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Targeted Versus Conventional Economic Sanctions: What Is at Stake for Human Rights?

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ABSTRACT

The adverse impact of economic sanctions on human rights is well documented in the literature (Peksen 2009; Wood 2008) and so are the consequences of sanctions for democracy (Peksen and Drury 2009, 2010) and for the survival of leaders (Escribà-Folch & Wright 2010; Marinov 2005). Using data from the Targeted Sanctions Consortium (Biersteker, Eckert, Tourinho, and Hudákóva 2013), we analyze whether sanctions that target segmented groups within the leadership fare any better with respect to human rights protection. The analysis focuses on the universe of targeted sanctions against African countries, between 1992 and 2008, and finds that the adverse impact of this coercive instrument—though unintended—is not statistically distinguishable from the adverse consequences already identified by the literature with respect to conventional sanctions. All else equal, the protection of rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture) in the targeted country is 1.74 times more likely to worsen under an episode of targeted sanction when compared to a situation where there is no sanction. We propose a signaling model wherein a targeted leader is perceived by the opposition as weakened by the sanctions, which leads to more protest and repression. Higher levels of human rights violations follow.

KEYWORDS

Economic sanctions; human rights; targeted sanctions

In the aftermath of the crisis in Ukraine and Crimea, the United States and the European Union imposed a series of targeted sanctions on Russia. The American measures aimed at the financial sector, the energy sector, and the defense and related materials sector; the European Union imposed a ban on travel into member countries for close to 50 Russian individuals, among other measures.[1] This is the latest episode of a trend that began in the 1990s, after the end of the Cold War, which had the backing of a select group of academics and policymakers (Wallensteen, Staibano, and Eriksson 2003). These scholars conceived targeted sanctions as a powerful tool at the hands of the United Nations Security Council, one that aimed primarily at minimizing the human suffering

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[1]ReedSmith. 2014. Special Update: Sanctions. Several authors. Available at http://www.reedsmith.com/files/Publication/9221cf81-e4f7-4907-ab2c-f7dc249eac58/Presentation/PublicationAttachment/441e0ec9-dbd8-4c3a-b1fa-0bf7ed4d5872/alert_14-255.pdf?utm_source=Mondaq&utm_medium=syndication&utm_campaign=View-Original

that followed from the imposition of broader (or conventional) sanctions. Simultaneously, there was hope that targeted sanctions would perform better, in terms of their ability to reach their stated goals. As the recent episode of targeted sanctions imposed in the context of the crisis in Ukraine demonstrates, this policy tool has been used unilaterally, without Security Council scrutiny, several times.

The defense of economic sanctions in general, as a foreign policy instrument, was premised on the expectation that sanctions would offer an alternative to the use of force. Both sanctions and the use of force are regulated under Chapter VII of the UN Charter; nevertheless, the majority of sanction episodes on record were imposed outside of the United Nations framework, at times by a coalition of states. Thus, the mantle of legitimacy associated with sanctions remains the exception rather than the norm.

The situations targeted by sanctions quite often amount to egregious violations of international law, international human rights law, and international humanitarian law. However, the literature remains skeptical of their value as an effective way to enact policy change in the target country. Moreover, several analyses document the unanticipated adverse consequences that economic sanctions have in the target country; studies have identified adverse consequences in the realm of human rights protection, economic development, the prospects for democracy, and other political dynamics. This literature has focused primarily on the impact of conventional sanctions, thus leaving a vacuum with respect to the role of targeted sanctions. This article seeks to address this shortcoming by studying the universe of cases of targeted sanctions against countries in Africa between 1992 and 2008. Our focus is on the impact of targeted sanctions on the level of human rights protection, more specifically, on rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture).

The article proceeds as follows: The next section presents recent findings with respect to the effectiveness of both targeted sanctions and conventional sanctions, their impact on democracy, the survival of leaders, and the protection of rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture). This section concludes by identifying the need for a more systematic study of the impact of targeted sanctions on rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture). The following section takes up this challenge and proposes a model to map the incentives and alternative courses of action available to the relevant political actors in a given sanction episode. We derive two hypotheses from the model, which are the subject of the next two sections. A section on empirical evidence presents the statistical model and the data, and a section on findings analyzes the results and concludes the article.

Targeted versus conventional sanctions

The study of economic sanctions was, for a long time, dominated by the question of effectiveness for a long time. By the mid-2000s, this question

seemed to be settled by scholars, who appeared to concede that sanctions—that is, conventional sanctions—would reach their stated goals in about 30% of the cases (Hufbauer, Schott, Elliott, and Oegg 2007; Pape 1997). At the same time, with the end of the Cold War, a policy consensus around the superiority of targeted sanctions was forming; the episodes of targeted sanctions that resulted from this initiative would generate another wave of research, wherein the same question of effectiveness was at the core of the investigation (Cortright and López 2000; 2002). In the meanwhile, new data and a renewed effort to systematize information about conventional sanctions produced a myriad of studies that went beyond the question of effectiveness to inquire about causal mechanisms and adverse consequences of various sorts.

A new data set provides coverage and detailed information on sanction episodes from 1945 through 2005 (Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2013). New research on conventional sanctions investigates several unintended consequences in a consistent manner: Peksen (2009) and Wood (2008) corroborate the adverse impact of conventional sanctions for the protection of physical integrity rights; Peksen and Drury document their negative consequences for political freedoms and democracy (2009 and 2010 respectively); Escribà-Folch & Wright (2010) confirm earlier results that for the first time associated economic sanctions with a shorter life span for the incumbent target (Marinov 2005).

For the purposes of this article, we turn to the most relevant findings of these three streams of contribution. The article by Peksen (2009), which uses data from Hufbauer et al. (2007), finds that the imposition of economic sanctions worsens the level of human rights protection significantly and over the lifetime of the sanction's episode. Using data from Freedom House's Democracy Index and from the Cingranelli and Richards' Physical Integrity Rights Index, the author finds quantitative evidence that economic sanctions aiming at promoting democracy in the target country worsen the level of human rights protection by 70% after 10 years. All else equal, there is a 58% difference in the average Freedom House democracy score between countries subject to sanctions and those that are not (Peksen 2009:404). Reed Wood's article arrives at a similar conclusion, departing from the same data/data set. His analysis goes a step further by differentiating between US unilateral sanctions and UN-sponsored multilateral sanctions. Wood also hypothesizes that the impact of sanctions on human rights protection will be milder in democracies (Wood 2008:497–498). All hypotheses are borne by the data, also confirming that UN-sponsored sanctions are associated with a greater magnitude of human rights violations (Wood 2008:503). This article follows the trail of this research agenda, based on the systematic analysis of new data on targeted sanctions (Biersteker, Eckert, Tourinho, and Hudákóva 2013).

The new data set on targeted sanctions

The new data set on targeted sanctions is part of a larger project by the Targeted Sanctions Consortium, which comprises a network of more than 50 scholars and practitioners, based in North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe.[2] Since 2009, the group has been working to document and analyze all cases of UN-*imposed* sanctions since the 1990s, using a common template. With the recent exception of the sanctions against Libya in 2011, all UN-sponsored sanctions since 1994 were targeted sanctions. As of November 2013, Biersteker et al. (2013) is the primary source for the project's description and preliminary analysis regarding the effectiveness of targeted sanctions. The authors define *targeted sanctions* as being "designed deliberately to be different from comprehensive sanctions, either by focusing measures on leaders, decisionmakers, and their principal supporters, rather than on the general population or by targeting a single sector, rather than an entire economy" (2013:9). The regimes object of the analysis are: Al-Qaida/Taliban, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia-Eritrea, Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Iran, Iraq (since 2003), Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya I (1992–2003), Libya II (since 2011), Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan I (1996–2001), Sudan II (since 2004), and Taliban.

The database documents 22 UN targeted sanctions regimes since 1991, which amount to 62 case episodes. It brings 288 variables for each case episode, as well as a qualitative summary of each case. The cases contemplate individual or entity targeted sanctions—such as travel bans and asset freezes, to diplomatic sanctions, arms embargoes, commodity sanctions, transportation sanctions, and core economic sector sanctions (which affect the broader population). These range from the most discriminating, to the least, as well as to nondiscriminating (the latter equivalent to comprehensive sanctions). The project also classifies the objectives of policy on sanctions in three categories: (1) to coerce, (2) to constrain, and (3) to signal. Given these three categories, their assessment of effectiveness reveals that targeted sanctions hardly ever succeed at coercing (10% of the time), whereas sanctions that aim at constraining or signaling score better: They reached their stated goals 28% and 27% of the time respectively (Biersteker et al. 2013:7).

Especially relevant to our research design, human rights protection does not feature prominently among the main objectives of the targeted sanctions episodes in the data set. In fact, there is no instance where human rights violations in the target country appears as the main objective of a sanction

[2]The Targeted Sanctions Consortium is a collaboration between the Graduate Institute, in Geneva, and the Watson Institute, at Brown University. For more information, visit their Web sites at http://graduateinstitute.ch/internationalgovernance/UN_Targeted_Sanctions.html and http://www.watsoninstitute.org/project_detail.cfm?id=4.

episode. The state of human rights is mentioned in less than 34% of the cases. Rather, armed conflict is the most important issue motivating the imposition of targeted sanctions. In about 60% of the cases, armed conflict appears as the main objective (Biersteker et al. 2013:14). The relatively small weight of human rights in the decision to impose a targeted sanction helps to support the argument advanced in the formal model and the following empirical analysis. We suggest that the greater levels of human rights violations observed in a target country in the aftermath of a sanction episode can be associated with the imposition of targeted sanctions.

The Targeted Sanctions Consortium preliminary analysis of the effectiveness of targeted sanctions also discusses unintended consequences. The authors document an increase in corruption and criminality in almost 70% of the cases, as well as the strengthening of authoritarian rule (54% of the cases). The humanitarian situation in the target country worsens in close to 40% of the cases (Biersteker et al. 2013:17). The analysis does not specify what is understood by "humanitarian," nor do the authors suggest the mechanics that link a targeted sanction to the unintended consequence with respect to the humanitarian situation.[3] The following formal model and empirical analysis seek to contribute to this question.

Targeted sanctions in Africa

We focus on all cases imposed of sanctions against African countries and investigate the impact of targeted sanctions for the protection of rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture) in the target country.[4] Our choice of Africa is motivated in part by the sheer level of human suffering that afflicts this region of the world. Moreover, the large majority of documented cases of targeted sanctions take place in Africa.[5] For instance, 13 of the 22 regimes in the Biersteker et al. (2013) database involve African countries; in the remaining nine cases, the Taliban appears twice, and there is one instance involving Kosovo and another the former Yugoslavia. By circumscribing our analysis to one region, and by choosing a region where targeted sanctions are frequent events, we are quite naturally controlling for other confounding factors. We are also mindful of an alleged emulation effect

[3]The authors mention the increase in human rights violations as a potential negative unintended consequence (Biersteker et al. 2013:38).

[4]The question of the adverse impact of targeted sanctions is mentioned in Biersteker et al. (2013:17), where the authors discuss the increase in corruption and criminality as the most frequent unintended consequence associated with this foreign policy instrument; a negative consequence for the legitimacy of the Security Council, together with humanitarian consequences, are found in 39% of the cases.

[5]The Biersteker et al. 2013 data set documents UN-sponsored targeted sanctions. There have been instances where targeted sanctions were imposed unilaterally or by regional organizations. There are no systematic data available on these sanctions. In the empirical analysis, we identify overlap between targeted and conventional sanctions; it would be interesting to see whether overlap between UN and bilateral and/or regional targeted sanctions, when and if it occurs, impacts our results. Presently, this is a limitation of our analysis.

associated with conventional sanctions that may be a factor for targeted sanctions as well. Recent research has shown that the imposition of economic sanctions in Latin American countries has had a positive impact on the level of protection of rights to physical integrity in countries in the region that were not targeted by sanctions (Carneiro 2014). These regional dynamics are better captured through segmented empirical studies.

We are particularly interested in unveiling the causal mechanisms at play, following earlier work that attempted to understand the intricate political dynamics taking place during a particular sanction episode (Allen 2008; Carneiro and Elden 2009; Marinov 2005). To that end, we offer a model to map incentives and courses of action available to the relevant political actors during any given episode of targeted sanctions.[6] Despite this effort, we do not claim a causal explanation at this point.

We dialogue with a growing literature on targeted sanctions that has turned toward a more empirical level of inquiry—now that we have a sizeable number of cases to enable a more systematic analysis, especially since the Targeted Sanctions Consortium Database became available. Two important contributions deserve mention in this respect. Work by Wallensteen and Grusell questions the usefulness of targeted sanctions and begins to raise issues related to these sanctions' unintended consequences in terms of their humanitarian impact (Wallensteen and Grusell 2012:208).[7] Recent research by Daniel Drezner marks a shift from interest in conventional sanctions (Drezner 2000, 2003; Drury and Li 2006; Lacy and Niou 2004; Lektzian and Souva 2003; McGillivray and Stam 2004) toward the undertheorized topic of targeted sanctions (Drezner 2011). Drezner offers cursory evidence that targeted sanctions may not be any more effective or humane than their counterparts, conventional sanctions, the latter widely studied in the literature (Drezner 2011:102). Along the same lines, new research has challenged the pacifying effect of conventional sanctions, suggesting that democracy brings about less disputatious behavior at the sanction threat level only, as opposed to broader pacifying consequences previously advocated by the democratic peace literature (Drury, James, and Peksen 2014:41).

More specifically, this article offers the first statistical analysis of the impact of targeted sanctions on rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture). It relies on the newly released data set on targeted sanctions that presents data on 22 UN targeted sanctions regimes between 1992 and 2008; the wide majority of these cases involve African countries—which are the empirical focus of the article.

[6]Research on the political incentives behind authoritarian leaders' decision to ratify the 1984 Convention Against Torture have embraced a similar methodological strategy (Rosendorff and Hollyer 2011; Vreeland 2008).

[7]The authors analyze eight sanction episodes, between 2000 and 2009, wherein individuals had their assets frozen, were the subject of a travel ban, etc., and criticize an emphasis, so far, on the human rights of the individuals targeted by the sanctions (Wallensteen and Grusell 2012:208–212).

We approach the statistical analysis through earlier work, which sought to map out the causal mechanisms at play when conventional sanctions are imposed. The literature has predominantly focused on domestic, as opposed to international costs. To that end, Smith (1996) and Kirshner (1997) analyze how economic sanctions impact the leadership and the opposition as well as the ensuing consequences for domestic groups at large. Their research focuses on the costs imposed on domestic groups and the destabilizing outcome for the leadership.[8]

Along the same lines, Allen (2008) investigates the relationship between economic (conventional) sanctions and the occurrence of violence and protest in the target country. The intuition behind her model is similar to the one we embrace in the next section. Because sanctions work more as a bargaining tool than as a punitive mechanism, they operate by dividing domestic groups and weakening support for the leadership. Allan tests two hypotheses: (1) the deprivation hypothesis, according to which "political violence and protest will increase in states targeted for economic sanctions"; and (2) the political opportunity hypothesis, which expects that in "states with strong political institutions—stable autocracies and democracies—the opportunity for political violence related to economic sanctions will be moderated" (Allen 2008:923). She finds empirical support in both cases. In the next section, we will argue that political violence and protest associated with a sanctions policy will result in more violations of physical integrity rights.

We follow work on conventional sanctions that sought to unveil the causal paths associated with the imposition of sanctions as a signaling mechanism (Lektzian and Sprecher 2007). We use the intuition behind signaling models to explore the domestic incentives faced by the relevant domestic political groups and their available courses of action (Brams and Kilgour 1992; Hollyer and Rosendorff 2011; Snidal 2004).

The intuition

Our model has a domestic signaling component for both the sender and the target in a given sanction episode. It can be portrayed as a two-level game, wherein the sender sends a costly signal, when it imposes sanctions, and the target incurs political (and sometimes economic) costs by resisting the sender's demands for policy change. The dynamics at the international level—level 1, or the game played between the sender and the target—are not relevant for our understanding of the impact of sanctions on repression.[9]

[8]For an analysis of costs at the international level see Martin (1993).

[9]This aspect of the imposition of targeted sanctions—equally relevant for conventional sanctions as well—will be explored in the future, through a broader analysis of the incentives faced by senders and targets during a sanction episode.

Traditionally, the cost attached to the signal on the part of the sender is due to the domestic costs associated with economic sanctions within the sender; these costs are widely researched in the literature, which attributes a significant share of the credibility of the sanctions to the costly signal that it entails (Lektzian and Sprecher 2007:416). This segment of the literature focuses on conventional sanctions, wherein the economic costs for the sender's economy are usually not trivial. In the case of targeted sanctions, the most important costs are political in nature. That is, when a leader or international organization imposes a targeted sanction, failure to attain the sanction's objective will be harmful for the sender's reputation. This risk of incurring reputational costs constitutes the primary cost attached to the signal and the one that informs its credibility (Peterson 2013).[10] It is interesting to note that, contrary to what seems to be the norm with conventional sanctions, when targeted sanctions are implemented, the costs associated with the signal grow in time. This happens because the damage for the sender's reputation will be harsher as the targeted leadership delays compliance or ultimately when it chooses not to comply.

Less well spelled out in the literature is the domestic game between the leadership in the target country and the domestic constituency. We are interested in the broad spectrum of politically relevant actors within the target, not only those essential to the political survival of the leadership (winning coalition).[11] It is an assumption in the model that some of these groups seek to replace the targeted leader in office, following the notion, well established in the Selectorate Theory, that the leadership always faces a challenger (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow 2003); we refer to the challenger as the opposition to the target's leadership. The opposition plays an important part in our model because it is responsible for triggering the chain of events that will eventually lead to more repression.

The game involves a credible signal on the part of the sender, which is assumed to impact the targeted leadership either directly, when the individual or his/her government is personally targeted, or indirectly, when members of the winning coalition are targeted. Because targeted sanctions seek to impose concentrated costs, they have a higher probability of actually weakening the leadership when compared to conventional sanctions. This probability is higher in authoritarian regimes because in these polities the winning coalition is rewarded primarily with private goods, which implies a concentrated perception of realized or potential costs.

[10]For instance, Biersteker, Eckert, Tourinho and Hudákóva find that the legitimacy and authority of the United Nations Security Council was impaired in 39% of the episodes of targeted sanctions that they analyze (2013:17).

[11]For more on the relationship between members of the winning coalition and the leadership, especially on how this relationship differs with respect to the size of the winning coalition—measured as a percentage of those eligible to participate in the political process (selectorate), who are essential to the political survival of the leadership—see Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow (2003).

By the same token, in these regimes members of the winning coalition are more closely linked to the leadership due to the degree of loyalty that exists between them. Whether targeted sanctions weaken the leadership or not is not the subject of empirical investigation here and is of secondary importance for the argument. Nevertheless, opposition groups perceive the leader as weakened by the imposition of sanctions. This is especially true in authoritarian regimes. Once the opposition observes targeted sanctions against the leadership, it increases its political demands because the net value of this action is now greater if compared to the situation in the absence of sanction. The nature of targeted sanctions is such that domestic groups are not directly affected by the sanctions, so their relative power with respect to the leadership increases in the presence of this type of sanctions; as a consequence, opposition groups believe that the likelihood of having their demands met increases. However, demands by the opposition are often met with resistance by the leadership, protest follows, and this leads to repression. Whether the leadership will concede is a function of a meta game, wherein the leadership pursues political survival as its primary goal. To resist political demands by the opposition and even to repress members associated with the challenger may contribute to enhance the leadership's chances of political survival. We make this argument here. The same counterintuitive logic applies to the challenger, who in our model accrues benefits from protesting and from being subject to repression. We argue that sympathy and support for the challenger will increase as a result of repression and to a lesser extent in the aftermath of protest. This is due to the enhanced visibility that protest and repression grant the challenger, working as a natural political stage to gather defectors from the ruling winning coalition.

This is a game of imperfect information whereby a targeted leader L is weakened by the sanctions with a probability p; the probability that sanctions have little impact on the targeted leader equals $1 - p$. These same probabilities will condition the targeted leadership's response to the increased demands by the challenger C, whereby L will concede with probability p and resist the demands with probability $1 - p$. The challenger C does not know whether it is facing a weakened leader or not, but the imposition of sanctions signals that the leadership is under stress and may be more likely to make costly concessions.

Acting on this observable signal, C increases its demands. If the leader is indeed weakened by the sanctions, C's demands are associated with greater gains and lower costs. Here, the gains of the challenger correspond to the policy concessions granted by the targeted leader at the end of the game; its costs are associated to the probability q that it will be subject to repression at the end of the game. Given this game structure, the targeted leader acts first, once it receives C's increased demands. L may concede to these demands, granting C its best payoff of 4 and ending the game at the worst outcome for

L, where *L* receives the payoff of 0. *L* may also resist *C*'s increased demands. At this game nod, *C* has the next move: It can decide not to protest, thereby ending the game at the worst possible outcome for itself, with a payoff of 0, whereas *L* gets its best payoff of 4. But *C* can choose to protest instead.

Once *C* protests, it is *L*'s time to move. *L* can choose to repress, with probability *q*, or not to repress, with probability *1 – q*. When *L* represses, the game ends at the next to best outcome for *C*. Here, *C* incurs costs associated with protest and with repression, while signaling its might (by choosing to protest). *L* realizes its next-to-best payoff by signaling its strength and determination. If protest by *C* is followed by no repression by *L*, both players are worse off because *L* is weakened by foregoing an opportunity to show its strength and determination, while *C* misses the chance to display its resolve through the visibility of repression.[12]

Figure 1 displays the game in extensive form, and Figure 2 solves for equilibria in pure strategy for one round of the game. Though this game could be played repeatedly, we believe learning takes place, so the payoffs would be subject to a discount factor.

There is one Nash equilibrium in this game, which corresponds to the situation where *C* protests and *L* represses; this equilibrium is the result of two dominant strategies for both players, namely for *C*, $2 > 0$ and $1 > 0$, therefore "protest" strongly dominates "not protest"; for *L*, $3 > 2$ and $4 > 0$, therefore "repress" strongly dominates "not repress." This outcome suggests the prevalence of protest, met by repression, in the aftermath of a sanction episode. One way to observe this outcome empirically is through variation in the level of human rights protection in the target country, following the imposition of a targeted sanction. This reasoning leads to the first hypothesis we test in the next section:

H1: *Targeted sanctions worsen the level of protection of physical integrity rights in the target country.*

We derive our second hypothesis from the Selectorate Model (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). According to the Selectorate theory, democratic leaders encounter less loyalty among their winning coalition because members of the winning coalition are rewarded primarily with public goods—thus not subject to exclusion—and also because of the low costs associated with

[12]The subsection of the game analyzed in Figure 2 foresees another possibility: The targeted leader resisted the increased demands made by the challenger, but the challenger did not protest. In this case, the targeted leadership realizes its best payoff of 4 and the challenger its worst payoff of 0. We carry this result to the game in the normal form and argue that the challenger is indifferent as to whether the targeted leader represses or not—thus in either case, the challenger gets 0. This is an artificial imposition from our part, with implications for the equilibrium that we find. We are satisfied that other model specifications would not compromise the outcome. For example, the leadership could receive some utility (1) when the resisted demands are not followed by protest by the challenger.

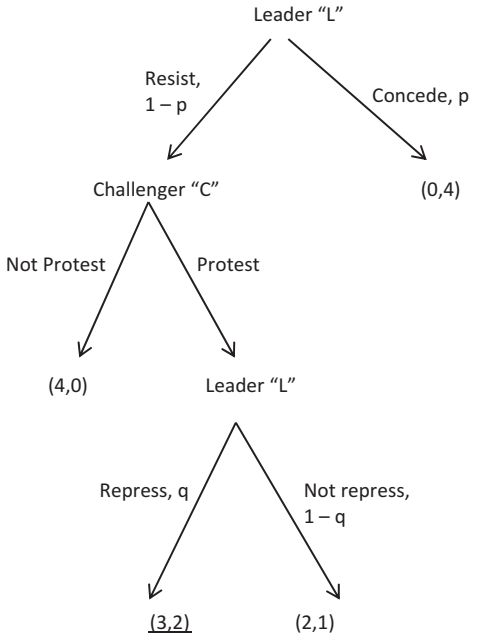

Figure 1. Sequential game between the targeted leadership and the opposition. Key: 4 > 3 > 2 > 1 > 0. The underlined payoff represents the sole Nash equilibrium in pure strategy.

		Targeted leadership (L)	
		Repress	Not Repress
Challenger (C)	Protest	2,3	1,2
	Not Protest	0,4	0,0

Figure 2. Subsection of the sequential game between the challenger C and the targeted leadership L. Key: 4 > 3 > 2 > 1 > 0. The underlined payoff represents the sole Nash equilibrium in pure strategy.

defection toward the challenger in these regimes. Given this set of incentives, the magnitude of the costs associated with an episode of targeted sanctions is deflated, with consequences for the way opposition groups perceive and act upon the signal. The more democratic the regime, the lower the level of demands and protest that will follow from the imposition of a targeted sanction. We believe that the difference between the incentives for the challenger in democratic versus authoritarian regimes ultimately leads to less "friction" between the leadership and the challenger since these political actors can negotiate their preferences through regular political channels. It follows that:

H2: *The adverse impact of targeted sanctions on physical integrity rights is milder in targeted democracies.*

Empirical evidence

Using data from the Political Terror Scale and from the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES), we find statistical evidence that conventional sanctions imposed on African countries between 1976 and 2008 worsen the level of protection of rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture), consistent with findings in the literature. Our findings are based on the new database (TIES, Morgan et al. 2013), whereas work by Peksen (2009) and Wood (2008) relied on Hufbauer et al.'s data.[13] The standard control variables perform in the expected direction. With the exception of our measure of economic development (which is not significant), all other controls are strongly significant and signed correctly.

We use the new data set from the Targeted Sanctions Consortium to test the two hypotheses associated with targeted sanctions specified earlier. This database contains 918 observations on African countries, at the country-year level, for the period 1992–2008. A targeted sanction occurs in 120 observations, whereas in 268 cases we observe episodes of conventional sanctions (there is overlap between the two types of sanctions in 42 observations).

Our independent variable of interest for this article, targeted sanction, confirms the first hypothesis (H1). We run an ordered logit model, with standard errors clustered on country, and find a statistically significant positive correlation between the presence of a targeted sanction and worse levels of protection of rights to physical integrity in a given year.

A description of the variables that inform the statistical analysis follows, as well as some descriptive statistics (Table 1). Our dependent variable, the level of protection of rights to physical integrity, comes from the Political Terror Scale (PTS, Gibney, Cornett, Wood and Haschke 2012). The variable measures the level of human rights protection in country-year, based on the annual reports on human rights practices that are published by the US State Department and by Amnesty International. The scale ranges from 1 (countries under secure rule of law, people are not imprisoned for their views, and torture is rare or exceptional; political murders are extremely rare) to 5 (terror has expanded to the whole population; the leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals). As a robustness check, we specify a model where the dependent variable is the measure of human rights protection from the CIRI dataset.[14]

We use the standard controls present in the literature: armed conflict, economic growth, population, and regime type. Armed conflict is a dummy variable coded one for the country-years when there was an armed conflict in a

[13]Drury, James, and Peksen discuss some of the limitations of this data (2014:32–33).

[14]The measure comes from The CIRI Human Rights Data Project, available at http://www.humanrightsdata.com. Version 2014.04.14. Their aggregated measure, the physical integrity index, constructed from the Torture, Extrajudicial Killing, Political Imprisonment, and Disappearance indicators, ranges from zero (no government respect for these four rights) to 8 (full government respect for these four rights).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.

Variables	*N*	Mean	*SD*	Min.	Max.	Type	Source
Statedept	897	2.95	1.11	1	5	Ordinal	PTS
Amnesty	719	3.16	1.05	1	5	Ordinal	PTS
Physint	800	4.15	2.05	0	8	Ordinal	CIRI
Targeted	918	0.13	1,66	0	1	Binary	TSC
Sanctionsall	918	0.29	0.45	0	1	Binary	TIES
Armed	918	0.23	0.42	0	1	Binary	UCDP/PRIO ACD
Polity2	858	0.15	5.47	−10	10	Ordinal	Polity IV
Ln_percapita	867	6.59	1.13	3.91	9.60	Log	WDI
Ln_pop	918	15.61	1.55	11.18	18.83	Log	WDI

Note. PTS = Political Terror Scale; CIRI = The CIRI Human Rights Dataset; TIES = The Threat adn Imposition of Sanctions Dataset; TSC = Targeted Sanctions Consortium; UCDP/PRIO ACD = The Uppsala Conflict Data Program/Peace Research Institute Oslo Armed Conflict Dataset; Polity IV = The Polity IV Project Dataset; WDI = World Development Indicators.

country. The variable is coded using the UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset.[15] UCDP defines *conflict* as: "a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths" (UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset). Economic growth is measured as the natural logarithm of the real GDP per capita in 2005 international prices. The data on growth as well as data on population come from the World Bank (World Development Indicators). Population is measured as the natural logarithm of the total population of a country in a given year. Our measure of regime type comes from the Polity IV Project (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2014) and is expected to capture the level of democracy of a country; the scale ranges from +10 (strongly democratic) to −10 (strongly autocratic).[16]

We expect a positive correlation between our measures of armed conflict and population, on one hand, and our measure of human rights protection on the other. This relationship is well documented in the literature and can be explained by the consequences of conflict for the well-being of the population in the countries that are directly engaged in the hostilities (Landman 2005). By the same token, a large population is associated with worse levels of human rights protection because of the pressure that it represents over scarce resources. Economic growth and regime type are inversely related to our measure of human rights protection, in as much as lower values on the PTS scale tend to be associated with greater levels of growth and democracy.

Our independent variables of interest, conventional sanctions and targeted sanctions, are measured as follows. Conventional sanctions (*sanctionsall*) is a

[15]The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset is a joint project between the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, and the Centre for the Study of Civil War at the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO), available for download from www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/ and www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/our_data1.htm.

[16]The Polity IV Project (Political Regimes Characteristics and Transitions, 1800–2013) Dataset Users' Manual can be found at http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/p4manualv2013.pdf.

dummy variable coded 1 for the country-year when there was a general sanction in force, or zero otherwise. The data come from the Threat and Imposition of Sanctions Dataset (TIES, version 4.0). Targeted sanctions is a dummy variable coded 1 for the country-years when there was a "targeted" sanction in force, or zero otherwise. Data come from the Targeted Sanctions Consortium (Biersteker et al. 2013).

Given the nature of our data, we estimate an ordered logistic model with standard errors clustered on country. We create a variable, using the lag of our dependent variable (Amnesty International's coding from the Political Terror Scale), to control for the occurrence of a history of violations in the past (*L.amnesty*). Following the existing approach in the literature, we lag all independent variables one year. This approach helps to establish that the observed impact on the dependent variable is in fact associated with the independent variables.

The results suggest that the presence of a targeted sanction in a given year has an adverse impact on the level of protection of rights to physical integrity in the target country (Table 2), thus confirming our first hypothesis. This result is consistent with the tests that we ran for conventional sanctions, which can be found in the appendix (see Table A1). The control variables perform as expected, with the exception of the control for the presence of a conventional sanction in a given year, and our measure of economic growth, which come out as nonsignificant. The lack of significant results for our conventional sanctions variable is most likely a data-related temporal issue, whereby since the end of the Cold War, conventional economic sanctions have been fewer in number and they are also less likely to play an important part in the reversal of the objectionable policy.

Model 6 (Table 2) uses the CIRI physical integrity index as the dependent variable. Consistent with our analysis in model 3 (Table 2), using data from the PTS scale, the presence of a targeted sanction has an adverse impact on the protection of rights to physical integrity. This analysis allows us to investigate the consequences of targeted sanctions for the protection of major categories of human rights. In the appendix we report results of an ordered logistic model, wherein the dependent variable is each of the four major categories of physical integrity rights covered by the CIRI dataset: killings, disappearances, torture, and political imprisonment (Tables A2–A5). These results are significant for two of the four categories: killings and disappearances.[17]

Next, we run model 3 (from Table 2), using the odds ratio as the coefficient for easiness of interpretation.[18]

[17]We were surprised by the nonsignificance of the tests for torture. We attribute this odd outcome to the unfortunate prevalence of torture in the region, which most likely obfuscates the impact of targeted sanctions per se.

[18]All statistical analyses are performed in Stata 12.

Table 2. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on the Protection of Rights to Physical Integrity 1992–2008: Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

	Amnesty			Physint		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Targeted	0.59**	0.72**		−0.68**	−0.67*	
	(0.22)	(0.28)		(0.25)	(0.27)	
L.amnesty	2.03***	1.68***	1.69***			
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.17)			
L.physint				1.00***	0.77***	0.81***
				(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Sanctionsall		−0.18			0.03	
		(0.18)			(0.15)	
Armed		1.56***			−1.15***	
		(0.22)			(0.25)	
Polity2		−0.04*			0.08***	
		(0.02)			(0.01)	
Ln_percapita		0.07			−0.02	
		(0.11)			(0.09)	
Ln_pop		0.29**			−0.38***	
		(0.09)			(0.08)	
L.targeted			0.55*			−0.68*
			(0.26)			(0.29)
L.sanctionsall			−0.13			−0.00
			(0.17)			(0.12)
L.armed			1.11***			−0.46*
			(0.26)			(0.18)
L.polity2			−0.04*			0.07***
			(0.02)			(0.01)
L.ln_percapita			0.04			0.00
			(0.09)			(0.08)
L.ln_pop			0.27**			−0.38***
			(0.09)			(0.08)
N	642	612	612	738	713	714

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

The coefficient for our independent variable of interest—targeted sanctions—can be interpreted in a more straightforward fashion, when expressed in odds ratio. Table 3 presents this output. All else equal, the level of protection of rights to physical integrity (the right to life and the prohibition of torture) in the targeted country is 1.74 times more likely to worsen under an episode of targeted sanction if compared to a situation where there is no sanction. We attribute this high probability to the internal dynamics between the leadership and opposition groups, who see in the imposition of a targeted sanction an opportunity to increase their demands; to that end, the higher the costs incurred by the sender country, the more effective the signal that sanctions send with respect to the target's leader. A weakened target is expected to concede more promptly to the demands of his/her own domestic opposition. It is often the case, though, that the leadership will not cave in. We know that targeted sanctions are more effective at constraining and at signaling, as opposed to coercing. Overall, targeted sanctions will

Table 3. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on the Protection of Rights to Physical Integrity: Ordered Logistic Regression, Reporting Odds Ratio, Standard Errors Clustered on Country, from Model 3.

					95% Conf. Interval	
Amnesty	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	*Z*	*P>z*	Lower	Upper
L.targeted	1.7401	.4535352	2.13	0.034	1.044045	2.900208
L.sanctionsall	.8773874	.1499266	−0.77	0.444	.6276816	1.226432
L.armed	3.022587	.7873207	4.25	0.000	1.814089	5.036155
L.polity2	.9638361	.0160269	−2.22	0.027	.9329304	.9957656
L.ln_percapita	1.043159	.0973495	0.45	0.651	.86879	1.252524
L.ln_pop	1.307591	.1124188	3.12	0.002	1.104818	1.547579
L. amnesty	5.420569	.9273334	9.88	0.000	3.876359	7.579938
N						612

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

only be effective 20% to 25% of the time, which suggests that leaders are not as weakened by the sanctions as the opposition might have expected.

Whenever the leadership resists the quest for policy change made by the sender country, he or she might as well resist the demands coming from within (their own opposition groups). According to the analysis on effectiveness produced by the Targeted Sanctions Consortium, the leader indeed refuses to alter the objectionable policy in the large majority of the cases—70% to 75%. In these same cases, domestic opposition groups will see their demands unmet, protest will follow, and eventually repression will prevail.

Table 4 presents the predicted probabilities of change in the PTS scale associated with different thresholds of violation. This information helps us assess how robust is the impact of an episode of targeted sanction on the probability of a government's recourse to repression in the following year. This table offers detailed information on what actually happens for groups of observations that fall under several categories of the data. It displays the observed level of violation in a given year (Time 1) and allows us to predict the level of violation at Time 2, given the history of past violations. Because most of the countries in the database are serious violators, we focus the interpretation on the upper right corner of the table, or observations where the level of violation ranges from 3 to 5 on the PTS scale.

In line with our expectations, the probability of a country remaining at worse levels of protection, here understood as 4 and 5 in the PTS scale, is consistently higher when a country is subject to a targeted sanction as opposed to when it is under no sanction. Namely, the probability of remaining at PTS = 4 is 0.55 under a targeted sanction, as opposed to 0.51 under no sanction; the probability of remaining at PTS = 5 is 0.52 under a targeted sanction, as opposed to 0.38 under no sanction. Conversely, the probabilities of improving rights protection, expressed in a movement toward a lower score in the PTS scale, are consistently lower, when a country is subject to a targeted sanction. For example, if a country is categorized as a serious violator at Time 1, expressed by a score of 4 in the PTS scale, the probability of this same country

Table 4. Predicted Probability of Repression Across Time: Targeted Sanctions, 1992–2008 (from Model 3).

	Predicted Probability of Repression in Time 2				
Repression at Time 1	Pr(y=1|x)	Pr(y=2|x)	Pr(y=3|x)	Pr(y=4|x)	Pr(y=5|x)
Pr(y=5|x)					
Targeted = 0	.0002678	.0083764	.1006649	.5038941	.3867967
Targeted = 1	.0001572	.0049444	.062187	.4105827	.5221286
Pr(y=4|x)					
Targeted = 0	.001299	.0394123	.3346593	.511099	.1135304
Targeted = 1	.0007669	.0236895	.2353093	.5560501	.1841842
Pr(y=3|x)					
Targeted = 0	.0093524	.2268205	.5786531	.1679036	.0172705
Targeted = 1	.005558	.1483004	.5602365	.2555286	.0303765
Pr(y=2|x)					
Targeted = 0	.0357362	.5132489	.3962457	.0502865	.0044827
Targeted = 1	.0214682	.3919112	.4929123	.0857315	.0079768
Pr(y=1|x)					
Targeted = 0	.085686	.6686503	.2231032	.0207638	.0017967
Targeted = 1	.0526183	.5842316	.3233677	.0365695	.0032128

improving the condition of rights protection by moving to an immediately better category along the PTS scale, namely 3 the following year, is greater if this country is not subject to sanctions (0.33) than if the country is subject to a targeted sanction (0.23). This closer look at what happened inside the various categories of human rights violators in our data reinforces the view that this is not a random effect but rather a systematic phenomenon, as we attempted to capture it with the model that informed our first hypothesis.

We could not confirm our second hypothesis, which associates the magnitude of repression to regime type. This may be due to model specification issues or to the nature of the data, where more democratic regimes represent fewer observations. Indeed, the vast majority of sanction episodes in our data set target authoritarian regimes. We believe failure to substantiate this hypothesis is primarily due to the small number of democratic regimes in our data, which is partly a result of our focus on Africa.

Findings and conclusion

This article investigates the impact of targeted sanctions on the level of protection of rights to physical integrity in the target country. The intuition for the expectation of an unintended adverse impact comes from the well-documented consequences that conventional sanctions have for human rights protection and from a game theoretical model offered here. The game shows that there is a Nash equilibrium in pure strategies, whereby a targeted leader will choose to meet protests by domestic opposition groups with repression. Greater levels of human rights violations—more specifically, violations of the right to life and the prohibition of torture—follow. The empirical analysis confirms the predictions of the model. We find that the level of human rights protection in the target

country is 1.74 times more likely to worsen under an episode of targeted sanction when compared to a situation where there is no sanction.

We calculate the predicted probabilities of change along the PTS scale, which measures the level of human rights violations and, consistent with our model's expectations, improvements in human rights protection are less likely to occur when a country is under a targeted sanction. Conversely, the probability that the level of human rights protection will deteriorate is higher when a country is subject to a targeted sanction.

Our findings have important implications for the growing literature on the role of targeted sanctions. They also present nontrivial evidence for policy-makers with respect to the usefulness of targeted sanctions as a foreign policy tool. If there was any doubt as to the adverse impact of targeted sanctions on the level of protection of rights to physical integrity, our research settles this question. Targeted sanctions do unintentionally harm the population in the target country by triggering domestic confrontations that otherwise would not have emerged at that point in time.

The article brings to light the new data on targeted sanctions, which results from a concerted effort by a large group of scholars who have produced a thorough and systematic analysis of the effectiveness of UN targeted sanctions since 1991. This comes at a time when unilateral sanctions of the same nature, and concerted efforts that coalesced outside of the United Nations, have resorted to this coercive tool in the hopes of solving serious international crises without the use of force. Simultaneously, the article gathers several streams of literature to distill a formal model that can be useful to help us better understand the dynamics at work during an episode of targeted sanction, both at the international as well as the domestic level—to use Robert Putnam's (1993) two-level game framework.

This research dovetails well with the older and larger literature on conventional sanctions, suggesting that some of the same mechanisms are at play—at least with respect to the consequences of sanctions for human rights protection. It is quite possible that the nature of targeted sanctions will implicate distinguishable consequences with respect to economic growth and even democratization. These seem to be natural places to move toward with this research agenda.

As we emphasized throughout the article, our regional focus and the choice to analyze African countries is motivated by the nature of the data and by a belief, on our part, that the dynamics involving economic sanctions and the protection of rights to physical integrity have a regional component that is best captured by a segmented empirical analysis. We invite caution in generalizing the results presented here to episodes of targeted sanctions outside of Africa. Currently, there are not enough documented cases to afford similar analyses for other geographic regions. Similar data limitation issues circumscribed our focus to UN-imposed sanctions, thus leaving

questions unanswered with respect to targeted sanctions sponsored by regional organizations or by countries acting alone.

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Appendix

Table A1. Impact of Conventional Economic Sanctions on the Protection of Rights to Physical Integrity 1976–2008 (PTS Data): Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

Statedpt	m1	m2	m3	m4
L.statedept	2.44***	2.44***	2.16***	2.16***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)
sanctionsall	0.28*		0.33*	
	(0.12)		(0.16)	
sanctionsnotrade		0.29*		0.34*
		(0.12)		(0.16)
armed			1.53***	1.53***
			(0.19)	(0.19)
Polity2			–0.03*	–0.03*
			(0.01)	(0.01)
ln_percapita			–0.10	–0.10
			(0.08)	(0.08)
Ln_pop			0.26***	0.26***
			(0.07)	(0.07)
N	1,583	1,583	1,411	1,411

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table A2. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on Killings 1992–2008 (Data: CIRI Killings Indicator): Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

	m1 b/se	m2 b/se	m3 b/se	m4 b/se
kill				
targeted	−1.76***	−0.86**	−0.72*	
	(0.44)	(0.32)	(0.31)	
L.kill		1.90***	1.59***	1.65***
		(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.15)
sanctionsall			−0.20	
			(0.19)	
armed			−1.33***	
			(0.32)	
polity2			0.01	
			(0.02)	
ln_percapita			−0.04	
			(0.12)	
ln_pop			−0.32**	
			(0.11)	
L.targeted				−0.75*
				(0.35)
L.sanction~l				−0.13
				(0.18)
L.armed				−0.34
				(0.22)
L.polity2				0.01
				(0.02)
L.ln_perca~a				0.01
				(0.11)
L.ln_pop				−0.36***
				(0.10)
N	800.00	738.00	713.00	714.00

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table A3. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on Disappearances 1992–2008 (Data: CIRI Disappearances Indicator): Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

	m1 b/se	m2 b/se	m3 b/se	m4 b/se
Disap				
Targeted	−1.98*** (0.47)	−1.10*** (0.31)	−0.90** (0.31)	
L.disap		1.92*** (0.19)	1.54*** (0.21)	1.63*** (0.22)
sanctionsall			0.27 (0.26)	
Armed			−1.44*** (0.29)	
polity2			0.05* (0.02)	
ln_percapita			−0.00 (0.12)	
ln_pop			−0.14 (0.09)	
L.targeted				−0.79* (0.34)
L.sanction~l				0.08 (0.24)
L.armed				−0.82*** (0.20)
L.polity2				0.05* (0.02)
L.ln_perca~a				0.04 (0.12)
L.ln_pop				−0.17* (0.08)
N	800.00	738.00	713.00	714.00

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table A4. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on Torture 1992–2008 (Data: CIRI Torture Indicator): Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

	m1 b/se	m2 b/se	m3 b/se	m4 b/se
Tort				
targeted	−1.18*	−0.71	−0.43	
	(0.48)	(0.40)	(0.32)	
L.tort		2.21***	1.86***	1.84***
		(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.23)
sanctionsall			0.11	
			(0.20)	
armed			−0.79*	
			(0.32)	
polity2			0.05*	
			(0.02)	
ln_percapita			−0.17	
			(0.11)	
ln_pop			−0.42***	
			(0.09)	
L.targeted				−0.55
				(0.34)
L.sanction~l				0.20
				(0.20)
L.armed				−0.61
				(0.32)
L.polity2				0.04*
				(0.02)
L.ln_perca~a				−0.17
				(0.11)
L.ln_pop				−0.42***
				(0.08)
N	800.00	738.00	713.00	714.00

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

Table A5. Impact of Targeted Sanctions on Political Imprisonment 1992–2008 (Data: CIRI Political Imprisonment Indicator): Ordered Logistic Regression, Standard Errors Clustered on Country.

	m1 b/se	m2 b/se	m3 b/se	m4 b/se
polpris				
targeted	–0.96* (0.46)	–0.49 (0.27)	–0.28 (0.30)	
L.polpris		2.33*** (0.17)	1.75*** (0.18)	1.78*** (0.17)
sanctionsall			0.11 (0.18)	
armed			–0.34 (0.28)	
polity2			0.13*** (0.02)	
ln_percapita			0.09 (0.12)	
ln_pop			–0.43*** (0.10)	
L.targeted				–0.35 (0.33)
L.sanction~l				0.02 (0.16)
L.armed				–0.24 (0.25)
L.polity2				0.12*** (0.02)
L.ln_perca~a				0.07 (0.12)
L.ln_pop				–0.41*** (0.10)
N	800.00	738.00	713.00	714.00

Note. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.