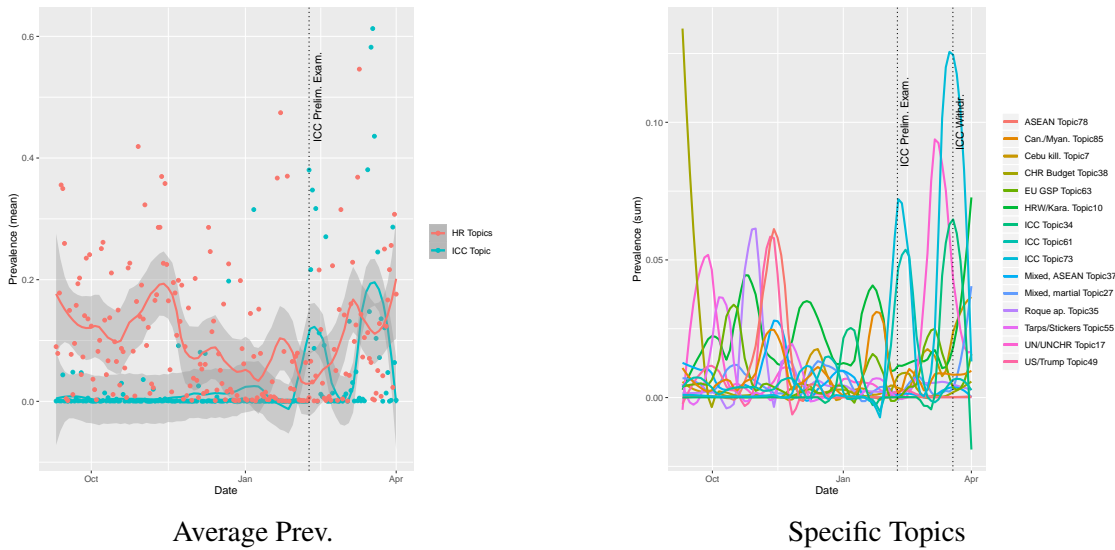


Figure G.2: Prevalence Measures for ICC and Human Rights Topics, Number of Topics Chosen by Algorithm ($k = 99$)



G.3 Results using alternate pre-processing decisions

I thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing me towards Denny and Spirling (2018). Their arguments apply most strongly to the unsupervised topic modeling portion of the main manuscript. Since the hand-coded, out of sample accuracy results for the classifier (which is supervised) are strong, I feel confident that alternate pre-processing decisions would not affect results.

However, it is important to check whether pre-processing choices were likely to affect topic model results. In the terminology of Denny and Spirling (2018), my pre-processing was “PNLSW.” I removed punctuation, numbers, and stopwords, converted words to lowercase, and then stemmed words. I did not use anything pertaining to ngrams, and I only removed words that appeared in only one document.

Figure G.3: Effect of Pre-Processing Choices on Document Similarity

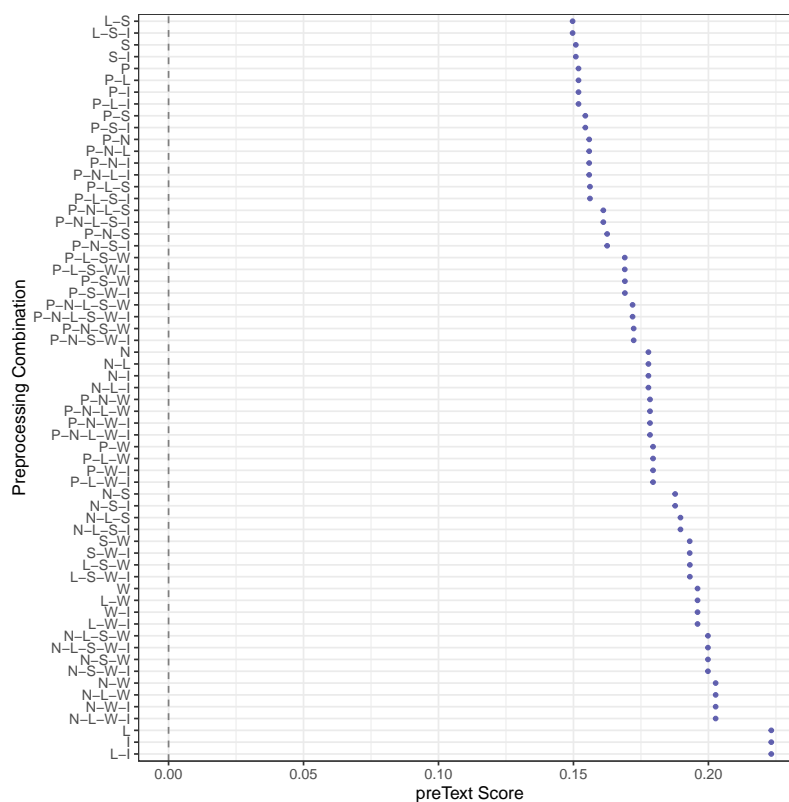


Figure G.3 shows preText scores, which are measures of document (dis)similarity using different pre-processing decisions Denny and Spirling (2018). As this measure goes up, the distance between documents for that particular pre-processing pipelines becomes more “unusual” compared to other pre-processing pipelines. Lower scores are therefore better; a lower score implies that the pre-processing pipeline is less likely to be generating an outlier corpus, and by extension, analysis heavily influenced by the pre-processing pipeline.

The row corresponding to PNLSW is approximately a third of the way down. This suggests that my original pre-processing algorithm was ok, but not the best, in terms of minimizing the

effect of pre-processing choices. A minimal amount of pre-processing, LS, generated a corpus with the least amount of dissimilarity across documents by pipeline specification. Though it is worth noting that the absolute change in the preText score, going from PNLSSW (my pipeline) to LS is about 0.03. The preText scores here were generally more tightly clustered than in the authors' vignette examples, where scores ranged from 0.07 - 0.17.⁷⁴ That gives initial evidence that pre-processing pipeline decisions may not have a large impact for the present analysis.

However, it's important to check further. I therefore re-ran my analysis of the drug corpus using an LS pre-processing pipeline. This meant that I re-estimated the topic model, only I left in punctuation, numbers, and stopwords (and still converted to (L)owercase and still (S)temmed words). I kept everything else about my analysis the same though I removed some additional text at the end of some documents.⁷⁵ I estimated a topic model with 75 topics. I then semantically labelled the topics, looking for those that were about the ICC and those that had "human rights" in their highest probability words. The topic model returned fewer distinct human rights topics, though their interpretation and trends were (to my great relief) similar.

Figure G.4: Effect of ICC on Human Rights Topics and ICC Topics, LS Pre-processing pipeline

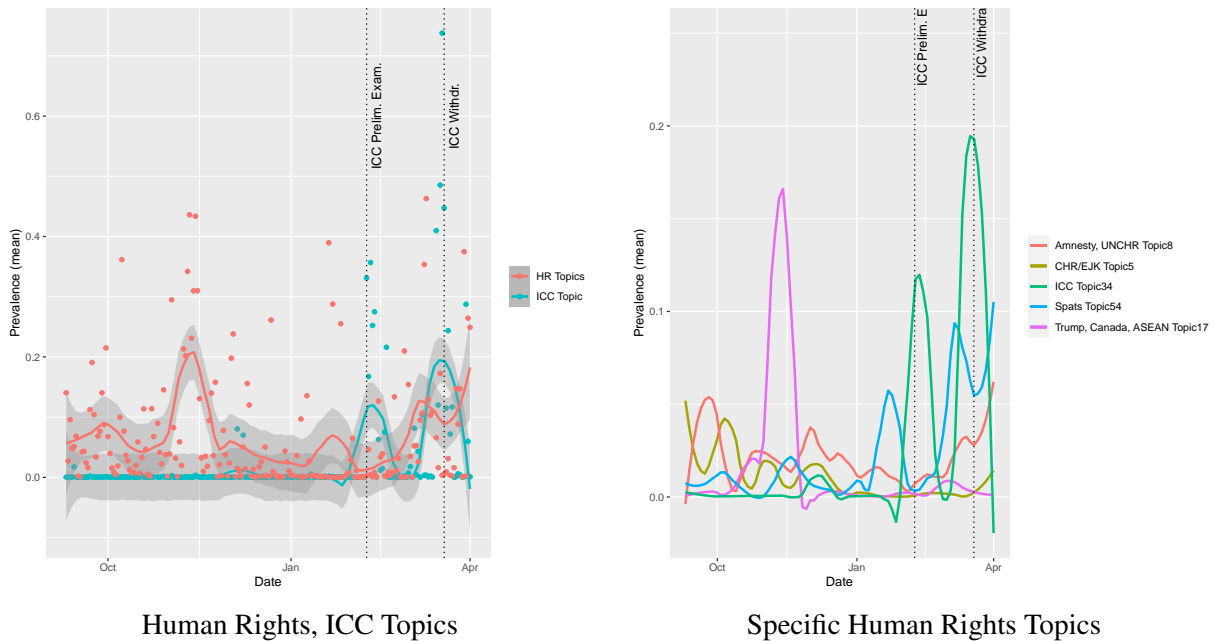
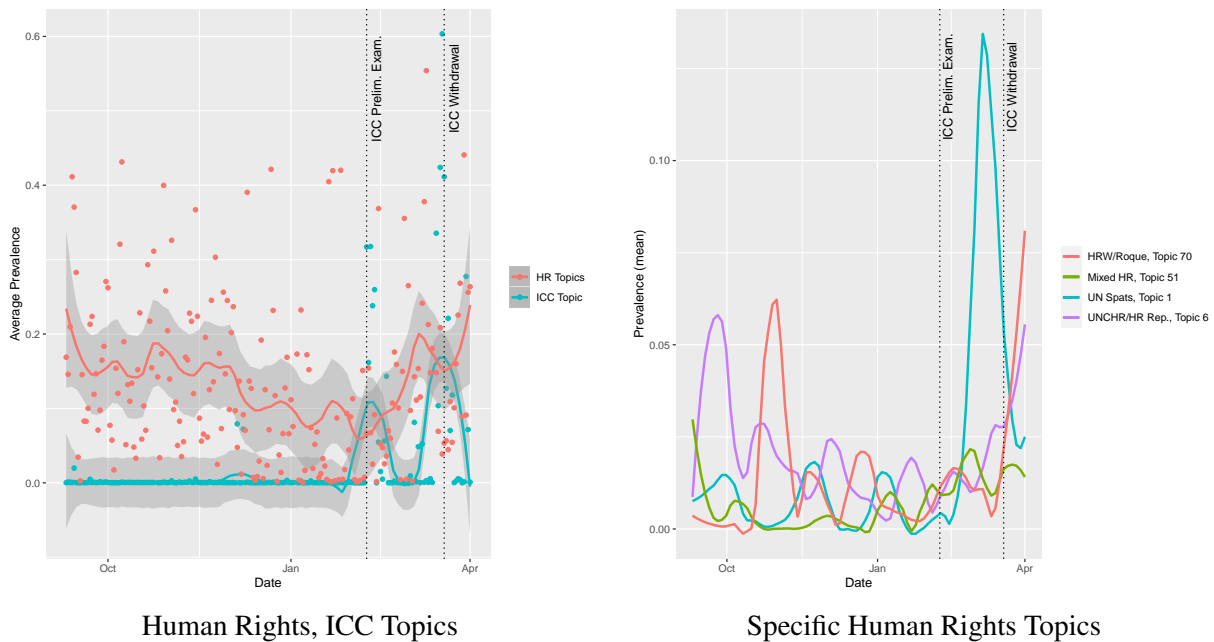


Figure G.4 shows the analogue of the most important figure from the main manuscript, using the LS pre-processing pipeline. I reproduced Figure 2 here from the main manuscript to make comparison easier (Figure G.5). The left pane shows the prevalence of human rights topics and the ICC topic over time. The right pane shows the specific topics from each category. The results are largely similar. The almost identical trends for the ICC topic is initial encouragement. Even

⁷⁴See http://www.mjdenny.com/getting_started_with_preText.html.

⁷⁵Manila Times articles listed a phone number for their main offices. Since the pipeline now retains phone numbers, this skewed the topic model results.

Figure G.5: Effect of ICC on Human Rights Topics and ICC Topics, Original PNSLW Pre-processing pipeline

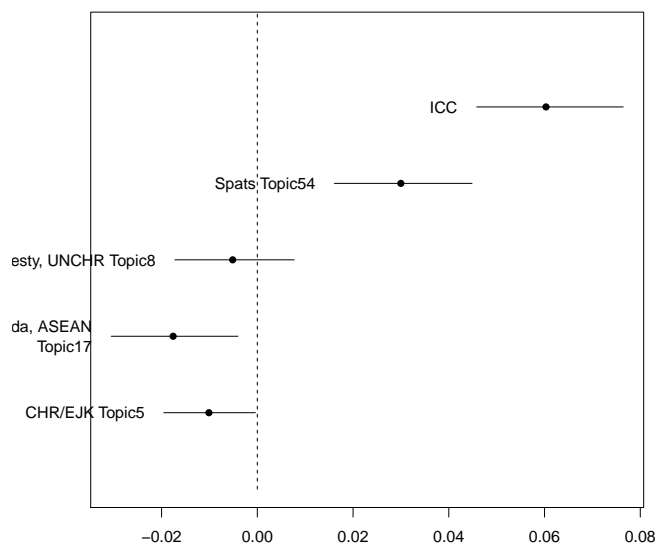


the numbers for the measures of prevalence are similar. On days around the ICC announcement, approximately 10% and 18% of the corpus of articles consisted of content related to the ICC. Those numbers are virtually identical across the two pre-processing pipelines.

More importantly though, human rights topic prevalence again increases after the ICC’s announcement. And it is predominantly driven by coverage of spats between defenders of the WOD and international officials. The exact topics, and of course their arbitrary topic numberings, change. But the prevalence of topics pertain to contestation and back-and-forth is similar across both specifications and rising after the ICC’s announcement. Figure G.6 shows the analogous regression results from the original manuscript. They are again similar.

There were two main differences worth noting. First, the LS pipeline and subsequent topic model picked up a more distinct ASEAN topic and included human rights among that topic’s most identifying words. This is not surprising. As mentioned in the original robustness checks about spikes in human rights topics, the ASEAN conference increased discussion of human rights. Second, the nice, relatively smooth decline in human rights topics before the ICC announcement in the original manuscript is not quite as smooth in the LS pipeline results. There is a bump in human rights content a little before the ICC announcement, though the overall downward trend is still present. The topic model after the LS pipeline picked up this content a little more distinctly.

Figure G.6: Topic Prevalence Before/After ICC, Structural topic model estimates, LS pipeline



H Results Including/Excluding Manila Times

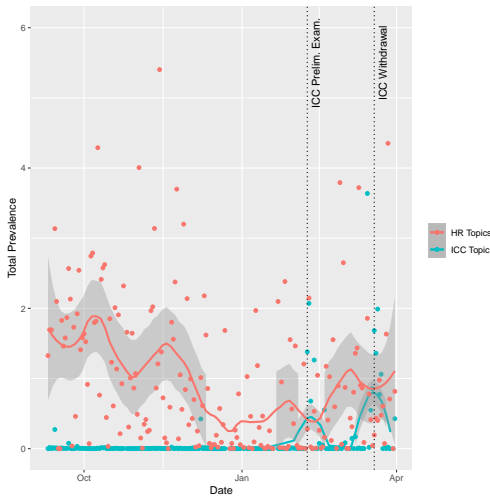
The owner of the Manila Times, Dante Arevalo Ang, has close ties with the Duterte administration. In May 2017, Duterte appointed Ang to the position of “special envoy for international public relations.”⁷⁶ It is possible that the Manila Times plays an outsized role in magnifying contestation over the ICC and human rights, regarding the WOD. Here’s I replicate the previous analyses, excluding The Manila Times, and find similar results.

Figure H.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.

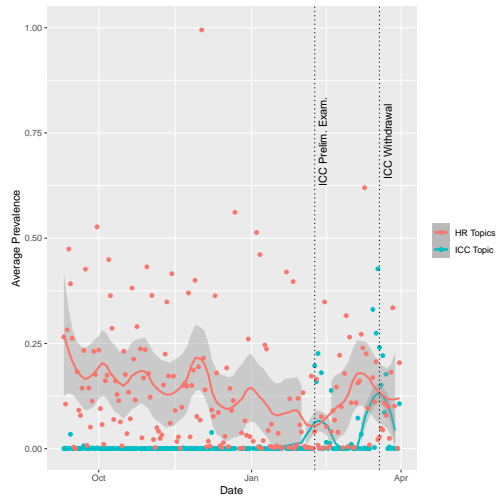
Figure H.2 replicates the second part of the main analysis of Hypothesis 2, showing trends in specific topics. Here, too, the trends are similar. Both the Manila Times and the other outlets display similar increases in coverage of spats and related topics after the ICC’s preliminary examination announcement.

⁷⁶<https://www.rappler.com/nation/170038-manila-times-dante-ang-appointed-envoy-public-re>

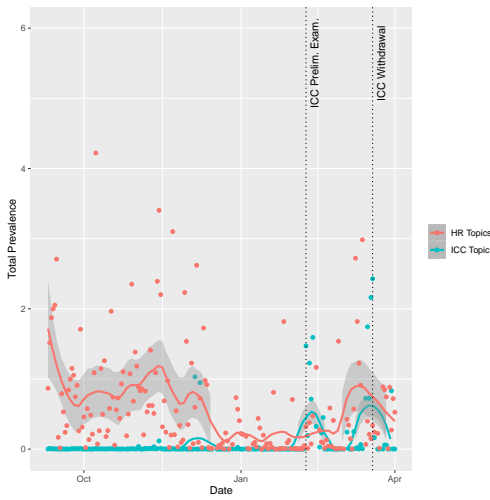
Figure H.1: Prevalence Measures, $k = 75$



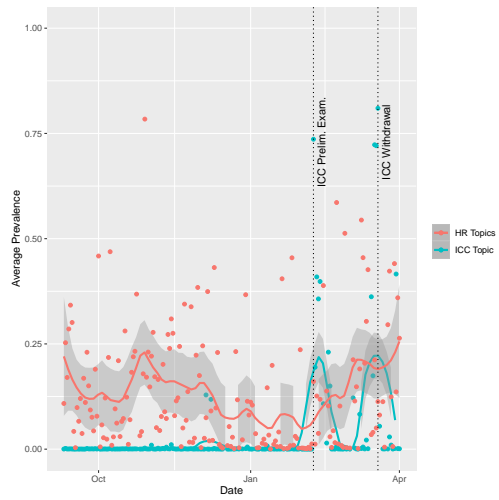
Total Prev., No Manila Times



Average Prev., No Manila Times

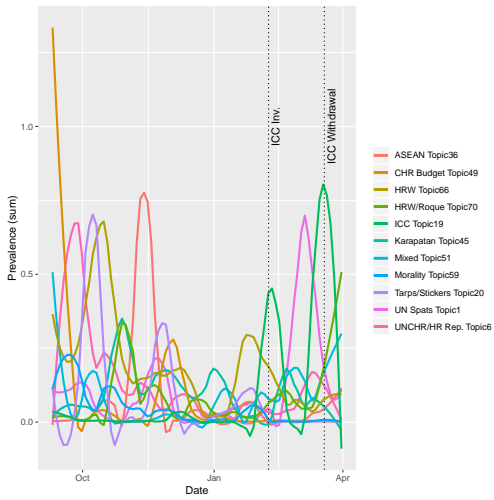


Total Prev., Manila Times Only

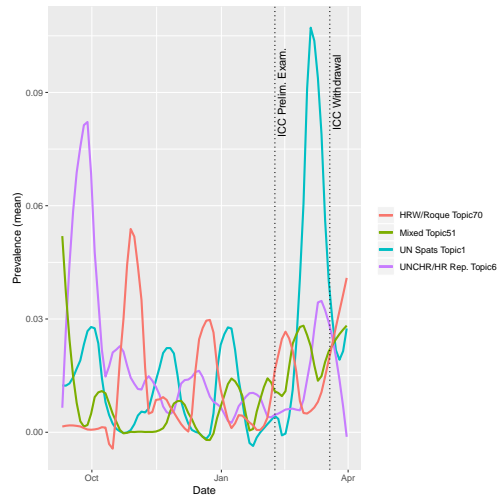


Average Prev., Manila Times Only

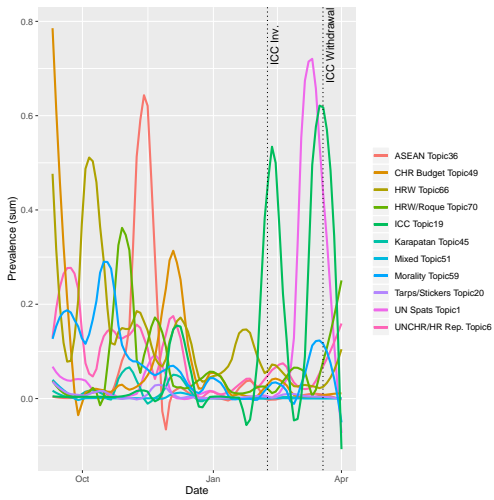
Figure H.2: Prevalence Measures, $k = 75$



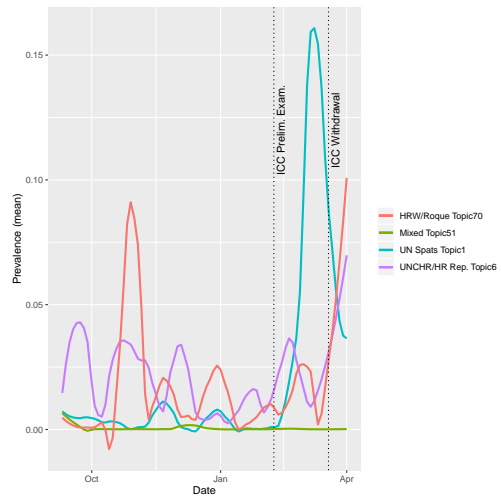
Total Prev., No Manila Times



Average Prev., No Manila Times



Total Prev., Manila Times Only



Average Prev., Manila Times Only

I Survey Experimental Evidence

I thank the reviewers and editors for pushing me to look for direct evidence about the effects of shifting media coverage on attitudes about the WOD and ICC. To do this, I conducted a large, pre-registered survey experiment in the Philippines that was in the field September 21 – October 21 of 2021. I used a professional firm, TGM Research, to sample approximately 3,000 respondents, nationally representative along several demographic characteristics. Respondents participated online and took the survey in Tagalog. Native speakers checked the translations for all materials.

The experiment randomly varied the type of newspaper article that respondents read. I constructed three treatment articles to match the archetypes that I highlighted in the theory and media content analysis: a “regular” article about the general conduct of the WOD (*WOD Article*), an article about the ICC investigation that emphasized contestation (*ICC Contestation Article*), and an ICC article that emphasized facts about the investigation in lieu of contestation (*ICC No Contestation Article*). After reading an article or being assigned to a Control condition without an article, respondents answered questions measuring their support for the war on drugs and the ICC.

For analysis, I focus on two comparisons: (1) attitudes after reading the the ICC Contestation article compared to attitudes after reading the WOD article and (2) attitudes after reading the ICC Contestation article compared to attitudes after reading the ICC No Contestation article. The first comparison allows me to think about what happens to public opinion when the ICC takes an important action and media coverage shifts from regular WOD content to content about contestation over the ICC - as documented in the main manuscript. The second comparison allows me to think about a counterfactual world in which media content focuses on the facts and process of the ICC’s action, as opposed to contestation. It therefore gives insight into what attitudes would look like in the absence of contestation, but still with an ICC action.

To give a brief preview: First, I find that contestation “works” (from Duterte’s perspective) in shoring up support for the WOD. Going from the WOD Articles to the ICC No Contestation article significantly decreases support for the WOD among Liberal Party supporters. However, substituting the ICC Contestation Article for the ICC No Contestation Article – which corresponds to what happens when Duterte and his supporters flood media coverage with back-and-forth – averts this decrease in support. This is not evidence of polarization, but it is an important effect of shifting media coverage.

Second, opinions over the ICC are quite polarized along party lines. Reading *either* ICC Article (with or without contestation) significantly widens gaps between different party supporters regarding their opinions about the ICC. This polarization is widened, though not to a large degree, with the additional of contestation.

Below, I describe the experiment and results in much greater detail.

I.1 Treatments

I constructed three articles that matched the types of articles described in the main manuscript. Recall that the main manuscript focuses on “core” WOD articles, articles about contestation over the ICC, and articles about the ICC’s action itself. I found recent, real-world articles that had these features and used excerpts from each to construct an article of each type. I constructed each

treatment article to have similar length and style, so that the main difference was in the content. The bolded title and text for each treatment are below. I very lightly edited a few words so that the parts of each article fit together cleanly. I did not change any meaningful content in the articles. I also assigned some respondents to a pure control condition, where they did not read an article.

For treatment assignment, I blocked based on party. Specifically, I randomly assigned treatment within three blocks: respondents who said they supported the Liberal Party (the main opposition party), PDP-Laban (Duterte's party), and all other respondents.

I.1.1 Core WOD Article

Core WOD articles focus on the everyday operations of the drug war and the overall statistics regarding its impact. These types of articles are common across the time frame of the main manuscript's analysis and since. They tend to describe a specific bust or "nanlaban," meaning situations where the police killed a suspect in (alleged) self defense. They often end with summary information about the total number of people killed in the drug war, without necessarily weighing in with judgement about whether the WOD has been good or bad. I conclude this article with a sentence about the ICC, because every respondent answers questions about the WOD and about the ICC. Adding this sentence helps that outcome question make more sense.

This article was constructed with material from the following three real world articles:

- 'Nanlaban' in Cavite: 3 drug suspects killed in buy-bust operations by Delfin T. Mallari Jr. Philippine Daily Inquirer, March 27, 2021. Available online at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1412048/nanlaban-in-cavite-3-drug-suspects-killed-in-buy-bust-operations>
- PNP calls Ateneo study 'unfair', says cops have no new powers in 'drug war' by Franco Luna. PhilStar Global, July 20, 2021. Available online at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/07/20/2113849/pnp-calls-ateneo-study-unfair-says-cops-have-no-new-powers-in-drug-war>
- ICC sees crimes against humanity in Philippines drug war by Helen Flores. PhilStar Global, December 16, 2020. Available online at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/12/16/2064113/icc-sees-crimes-against-humanity-philippines-drug-war>

Drug suspects killed in police operation as part of broader war on drugs

Three drug suspects were killed in separate buy-bust operations that ended in gunfights in Cavite province, according to police on Saturday.

Col. Marlon Santos, Cavite police chief, said in a report that the three slain suspects resisted arrest and fired at policemen during the operations.

Santos' report had no other details on the operations that led to the killing of the three suspects. Police also arrested 202 other drug suspects—176 alleged pushers and 26 users—in 140 operations, 110 of them buy-busts.

Authorities seized 464 packets of shabu (crystal meth), 52 packets of dried marijuana leaves, tools for drug use and cash believed to be from the sale of drugs. The volume and estimated street value of the confiscated drugs were not mentioned in the report.

Recently, the PNP chief, Police Gen. Guillermo Eleazar, cited government data from the Real Numbers PH campaign saying that the drug war has resulted in the arrest of 293,841 drug suspects, including 12,356 high-value targets, in 203,715 anti-illegal drug operations nationwide.

Figures from Real Numbers PH—which collates data from the PNP, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, and Dangerous Drugs Board—also note that 6,089 suspects have died in official operations since July 2016, though Eleazar left this number out in his statement.

Previous PNP chiefs said the number was around 8,000 deaths, but this was later lowered to the current figure. But rights groups say the actual death toll may be as high as 30,000 as of this post.

In June, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) sought authorization from The Hague tribunal to open a full investigation into the war on drugs.

I.1.2 ICC No Contestation Article

Some ICC articles report directly on the ICC’s actions. In the time frame of the survey, the ICC had recently announced its full investigation, as opposed to the preliminary examination that occurred during the time frame of the manuscript’s media analysis. These articles describe what the ICC did, its process, and the basis for the ICC’s actions.

This article was constructed with excerpts from the following real world article:

- ICC sees crimes against humanity in Philippines drug war by Helen Flores. PhilStar Global, December 16, 2020. Available online at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/12/16/2064113/icc-sees-crimes-against-humanity-philippines-drug-wa>

ICC Prosecutor sees crimes against humanity in Philippines drug war

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has found “reasonable basis” to believe that crimes against humanity were committed in President Duterte’s war on drugs, which has reportedly killed over 20,000 people since 2016.

“The Office is satisfied that information available provides a reasonable basis to believe that crimes against humanity were committed in connection to the (war on drugs) campaign launched throughout the country,” ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said in a recent report.

The ICC’s Chief Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, launched in February 2018 a preliminary examination of the alleged summary killings in the Philippines since July 1, 2016 in connection with Duterte’s anti-drug campaign.

The preliminary probe focused on allegations that Duterte and senior members of law enforcement agencies including the Philippine National Police (PNP) and other government bodies “actively promoted” and “encouraged” the killing of suspected drug offenders and users.

The ICC’s conduct of preliminary examination stemmed from a complaint filed by lawyer Jude Sabio in April 2017, accusing Duterte of committing crimes against humanity for thousands of alleged extrajudicial killings in the conduct of Duterte’s anti-drug campaign.

Citing data from the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) said a total of 4,948 suspected drug users and dealers died during police operations from July 1, 2016 to Sept. 30, 2018. The figure does not include the thousands of others killed by unidentified gunmen and classified by the PNP only as “homicides under investigation.” There are 22,983 such cases, according to a 2019 HRW report, citing PNP data.

Sought for reaction, a PNP spokesman said, “We refrain from making any comments if need be at this point until we obtain the ICC findings in detail.”

I.1.3 ICC Contestation Article

Some articles report on the ICC’s actions and then emphasize contestation, meaning the back-and-forth exchanges between supporters and opponents of the WOD. These can be between human rights groups, opposition politicians, and representatives of international organizations - on the one side - and Duterte and his supporters - on the other. In the main manuscript, I focus on contestation articles that do and do not include substantial content about the ICC. Here, since I want to focus on the specific effect of contestation, as opposed to the effect of including/excluding information about the ICC, I made the article about contestation directly in the context of the ICC’s announcement of an investigation.

This article was constructed with excerpts from the following real world articles:

- ICC sees crimes against humanity in Philippines drug war by Helen Flores. PhilStar Global, December 16, 2020. Available online at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2020/12/16/2064113/icc-sees-crimes-against-humanity-philippines-drug-war>
- Senators weigh in on ICC finding ‘basis to believe’ crimes in Duterte drug war by JC Gotinga. Rappler December 15, 2020. Available online at: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/senators-statements-international-criminal-court-finding-basis-to-believe-crimes-in-duterte-drug-war>
- Roque: Duterte ‘shrugged off’ latest ICC step toward probe by Krixia Subingsubing and Leila B. Salaverria. Inquirer.net June 18, 2021. Available online at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1447726/roque-duterte-shrugged-off-latest-icc-step-toward-probe>
- Human rights groups hail ICC prosecutor’s move vs Duterte’s drug war by Jodesz Gavilan. Rappler June 15, 2021. Available online at: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/human-rights-groups-statements-icc-prosecutor-move-duterte-drug-war>
- Duterte bad-mouths ‘bullshit’ ICC by Pia Ranada. Rappler June 22, 2021. Available online at: <https://www.rappler.com/nation/duterte-lashes-out-international-criminal-court>

ICC Prosecutor sees crimes against humanity in Philippines drug war

In June, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) sought authorization from The Hague tribunal to open a full investigation into Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte’s ongoing war on drugs.

Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said there is a reasonable basis to believe that crimes against humanity were committed during the war on drugs.

“It doesn’t come as a surprise... Perhaps if they acted sooner, thousands of lives could have been saved,” said opposition senator Francis Pangilinan, who is the president of the Liberal Party.

“[The ICC] report offers new hope for justice and humanity, as we continue to commemorate all those felled by bloody ‘tokhang,’” said Senator Risa Hontiveros, who is also a member of the opposition.

Karapatan, a human rights group based in the Philippines, calls the latest development a “long-awaited step towards justice and accountability” amid a human rights crisis in the country.

“[The ICC move] is yet another damning indictment of the Duterte government’s murderous policies that have killed – and continue to kill – thousands of Filipinos with impunity,” said a Karapatan representative.

In an open letter on behalf of Amnesty International, which is an international rights organization based in London, secretary general, Agnes Callamard said the ICC investigations in the Philippines is “last resort” since the drug war has “remained in the blind spot of international justice.”

President Duterte responded by calling the International Criminal Court “bullshit” and declared he wanted to “slap” its judges.

“Why would I defend or face an accusation before white people? You must be crazy,” said Duterte during a televised public address. Malacañang had earlier slammed the ICC as “politically-motivated.”

I.2 Incomplete Disclosure/Deception

This experiment used very mild incomplete disclosure/deception. I told respondents they would be reading “an article” but I did not tell respondents that they were reading something that was constructed with excerpts from real articles. This was necessary since it is not possible to find three articles whose sole difference is in content. They would vary in length, source, tone, and the events being covered. It would be impossible to discern whether the changes to content that I was interested in affected answers to the outcome questions or whether these other differences caused the changes.

That said, this is a very minimal use of incomplete disclosure/deception. None of the treatment articles contained content that could not also be found in many mainstream outlets. By combining parts of articles, I did not change any of the authors’ arguments or intent. In other words, the modified treatment articles have no additional adverse effects compared to what a citizen experiences when reading the news. The incomplete disclosure also causes no harm to the respondent.

I also included the possibility of incomplete disclosure in the informed consent document. This allows respondents to judge whether they were willing to participate, despite that possibility. I also de-briefed respondents with detailed information about what I manipulated. The de-brief text is below:

Thank you for your participation in this study. This study is concerned with how different types of media articles affect readers' views on political issues and various political actors.

Some information was withheld from you during this survey. First, we did not inform respondents that we randomly assigned them to read different articles about the war on drugs and some people did not read any article. Second, we did not inform respondents that the media articles were not from one single article. The news articles were written using excerpts from articles in commonly read media outlets in the Philippines. We did not alter the articles to add any misinformation or to change their content. We combined the excerpts and very lightly edited them so that they read clearly when combined.

The article you read used excerpts from the following sources: [I then gave them the citations and URLs for the articles used in their particular treatment.]

Outcome Measures

My two primary outcomes measured support for the WOD and the ICC. Immediately after treatment, I asked: "Do you support or not support the campaign against illegal drugs?" Respondents could choose from this response list: "Truly support, Support, May support and may not support, Not support, Truly not support." This wording matches that used in the public opinion surveys conducted by major Philippine polling firms.

I then asked "To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I support the ICC investigation into the war on drugs." Respondents could again choose from five options, "Strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree."

For each of these primary outcome measures, I use a binary version and an ordered version. For the binary version, I code the measure as 1 if the respondent chooses "truly support" or "support" for the WOD and "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" for the ICC. For the ordered version, I code the response from 0-4, with 0 referring to "Truly not support" / "Strongly disagree."

Other Measures

Party: Most importantly - pre-treatment - I asked "Which party comes closest to your political beliefs?" Respondents could choose from options including the main parties (PDP-Laban, Nacionalista, NPC, NUP, Liberal, Lakas). They could also select "Other" and type in their answer. I use this to code two variables. One is an indicator that equals one for respondents who chose the Liberal party. For the second measure, note that parties in the Philippines are more numerous and less clearly left/right than those in the United States. So I manually coded which parties tended to be aligned with Duterte. I used this to construct an indicator that I call "Not Right Party," which equals one for respondents who choose or wrote a party that doesn't tend to be aligned with or supportive of Duterte. There are pros and cons of both measures. On the one hand, the Liberal party is the mostly clear opposition to Duterte and the WOD. However, some parties other than the Liberal party are opposed to Duterte on some issues, including the WOD. The Liberal party indicator thus codes some parties as a zero even though they may oppose the WOD or Duterte. The

Not Right Party indicator codes some parties as a one even if they may not have a stance on the WOD. In practice, results are very similar using both measures and I present extensive analyses using both below.

Demographics I also asked a variety of demographic questions about the respondents' ethnicity, religion, income, education, employment status, marital status, region of residence, and media consumption. When the analysis below refers to regressions with controls, that references variables constructed from these measures. I generally coded these into binary indicator variables (eg married/unmarried). For income, I coded indicators based on whether the respondent's reported income fell in the 0-25, 26-75, or 76+ percentiles of the sample distribution. For ethnicity, I coded indicators for two major groups, those identifying as Tagalog and Cebuano. For region, I coded an indicator for those in Metro Manila/NCR.

Manipulation Checks At the end, I asked respondents "You read an article that was about: A drug operation in Cavite, The ICC, I didn't read an article." In general, respondents did well on the manipulation checks. 84% of respondents who read either of the ICC articles chose the correct answer. 85% of respondents who read the WOD article chose the correct answer.

I also coded a variable that is used in some analyses below, for whether the respondent took the survey exceptionally quickly or slowly. This variable equals 1 for respondents who took less than three minutes for the whole survey (261 respondents) or took greater than ten minutes for the whole survey (139 respondents). Results are generally similar when I include or exclude these respondents; they are generally stronger when I exclude them.

Balance and Demographics

Randomization of treatment assignment succeeded. Table I.1 shows summary statistics of each of the demographic variables across treatment conditions. Each section of the table compares those statistics between the Control condition and one of the Articles. I use the approach in Bowers, Fredrickson and Hansen (2010) to statistically assess any differences. There are a few, very small differences (eg there were more married people in the WOD Article treatment condition than in the Control group), but none that should interfere with inference. (I also control for all of these characteristics in subsequent analysis.) Bowers, Fredrickson and Hansen (2010) also show how to calculate an omnibus χ^2 statistic for differences in characteristics across treatment groups. The p values associated with those tests indicate no significant differences (0.22, 0.959, and 0.302, for the WOD Article, the ICC Contestation Article, and the ICC No Contestation Article, respectively).

Table I.1: Demographics Across Treatment Conditions

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>WOD Article</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Z score</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Liberal Party	0.27	0.26	-0.01	-0.33	
Not Right Party	0.46	0.45	-0.01	-0.43	
Female	0.52	0.52	0.00	-0.17	
Cebuano	0.18	0.19	0.01	0.48	
Tagalog	0.50	0.50	0.00	-0.10	
Catholic	0.72	0.74	0.02	0.85	
Post Sec. Educ.	0.68	0.68	0.00	0.03	
Inc. Lower 25th	0.27	0.24	-0.04	-1.74	.
Inc. Lower 26th-75th	0.54	0.54	0.00	0.12	
News > 5 hrs	0.43	0.46	0.03	1.02	
Married	0.32	0.26	-0.06	-2.38	*
Metro Man./NCR	0.21	0.20	-0.01	-0.44	

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>ICC Con. Article</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Z score</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Liberal Party	0.27	0.26	0.00	-0.21	
Not Right Party	0.46	0.45	-0.01	-0.41	
Female	0.52	0.51	-0.01	-0.41	
Cebuano	0.18	0.20	0.02	0.76	
Tagalog	0.50	0.46	-0.03	-1.34	
Catholic	0.72	0.74	0.02	0.84	
Post Sec. Educ.	0.68	0.66	-0.02	-0.68	
Inc. Lower 25th	0.27	0.27	-0.01	-0.26	
Inc. Lower 26th-75th	0.54	0.55	0.01	0.46	
News > 5 hrs	0.43	0.41	-0.02	-0.83	
Married	0.32	0.31	-0.01	-0.42	
Metro Man./NCR	0.21	0.19	-0.02	-0.93	

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>ICC No Con. Article</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Z score</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Liberal Party	0.27	0.26	-0.01	-0.34	
Not Right Party	0.46	0.42	-0.04	-1.47	
Female	0.52	0.53	0.00	0.12	
Cebuano	0.18	0.21	0.02	1.07	
Tagalog	0.50	0.48	-0.02	-0.85	
Catholic	0.72	0.75	0.03	1.33	
Post Sec. Educ.	0.68	0.71	0.03	1.28	
Inc. Lower 25th	0.27	0.23	-0.04	-1.88	.
Inc. Lower 26th-75th	0.54	0.55	0.01	0.43	
News > 5 hrs	0.43	0.43	0.00	-0.02	
Married	0.32	0.30	-0.02	-0.89	
Metro Man./NCR	0.21	0.22	0.01	0.34	

I.3 Analysis

The main manuscript highlights two things, (1) the shift in media coverage from “regular” or “core” WOD articles to coverage of contestation around the ICC and (2) the fact that this coverage emphasizes contestation, as opposed to more benign coverage of the ICC or human rights. My experimental design, with the three article types, allows me to ask: how does the shift in coverage affect attitudes towards the WOD and ICC and what role does contestation, in particular, play? I look at whether support for the WOD/ICC increases or decreases (and for whom) and also for polarization — whether attitudes between people supporting different parties widen.

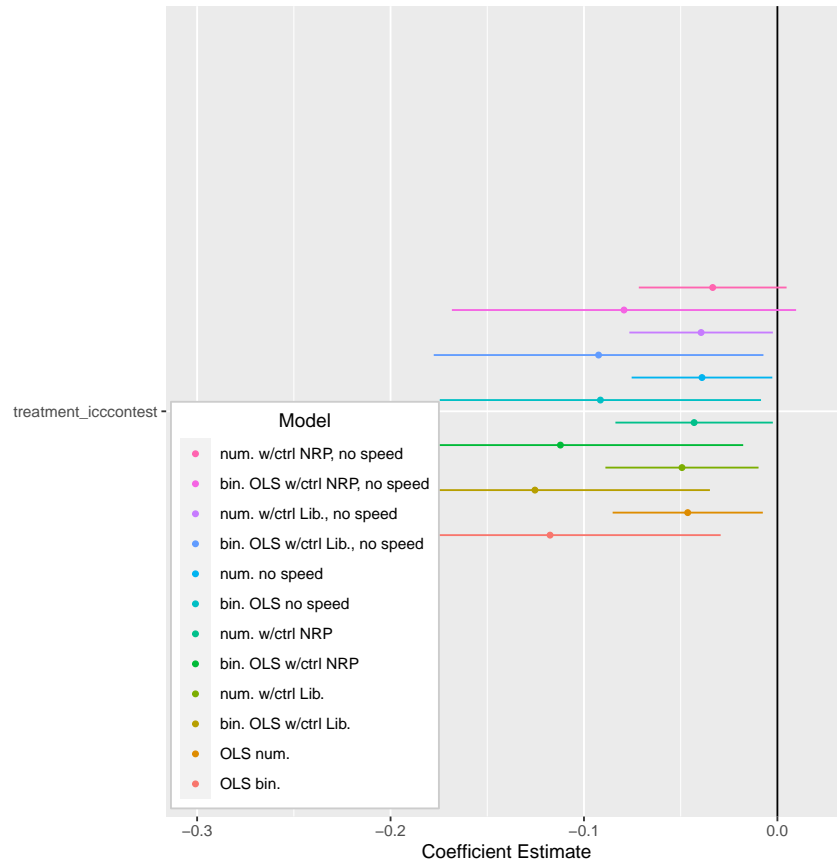
I.3.1 Effect of Coverage Shift on Attitudes Towards the WOD

I first look at whether the shift in coverage from regular WOD articles to contestation over the ICC affects attitudes towards the WOD. I do this by comparing the outcome measures between respondents assigned to the WOD article and the ICC Contestation article. To ensure that results are not artifacts of one particular specification, I present the effect of treatment from 18 different specifications. The specifications use OLS for the binary and ordered version of the outcome measure, plus logit for the binary version (3x), exclude demographic controls/include them with the Liberal Party variable/include them with the Not Right Party variable (x3), and include/exclude respondents who took the survey very quickly or very slowly (x2). This results in $3 \times 3 \times 2 = 18$ specifications.

Table I.2 shows the results in table form. Since there are so many specifications and variables in the table, Figure I.1 concisely shows the coefficient estimates, with 90% confidence intervals.⁷⁷ The ICC Contestation article generally lowers support for the WOD, compared to the WOD article. This effect is relatively modest in substantive terms. The ICC Contestation article generally lowers the percentage of people supporting the WOD by 4-5%. The effect is very consistent across specifications. We can reject the null of zero effect at the 0.05 level in 5 specifications, at the 0.1 level in 9 specifications, and we fail to reject the null in each of the three specifications with no control variables.

⁷⁷I omit the logit regression coefficients from the figure, since they're on a different scale than the OLS coefficients.

Figure I.1: Effect of ICC Contestation Treatment on Support for WOD (Base: WOD Article)



Note: Estimated coefficients for the ICC Contestation article effect, with the sample restricted to respondents who read the ICC Contestation or War on Drugs article. Whiskers show 90% confidence intervals.

Table I.2: Effect of ICC Cont. on Support for WOD

	Dependent variable:																	
	Support WOD (bin.)		Support WOD (num.)		Support WOD (bin.)		Support WOD (num.)		Support WOD (bin.)		Support WOD (num.)		Support WOD (bin.)		Support WOD (num.)			
	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic	OLS	logistic		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	
ICC Contestation Art.	-0.033 (0.023)	-0.163 (0.113)	-0.079 (0.054)	-0.039* (0.023)	-0.206* (0.119)	-0.092* (0.052)	-0.039* (0.022)	-0.207* (0.121)	-0.092* (0.050)	-0.043* (0.025)	-0.211* (0.122)	-0.112* (0.057)	-0.049** (0.024)	-0.265** (0.127)	-0.125** (0.055)	-0.046** (0.024)	-0.253* (0.130)	-0.118** (0.054)
Liberal Party				-0.187*** (0.026)	-0.879*** (0.127)	-0.553*** (0.060)							-0.156*** (0.028)	-0.743*** (0.138)	-0.510*** (0.064)			
Not Right Party							-0.245*** (0.023)	-1.252*** (0.124)	-0.678*** (0.052)							-0.224*** (0.024)	-1.149*** (0.132)	-0.645*** (0.055)
Female				-0.058** (0.023)	-0.308*** (0.119)	-0.137*** (0.052)	-0.047** (0.022)	-0.254** (0.122)	-0.109** (0.051)				-0.063*** (0.024)	-0.336*** (0.128)	-0.167*** (0.055)	-0.051** (0.024)	-0.277** (0.130)	-0.136** (0.054)
Cebuano				0.117*** (0.032)	0.727*** (0.191)	0.308*** (0.075)	0.090*** (0.032)	0.612*** (0.195)	0.239*** (0.073)				0.139*** (0.035)	0.896*** (0.213)	0.357*** (0.079)	0.110*** (0.034)	0.771*** (0.217)	0.284*** (0.078)
Tagalog				-0.015 (0.026)	-0.078 (0.133)	-0.044 (0.060)	-0.019 (0.026)	-0.105 (0.135)	-0.052 (0.059)				-0.024 (0.028)	-0.125 (0.141)	-0.048 (0.064)	-0.031 (0.027)	-0.172 (0.144)	-0.064 (0.062)
Catholic				-0.001 (0.026)	0.001 (0.137)	0.026 (0.059)	-0.013 (0.025)	-0.061 (0.139)	-0.009 (0.058)				0.009 (0.027)	0.055 (0.144)	0.041 (0.062)	-0.001 (0.027)	0.004 (0.147)	0.007 (0.061)
Post Sec. Educ.				0.045* (0.025)	0.232* (0.130)	0.017 (0.058)	0.042* (0.025)	0.231* (0.133)	0.007 (0.056)				0.039 (0.027)	0.201 (0.140)	-0.001 (0.061)	0.037 (0.026)	0.203 (0.142)	-0.012 (0.060)
Inc. Lower 25th				0.041 (0.036)	0.204 (0.192)	0.081 (0.082)	0.034 (0.035)	0.168 (0.196)	0.064 (0.080)				0.033 (0.039)	0.163 (0.209)	0.032 (0.089)	0.026 (0.038)	0.130 (0.213)	0.016 (0.086)
Inc. Lower 26th-75th				-0.024 (0.030)	-0.138 (0.156)	-0.062 (0.068)	-0.033 (0.029)	-0.196 (0.160)	-0.086 (0.067)				-0.033 (0.032)	-0.186 (0.170)	-0.090 (0.074)	-0.039 (0.032)	-0.232 (0.173)	-0.107 (0.072)
News > 5 hrs				-0.010 (0.023)	-0.061 (0.120)	-0.003 (0.053)	-0.009 (0.022)	-0.050 (0.123)	-0.0003 (0.051)				-0.030 (0.025)	-0.167 (0.129)	-0.045 (0.056)	-0.024 (0.024)	-0.135 (0.132)	-0.028 (0.055)
Married				0.086*** (0.026)	0.476*** (0.140)	0.172*** (0.059)	0.079*** (0.025)	0.452*** (0.143)	0.153*** (0.057)				0.088*** (0.027)	0.483*** (0.149)	0.174*** (0.062)	0.081*** (0.027)	0.461*** (0.152)	0.159*** (0.061)
Metro Man./NCR				-0.025 (0.030)	-0.125 (0.151)	-0.092 (0.069)	-0.013 (0.030)	-0.065 (0.153)	-0.063 (0.068)				-0.040 (0.032)	-0.195 (0.159)	-0.120 (0.074)	-0.027 (0.032)	-0.137 (0.162)	-0.092 (0.072)
Constant	0.729*** (0.016)	0.989*** (0.081)	3.010*** (0.038)	0.754*** (0.045)	1.156*** (0.238)	3.146*** (0.104)	0.832*** (0.045)	1.621*** (0.251)	3.355*** (0.103)	0.736*** (0.018)	1.026*** (0.088)	3.035*** (0.041)	0.769*** (0.048)	1.253*** (0.256)	3.219*** (0.110)	0.839*** (0.048)	1.670*** (0.268)	3.408*** (0.109)
Observations	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334	1,334
R ²	0.001		0.001	0.074		0.099	0.110		0.145	0.002		0.003		0.073		0.102		0.147
Log Likelihood		-912.391			-856.062			-825.784			-796.445			-746.801			-721.638	
Akaike Inf. Crt.		1,828.783			1,738.123			1,677.567			1,596.889			1,519.602			1,469.275	

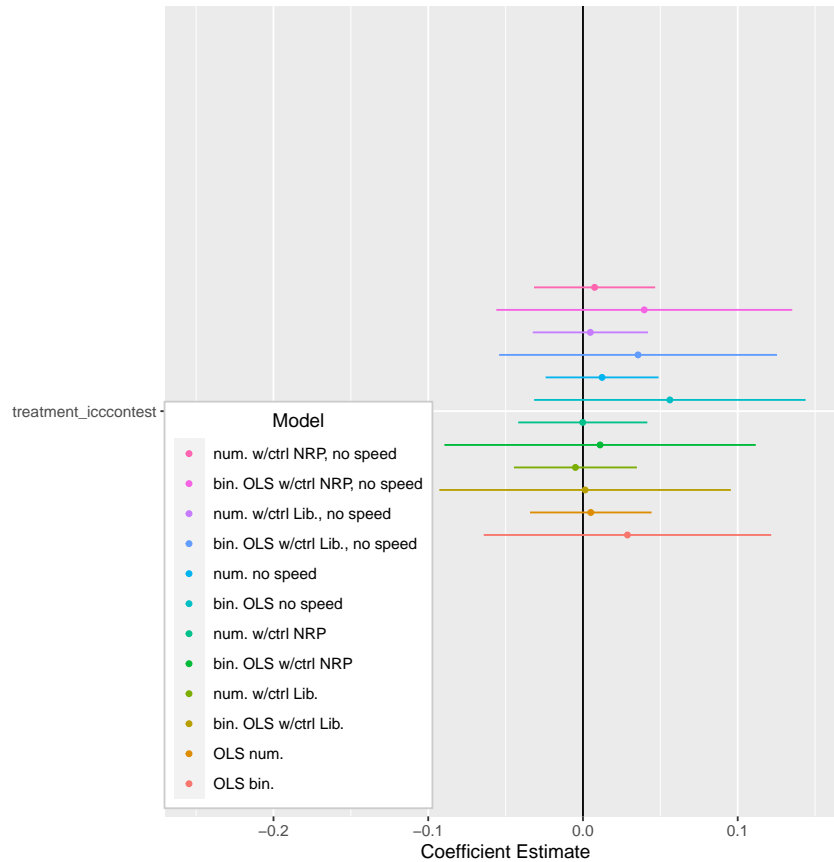
Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I.3.2 Effect of Contestation on Attitudes Towards the WOD

How does the presence of contestation, as opposed to more factual, event-based reporting about the ICC, affect attitudes towards the WOD? Figure I.2 shows the effect of the ICC Contestation article with the ICC No Contestation article as the base category, using the same series of model specifications as above.⁷⁸ In the aggregate, there is no significant effect of adding contestation on support for the WOD, relative to an article on the ICC without contestation.

Figure I.2: Effect of ICC Cont. on Support for WOD (Base: ICC No Contest)



Note: Estimated coefficients for the ICC Contestation article effect, with the sample restricted to respondents who read one of the ICC articles. Whiskers show 90% confidence intervals.

However, this aggregate effect masks significant heterogeneity across respondents based on their preferred party. Duterte’s strategy of injecting intense contestation into coverage of the ICC’s actions is very successful in blunting the effect of the ICC on support for the WOD - interestingly - among Liberal Party supporters. This is most easily seen in Figure I.3. This Figure shows the predicted probability that a respondent supports the WOD, broken down by party identification

⁷⁸I omit the full regression table. Results are similar including logit specifications.

and treatment condition.⁷⁹ Unsurprisingly, there are party splits, with respondents who support the Liberal Party being less supportive of the WOD. Moving from the WOD Article treatment to the ICC No Contestation treatment significantly lowers support for the WOD among Liberal Party supporters, and has a negligible effect on other respondents. However, moving from the ICC No Contestation treatment to the ICC Contestation treatment re-raises support for the WOD among Liberals.

Each of these differences across parties is statistically significant. Table I.3 shows results from regressions of support for the WOD on the ICC Contestation treatment indicator variable, including interaction terms with the Liberal Party indicator, across various specifications. The sample is limited to respondents receiving one of the ICC treatments, ie the base category in these regressions is the ICC No Contestation treatment. The positive and always significant interaction terms show how exposure to the ICC Contestation article re-raises support for the WOD among Liberals.

In other words, Duterte’s strategy “works.” As the main manuscript shows, after ICC actions, coverage shifts more towards contestation articles, as opposed to articles that look like the no contestation treatment. This likely crowds out space for media content that would have further depressed Liberal support for the WOD. Had Liberals read articles like the ICC No Contestation treatment, their support for the WOD would have been even lower. But since coverage shifts more towards Contestation articles, this dip is not as low as it otherwise could have been.⁸⁰

⁷⁹This figure uses the binary version of the outcome measure, OLS regression, omits controls, and includes the full sample of respondents. Results are very similar using alternate variations of that specification.

⁸⁰An alternative explanation for this finding is that Liberal Party supporters are persuaded by Duterte’s retorts in contestation-style arguments. This experiment’s research design cannot distinguish between “crowding out” and “persuasion.” An alternative design would have a treatment that combined both types of ICC articles. That is beyond the scope of this note, though. I suspect that crowding out is the more likely mechanism, based on the antipathy from lots of Liberal Party supporters towards Duterte.

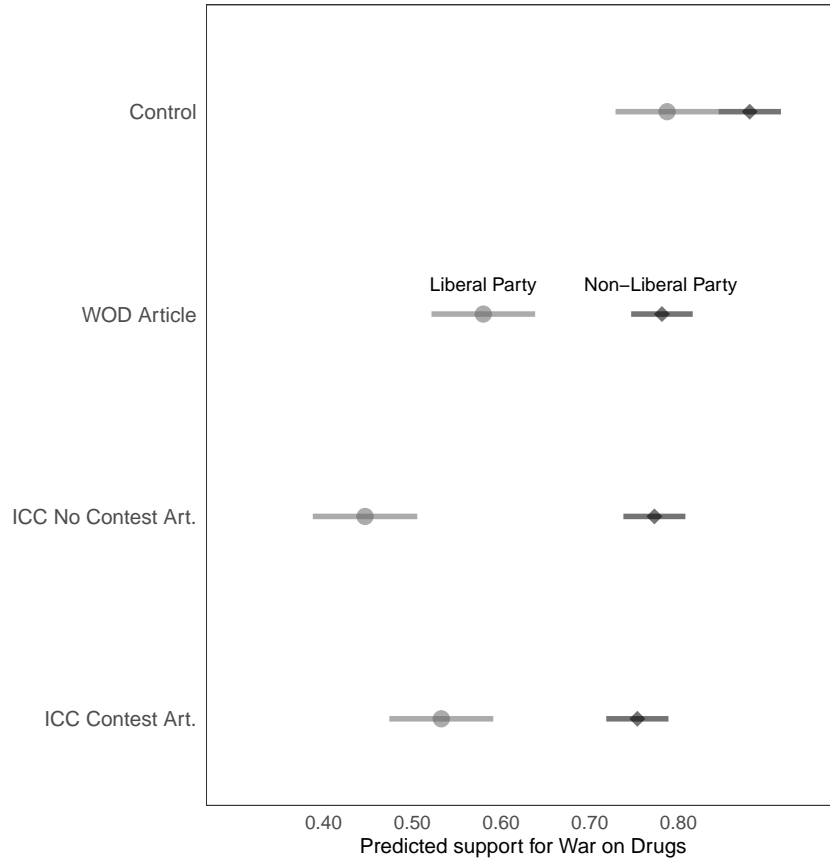
Table I.3: Effect of ICC Cont. on Support for WOD, Party Interactions (Base: ICC No Contest)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>							
	Support WOD (bin.)	Support WOD (num.)	Support WOD (bin.)	Support WOD (num.)	Support WOD (bin.)	Support WOD (num.)	Support WOD (bin.)	Support WOD (num.)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
ICC Contestation Art.	-0.019 (0.027)	-0.026 (0.064)	-0.019 (0.026)	-0.023 (0.064)	-0.045 (0.028)	-0.091 (0.067)	-0.045 (0.028)	-0.088 (0.066)
ICC Contestation Art. X Liberal Party	0.105** (0.052)	0.260** (0.126)	0.092* (0.051)	0.221* (0.124)	0.169*** (0.055)	0.385*** (0.132)	0.152*** (0.055)	0.342*** (0.130)
Liberal Party	-0.326*** (0.037)	-0.897*** (0.089)	-0.290*** (0.037)	-0.803*** (0.089)	-0.364*** (0.039)	-0.984*** (0.094)	-0.333*** (0.039)	-0.895*** (0.094)
Female			-0.027 (0.023)	-0.044 (0.055)			-0.041* (0.024)	-0.098* (0.058)
Cebuano			0.087*** (0.033)	0.261*** (0.079)			0.069** (0.035)	0.245*** (0.083)
Tagalog			-0.073*** (0.026)	-0.129** (0.064)			-0.077*** (0.028)	-0.120* (0.067)
Catholic			-0.030 (0.026)	-0.015 (0.063)			-0.005 (0.028)	0.039 (0.065)
Post Sec. Educ.			0.045* (0.025)	0.142** (0.061)			0.046* (0.027)	0.123* (0.064)
Inc. Lower 25th			0.058 (0.036)	0.189** (0.086)			0.032 (0.038)	0.107 (0.091)
Inc. Lower 26th-75th			0.049 (0.030)	0.113 (0.072)			0.034 (0.032)	0.075 (0.077)
News > 5 hrs			-0.002 (0.023)	0.032 (0.056)			0.001 (0.025)	0.037 (0.059)
Married			0.105*** (0.025)	0.253*** (0.061)			0.105*** (0.027)	0.247*** (0.064)
Metro Man./NCR			-0.049* (0.030)	-0.124* (0.071)			-0.047 (0.031)	-0.137* (0.075)
Constant	0.773*** (0.019)	3.125*** (0.046)	0.725*** (0.047)	2.873*** (0.113)	0.789*** (0.020)	3.170*** (0.048)	0.750*** (0.050)	2.968*** (0.118)
Observations	1,511	1,511	1,511	1,511	1,326	1,326	1,326	1,326
R ²	0.070	0.092	0.110	0.133	0.077	0.103	0.114	0.142

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure I.3: Predicted Support for the War on Drugs, by Treatment and Party ID



Note: Predicted probabilities are from regressing (OLS) the binary version of the WOD support outcome measure on the indicators for each of the three article treatments, interacted with the Liberal Party indicator, without additional controls.

I.3.3 Effect of Coverage Shift and Contestation on Attitudes Towards the ICC

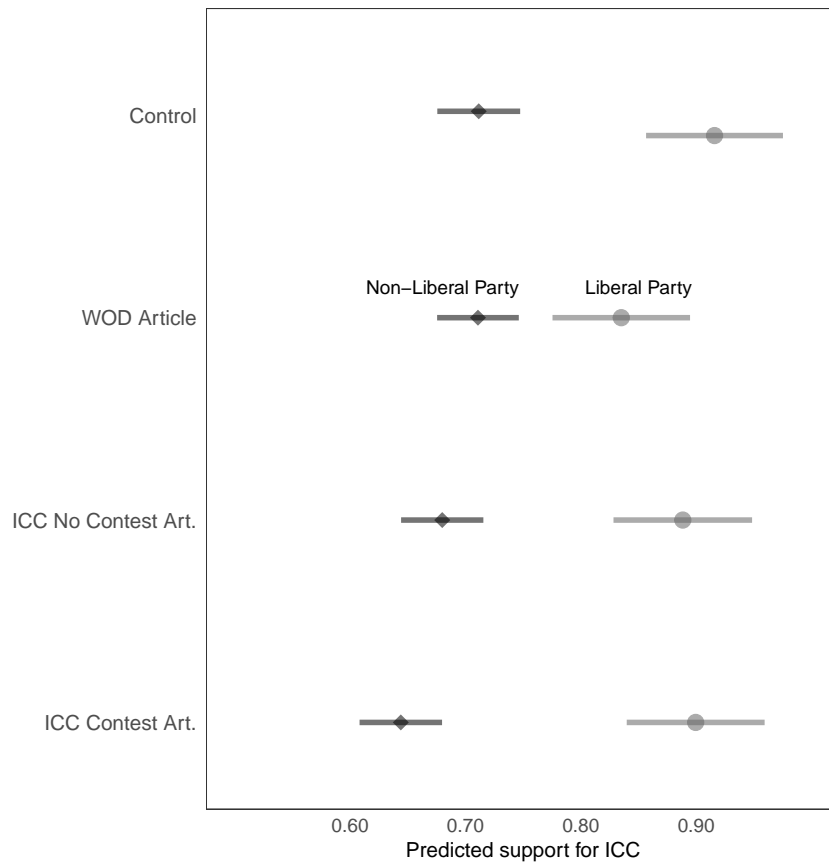
How does shifting coverage from regular WOD articles to articles describing contestation over the ICC affect attitudes towards the ICC? Here, I again focus on the effect of going from the WOD article treatment to the ICC Contestation treatment. In the aggregate, this shift has a negative, generally small and statistically insignificant effect on support for the ICC. Table I.4 shows results from regressing support for the ICC on the ICC Contestation treatment, using the WOD article as the baseline.

However, as above, this aggregate result masks significant party heterogeneity in the effects of the ICC Contestation treatment. This is most easily seen in Figure I.4, which shows the predicted probability of supporting the ICC across parties and treatments. Going from the WOD article to the ICC Contestation article significantly widens the party splits on attitudes towards the ICC. This is consistent with polarization. The Contestation article lowers support for the ICC substantially (and statistically significantly) among those not supporting the Liberal Party. It raises support for

the ICC among Liberal Party supporters. The end result is a much larger gulf between the parties on their attitudes towards the ICC.

Note, too that the gaps in support for the ICC widen in going from the WOD Article treatment to the ICC No Contestation treatment. This is consistent with the argument that the ICC itself is a polarized topic. When respondents are prompted to read about the ICC, their attitudes, which are polarized along party lines, are activated. The gaps get even wider in moving to the ICC Contestation treatment, though the added effect on party gaps of moving to the ICC Contestation treatment from the ICC No Contestation treatment is only statistically significant in a few specifications.

Figure I.4: Predicted Support for the ICC, by Treatment and Party ID



Note: Predicted probabilities are from regressing (OLS) the binary version of the ICC support outcome measure on the indicators for each of the three article treatments, interacted with the Liberal Party indicator, without additional controls.

Table I.4: Effect of ICC Cont. on Support for ICC

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Support ICC (bin.)	Support ICC (num.)	Support ICC (bin.)	Support ICC (num.)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ICC Contestation Art.	-0.032 (0.023)	-0.089 (0.061)	-0.033 (0.022)	-0.089 (0.059)
Liberal Party			0.189*** (0.026)	0.658*** (0.069)
Female			0.036 (0.023)	0.065 (0.060)
Cebuano			-0.020 (0.032)	-0.083 (0.086)
Tagalog			0.004 (0.026)	-0.007 (0.069)
Catholic			0.004 (0.026)	0.088 (0.068)
Post Sec. Educ.			-0.038 (0.025)	-0.132** (0.066)
Inc. Lower 25th			0.032 (0.036)	0.103 (0.095)
Inc. Lower 26th-75th			0.038 (0.030)	0.097 (0.078)
News > 5 hrs			-0.017 (0.023)	-0.042 (0.060)
Married			-0.055** (0.025)	-0.201*** (0.067)
Metro Man./NCR			-0.025 (0.030)	-0.012 (0.080)
Constant	0.743*** (0.016)	3.009*** (0.043)	0.700*** (0.045)	2.846*** (0.119)
Observations	1,522	1,522	1,522	1,522
R ²	0.001	0.001	0.047	0.077

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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