

Why Do States Repress Sexual Minorities?

Legitimacy, Diversionary Homophobic Nationalism, and Anti-Westernism

by

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ABSTRACT

Why do states repress sexual minorities? The logic of coercive responsiveness demonstrates that states repress people when they feel threatened. From this perspective and because repression leaves states with international condemnations and sanctions, it is puzzling why states target sexual minorities. First, I explore this puzzle in all states and argue that political regimes repress sexual minorities when their legitimacy is undermined. Repression of sexual minorities becomes a legitimation strategy for political regimes in homophobic societies specially when regimes lack rational-procedural legitimacy. Second, I examine state repression of LGBTQ+ people in conservative countries and argue that political regimes in homophobic societies tend to repress sexual minorities to divert public attention from domestic economic problems. Corruption, government ineffectiveness, and uneven economic development sprout public resentment and discontent. Political regimes act to repress sexual minorities, implementing homophobic policies to divert public attention from poor economic conditions and discourage citizens from demanding redistributive policies. Instilling homophobic elements into nationalist diversionary tactics makes these tactics more appealing to a broader society where traditional family values and normative homosexuality is blended with national identity. Third, I study the repression of sexual minorities in authoritarian countries and argue that regimes which oppose the US-led international liberal order are more likely to repress sexual minorities. Political leaders in these regimes commit egregious human rights abuses against sexual minorities to draw attention from Western media and gay rights organizations, which press Western governments to make condemnations and sometimes impose sanctions. Leaders in these anti-Western then frame these condemnations and sanctions as threats to

sovereignty and cultural imperialism, which become appealing to the homophobic public. Testing these conjectures against new country-year data, survey experiments, and five public surveys, I find results consistent with these arguments. The findings suggest that state repression has both domestic and external dimensions. Homosexuality is highly politicized in repressive countries. Leaders resort to violence against sexual minorities for various political gains when the public is hostile to homosexuality. I conclude that public acceptance of LGBTQ+ people is paramount to the improvement of gay rights.

DEDICATION

To my parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On September 30, 2022, in his address to the Russian nation at annexation ceremony, President Putin stated the following: “Do we really want, here, in our country, in Russia, instead of ‘mum’ and ‘dad’, to have ‘parent No. 1’, ‘parent No. 2’, ‘No. 3’? Have they gone completely insane? Do we really want ... it drilled into children in our schools ... that there are supposedly genders besides women and men, and [children to be] offered the chance to undergo sex change operations? ... We have a different future, our own future” (Reuters, 2022). Homophobic narratives like these have been incorporated to Russian domestic and foreign politics since the beginning of the second decade of 21st century when Russian economy went through crisis. Independent media has reported egregious violations of human rights against sexual minorities committed by Russian law enforcement. Russian leaders are not alone in politicizing gay rights and persecuting sexual minorities. Political leaders in Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Jamaica, Poland, and many other countries have targeted sexual minorities. The Covid-19 pandemic made the matters worse. Several states attempted to use lockdown restrictions as an opportunity to restrict gay rights and repress sexual minority members. Video footage appeared in Uganda showing the police raiding an LGBT shelter in March 2020. By enforcing the rules set as a result of the pandemic, Uganda detained 19 individuals for a month and refused to recognize their rights to access lawyers (Feder, 2020).

While we observe countless cases of state persecution of sexual minorities, we know little why states repress sexual minorities. The existing literature has extensively studied repression against ethnic groups in line with the standard logic of the law of

coercive responsiveness scholars and found that ethnic minorities face repression when the states perceive them as having the potential to involve themselves in collective action against states as a form of rebellion or insurgency (Gurr and Harff, 1994; Davenport, 2007a). Therefore, it is mass killings and other egregious human rights abuses that tend to occur during civil wars as states face numerous threats (Hill and Jones, 2014). The previous research demonstrates that “states have lower incentives to repress ...in contexts where discontented people and organized opposition do not seriously challenge their power” (Rivera, 2016). Yet, this logic falls flat to explain the repression of sexual minorities. It is puzzling why states repress these vulnerable minorities, leading to international condemnations and sanctions.

This dissertation is an effort to explain state repression of sexual minorities. First, it explores the repression of sexual minorities in all states from 2000-2020, using state-year data collected from reliable human rights reports and demonstrates that repression of sexual minorities is connected to legitimation process. I take Weber’s classification of legitimacy into traditional, rational-legal, and charismatic as starting and argue that political regimes in countries with homophobic societies repress sexual minorities to generate legitimacy. Repression of sexual minorities becomes legitimation strategies for political regimes in homophobic societies. States with lower level of homosexuality acceptance become even more repressive when they lack rational-legal legitimacy and seek alternative modes of legitimation where homophobic narratives are incorporated.

Second, it examines state repression of LGBTQ+ people in conservative countries and argues that political regimes in homophobic societies tend to repress sexual minorities to divert public attention from domestic economic problems. *Corruption, government*

ineffectiveness, and *uneven economic development* sprout public resentment and discontent. Political regime acts to repress sexual minorities, implementing homophobic policies to divert public attention from poor economic conditions and discourage citizens from demanding for redistributive policies. Instilling homophobic elements into nationalist diversionary tactics makes these tactics more appealing to broader society where traditional family values and normative homosexuality is blended with national identity.

Third, it gauges repression of sexual minorities in authoritarian countries and argues that regimes which oppose the US-led international liberal order (anti-Western) are more likely to repress sexual minorities. Anti-Western countries become even more repressive when they face legitimacy crisis at home. Political leaders in these countries commit egregious human rights abuses against sexual minorities to draw attention from Western media and gay rights organizations, which press Western governments make condemnations and sometimes impose sanctions. Leaders in these anti-Western then frame these condemnations and sanctions as threats to sovereignty and cultural imperialism, which become appealing to homophobic public. Testing these conjectures against new country-year data, I find results consistent with these arguments. The results suggest that state repression has both domestic and external dimensions. Homosexuality is highly politicized in repressive countries. Leaders resort to violence against sexual minorities for various political gains when the public is hostile to homosexuality. I conclude that public acceptance of LGBTQ+ people is paramount to the overall improvement of gay rights.

My dissertation project contributes to broader fields of state repression and social movements in three ways. First, in line with the standard logic of coercive responsiveness, scholars have found that ethnic minorities face repression when states perceive them as

having the potential in involving in collective action against states in the form of rebellion or insurgency. Yet, this logic tells little about why governments resort to repressive measures against certain vulnerable groups. My research moves beyond this classic repression-dissent nexus and demonstrates that sexual minorities face repression for reasons mainly related to global and domestic politics rather than a threat they pose to state security. Second, my dissertation draws new connections between the external and domestic sources of state repression against sexual minorities and gay activism. Finally, my dissertation advances the literature on external support and human rights outcomes.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY OF STATE REPRESSION

Explaining why some states repress sexual minorities is directly linked to a wider question in the state repression literature as to why some states resort to repressive measures. The literature has seen tremendous development in last three decades. Scholars have explored various covariates of state repression. Using various innovative quantitative and qualitative methods, the previous research has generally focused on uncovering social, economic, and political circumstances associated with human rights abuses (Davenport, 2007b). Moving beyond statistical significance tests based on p-value approach, others have gauged factors that can predict state repression, contending that some statistically significant variables fall flat to effectively forecast the incidence of state repression (Hill and Jones, 2014). Thus, scholars have advanced the existing state repression literature both theoretically and methodically.

Previous research has primarily provided domestic level explanations to account for state repression. One such domestic level explanation and the most pressing finding in the state repression literature is the law of coercive responsiveness. The finding leads us to anticipate that “governing authorities should respond with repression to behavior that threatens the political system, government personnel, the economy, or the lives, beliefs, and livelihoods of those within their territorial jurisdiction” (Davenport, 2007, p. 7). Per the law of coercive responsiveness, the governing authorities are more interested in quiescence, which helps them to extract taxes, create wealth, and sustain their legitimacy. The authorities tend to apply different repressive measures to prevent societal threats that challenge the status quo within their territorial jurisdiction. What is impressive about the

law of coercive responsiveness is that the positive effect of behavioral threat on state repression is very consistent across different research areas within political science discipline, whereas scholars have found mixed results for the effect of repressive measures on dissent behavior (the reverse of the law of coercive responsiveness). The core of this robust finding is that it focuses on political conflict, behavioral threat, and dissent. Scholars studying the relationship between state repression and political conflict have argued that state repression reaches to a higher level during civil wars because that is when states face the greatest threats. States are disposed to commit grave crimes and massive killings when insurgent attacks challenge their security. When faced with insurgency, states are likely to use indiscriminate violence to target the insurgents hid among civilians (Valentino et al., 2004) and even willing to commit genocide against ethnic or racial groups when they perceive threats from these groups (Shaw, 2003). Hill and Jones (2014) use cross validation and random forests methods to measure predictive power of the theories explaining state repression and find that civil war explains a government's violations of human rights better than other variables.

Another domestic politics level variable taken to explain state repression is regime type. These studies have found a negative correlation between the level of democracy and the use of repressive measures in each country. Davenport (2007) highlights three reasons why democracies mitigate the incidence of state repression. First, the presence of democratic institutions, such as elections in democratic regimes, make the use of repression costly since the subjects might remove the governing authorities in elections if they consider state actions improper. Second, the subjects in democratic regimes embrace certain values that promote tolerance, communication, and deliberation. Third, in

democracies, there are alternative instruments of control through contestation and participation, which “weaken the justification for coercive activity by reducing the likelihood for human conflict and facilitating the conveyance of grievances” (Davenport, 2007). Using different measurements and methods, many studies have found consistent results across time and space that democratic regimes are less likely to commit repression. This finding in state repression literature is called as “domestic democratic peace,” which means that the presence of peaceful conflict management measures and constraining institutions decreases state repression (Davenport, 2007). Meanwhile, some have questioned the direct link between democracy and state repression. One line of research suggests the presence of “more murder in the middle,” which means that hybrid and transitional regimes are more likely to use repression relative to full democracies and autocracies (Fein, 1995; Regan & Henderson, 2002; Pierskalla, 2010). Other studies find that the negative relationship between democratization and state repression is misspecified and the relationship holds only after the level of democracy reaches a certain threshold (Davenport & Armstrong, 2004; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005). The studies have also uncovered several aspects of democracy that make state repression less likely (Conrad & Moore, 2010).

Domestic level explanations for state repression are not only limited to the law of coercive responsiveness and the level of democratization, the two key findings in the literature. Some scholars have taken an institutionalist approach and suggested that different domestic legal institutions prevent states from using repressive measures (Powell & Staton, 2009; Mitchell et.al, 2013). In their examination of different models explaining state repression, Hill and Jones (2014) find this body of research promising. They articulate

that comparative institutions literature provide helpful guidance about how domestic legal institutions such as courts and constitutions help citizens to succeed in solving the coordination problem while they are making efforts to withstand the governmental crackdown on basic rights (North & Weingast, 1989; Weingast, 1997; Carey, 2000). In general, the studies expect that state repression is less likely when constitutional provisions put explicit constraints on the governing authorities and when there is an independent judiciary. In line with this expectation, Cross (1999) and Keith et al. (2009) find that some constitutional provisions prevent state repression. Meanwhile, other institutional approach studies demonstrate that state repression is less likely in countries with common law legal systems (Powell & Staton, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2013). Mitchell et al. (2013) posit that the decreased repression is partly linked to common law systems since it contributes to an independent judiciary. Hill and Jones (2014, p. 664) also find that “domestic legal institutions are good predictors of repressive behavior.” Hence, scholars have found that human rights abuses are associated with several domestic-level factors.

Nevertheless, one line of research in the literature has explored the effect of some international factors on state repression. These factors include exposure to foreign investment and trade, participation in World Bank and International Monetary Fund programs, the influence of global civil society, and international legal agreements. First, based on classical Marxist understandings, some studies have found that there is a positive relationship between exposure to foreign investment and trade and state repression since the flow of external capital hurts the domestic economy leading to the rise of dissent. States then tend to use repression to prevent dissent, maintain regime stability, and facilitate further investment, which is beneficial to political elites rather than to a domestic economy

(Meyer, 1996). Similarly, studies have also found that repression is associated with participation in World Bank and IMF adjustment programs. One study found that the relationship between these two is positive because participation in the programs of the international monetary organizations makes states economically vulnerable, which leads to the rise of dissent, and therefore the use of repressive measures becomes inevitable (Cingranelli, 2007). By contrast, others argued that there is a negative relationship between trade openness and the use of repressive measures (Apodaca, 2001; Hafner-Burton, 2005a). Hafner-Burton (2005) finds that international trade agreements make state repression more costly since these agreements require states to have good human rights records. Likewise, some studies have suggested that international legal agreements have an effect on state repression (Hathaway, 2002; Simmons, 2009; Conrad & Ritter, 2013). Simmons (2000) found that states comply with international treaties because legal commitments coerce the states to do so (Simmons & Hopkins, 2005). The authors conclude that treaties have constraining effects on state behavior. However, Von Stein (2005) challenges this conclusion methodically and argues that the conditions that lead states to join international treaties cause them to comply with the treaties.

Some studies have looked at other international factors to explain variation in state repression. One line of research has found that when there is an impact of global civil society and international human rights organizations and they have active performance in a given state, human rights violations are less likely. However, scholars have found mixed results for the relationship between “naming and shaming” by these organizations and the incidence of state repression (Franklin, 2008; Murdie & Davis, 2012). Thus, scholars have

made tremendous accomplishments in uncovering social, economic, and political circumstances associated with human rights abuses (Hill & Jones, 2014).

While previous research has achieved some progress in explaining state repression against ethnic minorities, most of the findings are applied for oppositional forces in general. However, different theoretical and empirical mechanisms function contingent on the *types* of groups that face repression. Empirical evidence suggests that states commit human rights violations for a variety of reasons across different social groups. There is a reasonable theoretical expectation that different causal pathways play out depending on which groups political regimes target. Ascertaining these pathways requires disaggregation and further theorizing.

First, the law of coercive responsiveness, the most pressing finding in state repression, does not tell us why states repress sexual minorities, as it does not threaten state security. The logic in this finding falls flat to explain human rights abuses against sexual minorities. It is perplexing why political regimes resort to violence against vulnerable groups which do not have capabilities to mobilize into a collective action that might threaten regime security. Human rights violations against LGBTQ+ people also lead to international condemnations and sometimes sanctions. Meanwhile, state repression against sexual minorities is prevalent. The state repression literature, which mainly focuses on the repression-dissent nexus, tells little about why governments resort to repressive measures for vulnerable groups. Whereas the literature has provided ample evidence that states demonstrate repressive measures when they face dissent or perceive threats to their security and survival, it is less known what motivates states to repress sexual minorities (Gartner and Regan, 1996; Pierskalla, 2010; Ritter, 2014).

Second, while previous literature has focused on explaining why some states repress more than others, it has mainly covered state repression in all states. Many studies have uncovered that less state repression is associated with a high level of democracy (Davenport, 2007; Russett, 1993; Bueno de Mesquita et al., 2005). Some studies have recently found that “democracy levels correlate with LGBT and human rights” (Hammond, 2012). Encarnación (2014, p. 91) argues that the factors that make a democratic regime an essential precondition for sexual minorities are “the opportunities that it provides for advocacy—including access to the courts, the party system, and the legislature as well as a social environment that permits gay people to live their lives openly and honestly.” Democracy variable is central to studies that have examined why some states have lagged in improving gay rights. Institutionalists believed that democratic institutions prevent human rights abuses against sexual minorities.

Yet, the relationship between democracy and gay rights is not free from endogeneity issue. Most of democracy measures also consider respect for LGBTQ+ rights. Therefore, it might sound tautological that democracies persecute sexual minorities less as they are identified as democracy in part because they protect gay rights at least in a minimal level. The association between democracy and gay rights is very well expected as law enforcement and other repressing bodies are constrained by working laws and institutions in democratic regimes. It is important to explore state repression within various subgroups of political regimes and circumstances. For instance, one key and important question that would yield interesting and useful insights is why some non-democracies repress more than other non-democracies. Previous research has demonstrated that there is a variation in the level of governmental human rights violations across authoritarian regimes. For instance,

Davenport (2007) finds that single-party authoritarian regimes are less repressive than other authoritarian regimes. This variation should also hold in case of state repression against sexual minorities. While studying repression against sexual minorities among all states as the universe of cases would give us interesting insights and important policy guidance to improve gay rights, it is also essential to ascertain why some nondemocracies repress sexual minorities more than others. In particular, the identification of causal pathways and conditions that are associated with the repression of sexual minorities in some authoritarian countries has both important policy implications and the potential to contribute to the literature. However, the current state repression literature “generally ignores the diversity that exists within autocracies” (Davenport, 2007, p. 485). However, the research should make an effort to “disaggregate regime type so that we can understand the circumstances under which civil liberties are restricted and human rights are violated. It is incorrect to treat all autocratic governments in the same manner.” There is a great amount of diversity within different subgroups of states that the previous research has overlooked. It is necessary to disaggregate both repressive entities and victims of repression to further theorize state repression across different target groups and subgroups of states as a means to understand why repression takes place. Disaggregating an organization’s pattern of violence through targeting as well as repertoire, frequency, and technique “adds precision to the documentation and analysis of political violence, clarifies the evaluation of rival theories, and opens up new research questions” (Gutiérrez-Sanín & Wood, 2017, p. 20). To these ends, this dissertation explores state repression against sexual minorities, a vulnerable group of repression target, from various aspects in various subgroups of countries.

First, I explore state repression against sexual minorities in all countries in the 21st century to ascertain boarder patterns across all states. Exploring state persecution of LGBTQ+ people in all countries provides me initial insights of a broader perspective. The study of human rights abuses across all countries is important for both theoretical and policy guidance importance. The research on state repression against sexual minorities is very recent. Previous studies have found that affluence and religion are two main reasons explaining why there is a global divide on homosexuality. In general, it is believed that more secular and wealthy countries (relative to more religious and poor ones) are more likely to recognize equal rights for sexual minorities (Encarnación, 2014). More recently, some studies have found that gay rights are more likely to thrive in democracies (Hammond, 2012).

However, this line of research primarily explores the acceptance of gay rights by mainstream society and why some societies generally tend to refuse to recognize equal rights for LGBTQ people and tells us little about why states violate gay rights. One recent research finds that revolutionary governments tend to repress sexual minorities for ideological and strategical reasons (Tschantret 2019). Others have focused on stressing the backlash against gay rights in liberal democracies (Corrales, 2020). However, more research is needed to explore repression of sexual minorities across all countries for three reasons. First, previous research has primarily explored public acceptance of gay rights and tells us little about why states involve in gay rights violations. Second, the central finding about the relationship between democracy and gay rights sounds tautological because their measurement components overlap. Third, empirical evidence demonstrates that sexual

minorities face persecution even in affluent and secular countries. Therefore, I explore state repression of LGBTQ+ rights in all countries in next chapter.

Once I examine oppression of sexual minorities across all countries in Chapter 3, I move to exploring the state repression in conservative countries in Chapter 4. While states with lower acceptance of homosexuality should be expected to repress sexual minorities more frequently compared to states with higher level of acceptance, it is puzzling why some conservative states are more likely to target sexual minorities relative to other conservative states. Studying this question would help the research to explore covariates of repression against sexual minorities beyond public acceptance of homosexuality. Although my results from the study of all countries demonstrate that states with lower societal acceptance of sexual minorities tend to repress more specially when they lack legitimacy, it is not clear to the understanding as to why some states with homophobic societies tend to repress more compared to other states with homophobic societies.

Third, this research examines state repression against sexual minorities in nondemocracies in Chapter 5. It is important to explore gay rights in nondemocratic states separate from democracies since different processes are in progress in these two types of political regimes in terms of the development of gay rights and state repression against sexual minorities. While gay activists fight to pass legislation for marriage and anti-discrimination in Western democracies, sexual minorities attempt to ameliorate governmental homophobic persecution and push the governing authorities to recognize their rights to identify as LGBTQ+. Therefore, state repression against sexual minorities in democracies might be different from homophobic human rights violations in nondemocracies.

CHAPTER 3

WHY DO STATES REPRESS SEXUAL MINORITIES: SEEKING LEGITIMACY

Theoretical Framework

This chapter first asks why some countries repress sexual minorities while others do not. I argue that the repression of sexual minorities becomes legitimization strategies for political regimes in homophobic societies. Political regimes repress sexual minorities to boost their popularity and generate a public perception they are entitled to rule as the protector of traditional societal values. States with low societal acceptance of homosexuality are more likely to repress sexual minorities as a political strategy to generate legitimacy. Since states use their persecution of sexual minorities to generate legitimacy, I also argue that the effect of homosexuality acceptance on state repression of LGBTQ+ people is greater in countries with lower legitimacy. The lack of procedural or rational-legal legitimacy coerces political regimes to persecute sexual minorities to reclaim alternative modes of legitimacy, incorporating homophobic elements into their legitimization strategies as their constituents become more hostile to homosexuality. Thus, the results suggest that societal acceptance of homosexuality and procedural legitimacy are paramount for the improvement of gay rights. Political leaders blend homophobic components into their legitimacy narratives when public is bellicose to sexual minorities. The repression of sexual minorities becomes part of legitimization process in homophobic societies, specially, when political regimes lack procedural legitimacy. The persecution of sexual minorities helps to germinate alternative forms of legitimacy as the public becomes less accepting of homosexuality.

Legitimacy is a highly contested yet essential concept in comparative politics and international relations literature (Lipset, 1959; Beetham, 1991; Weatherford, 1992; Barker, 2001). The concept was etymologically developed to separate a legitimate political system from a tyranny which lacks accountability, an important element of legitimacy. Legitimacy has been viewed as an essential component of a normative democratic theory. Classic texts in moral philosophy have promulgated how political institutions and regimes should be designed or established to retain legitimacy. Classic liberals believed that “the government is not legitimate unless it is carried on with the consent of the governed” (Ashcraft, 1991, p. 524). This normative conception of legitimacy presupposes a set of standards that political regimes and institutions must comply with to be considered as legitimate. By contrast to this normative conception, Weber developed empirical legitimacy based on whether public believes an institution or regime is legitimate (Collins, 1986). While normative conception demonstrated how political regimes should present, the empirical approach explores what political rules and institutions actually resemble.

In this dissertation project, I use an empirical-analytical understanding of legitimacy based on a Weberian conception, which could be applied to all regimes regardless of whether they are democratic or authoritarian. I also differentiate between legitimacy, legitimation, and legitimacy claims. While legitimacy is “the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society” (Lipset, 1959, p. 86), legitimation is the process of obtaining public support (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 18). Political regimes employ various legitimacy claims to justify why they are entitled to rule (Beetham, 1991). These claims are the narratives that political leaders promulgate to give grounds for their

rule. The claims to legitimacy are conceptually different from legitimacy itself since legitimacy involves not only claims of the rules, but also how these claims are received by citizens.

All political systems need to maintain a certain level of legitimacy to sustain their survival in the long run regardless of whether they are an autocracy or a democracy (Graf Kielmansegg, 1971; Schmidt, 2003). Establishing legitimacy is also essential for regime survival. The key importance of legitimacy in democratic regimes has been established in the literature. Studies have also demonstrated that authoritarian regimes build legitimacy, which is critical to the maintenance of order and security in social relations in both democracies and authoritarian regimes. It is conducive to effective governance and stability (Gerschewski, 2013). Previous studies demonstrate that autocracies use cooptation and repression interchangeably to achieve social control and prolong their survival. A wave of studies on autocracy survival has emphasized stabilizing effects of institutions as cooptation mechanisms (Brownlee, 2007; Gandhi and Przeworski, 2007; Gandhi, 2008; Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010; Blaydes, 2011; Svobik, 2012). Defined as the “intentional extension of benefits to challengers to the regime in exchange for their loyalty” (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor, 2014, p. 2; Corntassel, 2007), cooptation enables regimes to offer some spoils to their challengers and obtain policy concessions. Scholars have found that autocracies with legislative institutions tend to be more stable since these institutions are used as arenas for policy concessions (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007) and spoils distribution (Lust-Okar, 2009).

However, cooptation and repression of *oppositional forces* are not without costs. Distributing spoils and other benefits to potential challengers through cooptation

mechanisms can potentially empower them and might bring up a situation of fait accompli. Empowering potential challengers is therefore a practical hazard for autocracies. Sole reliance on repression of oppositional forces also poses a practical hazard for regime durability since “the very resources that enable a regime’s repressive agents to suppress its opposition also empower it to act against the regime itself” (Svolik, 2012, p. 10). Repressive measures against oppositional forces might augment widespread popular discontent and diminish political legitimacy. Studies demonstrate that repression of oppositional forces increases dissent behavior in the short run, making collective action difficult and scattered (Tucker, 2007; Kricheli et.al, 2011). However, they also indicate that “the chances that scattered acts of resistance will more easily escalate into destabilizing civil unrest” increase in the long run (Rasler, 1996, p. 334). Relying solely on cooptation and repression of regime challengers poses potential risks for regime durability and survival. Although both repression and cooptation are essential tools in regimes’ toolkit for regime survival (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor, 2014), the previous research has argued that cooptation and repression of oppositional forces might endanger the stability of autocracies (Weber, 1978). Since both coercion and cooptation sometimes pose increased costs and makes these authoritarian toolkits vulnerable in times of crisis that threatens repressive and financial capabilities of a political regime, less reliance on them allows the regime to develop a greater resilience against negative shocks (Lipset, 1960).

Regime legitimacy, an alternative explanation why citizens obey an authority, is a critical mechanism for regime survival and stability (Backes & Kailitz, 2015; Kailitz, 2013). It is a necessary component of both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Studies have demonstrated that legitimation is among three central pillars of stability in autocratic

regimes. Furthermore, research has indicated that non-democratic regimes consistently legitimize their authority before their ordinary citizens (Ulfelder, 2005). They legitimate their rule to embellish a persuasive *raison d'être* and preserve their stability and endurance over a longer period (Gerschewski, 2018, p. 652-653). Rousseau argued that a political authority is legitimate only when it has the consent of all people, which is critical for all political regimes to sustain their rule since even the most powerful rulers cannot be always powerful enough to achieve mastery over their subjects (Rousseau, 2018). The most powerful regimes must transfer their power into right, thus generating and maintaining a public perception that “existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society” (Lipset, 1959, p. 86). Political systems will be vulnerable to instability unless “force has been transformed into right and obedience into duty” (Rousseau, 2018). This necessity of ensuring legitimacy applies in both democratic and authoritarian contexts. Interdependencies between rulers and citizens has been increasing in 21st century. Based on the previous research, this study presumes that the concept of legitimacy has the capacity to travel to the non-democratic realm as it is an important and stabilizing component of both non-democratic and democratic rule. In this research, I accept a previously made conjecture that “behind every political order there must be a legitimacy idea” (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 18).

Measuring declining political legitimacy has been a daunting task. Some scholars have contended that the concept of legitimacy is vague and underspecified and therefore its empirical and theoretical unity has been debated (Beetham, 1991; O’Kane, 1993). Its explanatory power to account for regime stability has also been questioned as it has been viewed as an “irrelevant” and a “residual concept” (Przeworski, 1991, p. 28; Marquez,

2016, p. 19-20). Others have defended its utility (Beetham, 1993) and examined different sources of “legitimacy idea.” Political regimes use these sources to claim legitimacy. They usually justify their rule based on elements of various legitimacy narratives rather a single legitimacy claim. However, they tend to have a dominant mode of legitimation. In this research, I use Weber’s classification of legitimacy into traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal types as a starting point for discussion. Weber argued that political regimes with rational-legal legitimacy are modern states, which drive their popular legitimacy from consistent laws and an arrangement of institutional procedures, which grants a right to those elevated to authority to issue command and establish law and order in public interest (Weber, 1978, p. 215).

States engage in various legitimation claims when their rational-legal legitimacy is questioned within the broader society. These claims are key to accounting for political regimes’ means of rule (Wintrobe, 1998). They have fundamental repercussions for regime popularity, opposition activity, elite cohesion, and external sanctions (Grauvogel & von Soest, 2014). I argue that the repression of sexual minorities becomes part of legitimation strategies of political regimes as their constituents become hostile to homosexuality. First, political regimes use *foundational narratives and origin myths* to legitimize their rule. These narratives are based on historical accounts, which “are significant and contentious precisely because of their relationship to the legitimacy of power in the present” (Beetham, 1991, p. 103). Studies have demonstrated that political leaders utilize these legitimacy claims to justify their means of rule (von Soest & Grauvogel, 2015). They incorporate homophobic accounts to their foundational narratives, asserting that homosexuality has no place in their “true” origins and that it is “imported” as part of cultural imperialism. These

claims are likely to be well-received by the majority in homophobic societies and contribute to building legitimacy on foundational narratives.

Second, political regimes use ideology-based narratives to legitimize their rule (Gerschewski, 2013). Ideology-based legitimacy claims are “general narratives regarding the righteousness of a given political order” (von Soest & Grauvogel, 2016, p. 21). Scholars have regarded ideology-based legitimacy to “diffuse legitimacy,” which is defined as “the general meaning it has for a person- not what it does” (Easton, 1975, p. 444). In contrast to the specific legitimacy, diffuse legitimacy means what political regimes are in actuality or what they represent. Previous research has demonstrated that sexuality and nationalism are connected. Pryke (1998) argued that “sex and nation combine to produce notions, both real and imagined, of other nationalities’ sexual character and threat, and ideals of virility, fecundity, and respectability” (p. 529). Defining national identity necessitates not only circumscribing what national identity entails, but also what it does not. The connection between sexuality and nationalism plays an important role to identify who belongs to the nation and who does not. It demonstrates if there is compatibility between the advancement of gay rights and the imagined nation (van den Berge et al., 2014). The persecution of sexual minorities becomes part of the legitimization narrative based on nationalism and national-identity building with homophobic societies.

National identity building based on traditional values makes sexual minorities a “legitimate” target in conservative societies. Greenberg (2006) analyzed the relationship between homophobic violence and nationalism during the 2001 Belgrade gay pride in Serbia and argued that the violence happened at the “intersection of different modes of belonging, entitlement, action, and politics” (p. 336). Sexual minorities are perceived as

“threatening the nation by undermining the traditional family, failing to contribute to the reproduction of the nation, challenging national stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, and deviating from shared norms, especially those derived from religion” (Mole, 2018). This connection between national-identity building and homosexuality is very strong in homophobic societies. For instance, “Putin’s construction of homosexuality as both non-traditional and thereby non-Russian—in tandem with his rigorous defense of traditional values as the foundation of the Russian nation’s greatness—has successfully legitimized the marginalization of the country’s LGBT citizens” (Mole, 2018; Sleptcov, 2018).

Third, *personalism* has also used a legitimation strategy in states with homophobic societies. Political regimes have relied on charisma of their leaders to justify why they are entitled to rule. They derive their authority from a charismatic political leader with exceptional capabilities. Charismatic leaders are believed to have a right to exercise authority when their extraordinary qualities convince the ruled to obey. Political regimes usually tend to attain their legitimacy based on a charisma of a political leader in countries with weak institutions. The legitimacy of regimes based on a charismatic leader is fragile and short-lived as they usually lose their legitimacy and seek other legitimacy sources when the charismatic leader leaves the authority unless a successor achieves to establish a charismatic rule. They claim legitimacy based on narratives that they are the “father” or “savior” of their nation. Charismatic leaders are propagandized as the protector of national and traditional values in countries with homophobic societies. For instance, Russian President Putin has been hailed as the leader of Russian nation who accomplished to restore Russian pride and identity (Holmes, 2010, p. 112). Charismatic leaders tend to adopt

policies to persecute sexual minorities to assure their exceptional abilities in protecting nation and national identity based on traditional values.

H1: States are more likely to repress sexual minorities when their public is hostile to homosexuality relative to states with higher level of homosexuality acceptance.

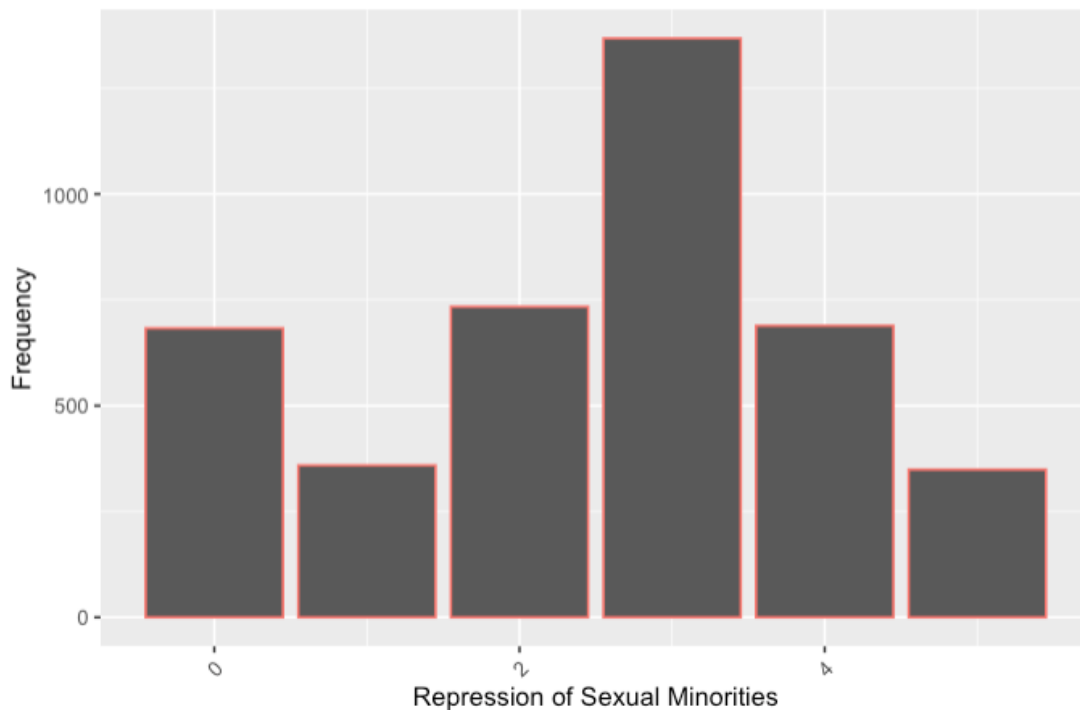
H2: States with lower level of rational-legal legitimacy are more likely than states with higher level of rational-legal legitimacy to repress sexual minorities when their public is hostile to homosexuality.

Data and Methods

Data and Dependent Variable: I adopted *political terror scale* methodology to collect data about state repression against sexual minorities. Countries with advanced LGBTQ+ rights are coded as “0”. These are established democracies where gay rights are largely recognized and protected. Most of these states also consider accepting or already approved the same-sex marriage. Countries where political leaders do not repress LGBTQ+ people but have sometimes failed to protect gay rights have been coded as “1”. Countries with a limited repression against sexual minorities and a large scale of non-protections of LGBTQ+ rights are coded as “2”. Countries where homosexuality is illegal and law enforcement repress sexual minorities occasionally is coded as “3”. These are the countries that usually refrain from widespread repression against sexual minorities. Although homosexuality is illegal in these countries, it is rarely enforced. Nevertheless, *occasional*

LGBTQ+ repression remains. Countries with *widespread* repression against sexual minorities are coded as “4”. LGBTQ+ people regularly face arrest and imprisonment. Political leaders publicly target sexual minorities in these countries. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes part of official state policy. Finally, countries with *systemic* state repression against sexual minorities are coded as “5”. The data are from 2000-2020 and state-year format. Figure 3.1 below demonstrates the distribution of the dependent variable.

Figure 3.1: Repression against Sexual Minorities



Independent Variables: *Global Acceptance Index* of homosexuality, developed by UCLA Williams Institute, is used to measure public acceptance of homosexuality. It is measured

from “0” being lowest acceptability to “10” being highest acceptability. *Rational-procedural legitimacy*: Measuring legitimacy has been a daunting task for scholars. Some studies have suggested using surveys to gauge public confidence in political institutions as the measure of legitimacy. Other have focused on the nature of elections, stressing that free and fair elections are prerequisite for legitimacy. Studies have argued that incidence of political protests could help us to measure legitimacy. Scholars have taken mass demonstrations and civil disobedience as a sign of declining legitimacy. However, this approach has also been challenged since repressive measures discourage oppositional forces to involve in civil disobedience and demonstrate dissent behavior even when regime legitimacy has been seriously weakened. I use two measures for rational-procedural legitimacy: *legitimacy score* from Center for Systemic Peace’s State Fragility Index and *voice and accountability* indicator from World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators. The *legitimacy score* is the measure of various legitimacy indicators that demonstrates the scale of working laws. *Voice and accountability* variable demonstrates the scale that citizens can participate in selecting government and holding it accountable. The ability of citizens to select the government suggests that it has the consent of people and is entitled to rule.

Control variables: I also control for the following variables, which have been found to cause state repression. First, states involved in both interstate and civil war have tended to resort to repressive measures. I use binary *civil war* and *interstate war* variables from the *Correlates of War* dataset to control for the likelihood that the sexual minorities are repressed because of interstate and civil war. Second, sexual minorities might face persecution in countries with a large scale of human rights abuses. Some states frequently

repress their citizens regardless of whether they are sexual minorities or not. I use *political terror scale* to control for this possibility. Third, two-third of countries where homosexuality is illegal are former British colonies. They have inherited laws from British colonial period to criminalize homosexuality. I use a binary variable indicating whether a given country is a *former British colony*. Fourth, studies have contended that countries with large Muslim populations are more likely to repress sexual minorities. I control for the *percentage of Muslim population* in a given country in a certain year. I also control for *polity score*, *women empowerment*, and *political party competition*. These democratic indicators reduce the likelihood of repression of sexual minorities. Many studies have demonstrated that democratic counties are less likely to repress. Using World Bank data, *logged GPD* and *logged population* are also controlled for.

Models: I use generalized linear models to gauge the covariates of repression against sexual minorities. The results are adjusted by robust standard errors and clustered countries to eliminate autocorrelation since the data are based on state-year format. Dependent variable is measured as a categorical variable. However, parallel regression assumption is violated and therefore ordered logistic regression is less suitable to isolate the effect of global acceptance index of homosexuality on state repression of sexual minorities.

Public Survey Data: I also use public survey data from Georgia to explore whether political leaders obtain public support in homophobic societies when they stigmatize sexual minorities. I specifically gauge if there is association between public support for government and public opposition to homosexuality. Five surveys are used to explore this possible relationship: World Values Survey (WVS) Georgia 1996(n=2008), WVS

2009(n=1500), NDI Public Attitudes Georgia April 2015(n=4360), NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2019(n=2131), and NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2022(n=2104). Georgia is selected as a case-study for two reasons. First, its society is predominantly against homosexuality. The global acceptance index of homosexuality in the country has been below 3 since 2009. Second, there are variations in governmental treatment of LGBTQ+ people continent on which regime is ruling the country.

The following variables from the surveys have been used. The dependent variable from both WVS Georgia 1996 and WVS Georgia 2009 is trust in government. It is originally coded from the highest trust (1) to the lowest trust (2). To make interpretation intuitive, it is re-coded in a reverse way. The independent variable from both WVS Georgia 1996 and 2009 is individual belief about whether homosexuality is justified. It is originally coded from never (1) to always (10). To make interpretation intuitive, it is re-coded in a reverse way. Six variables- religiosity, income, education level, urban, sex, and age are also controlled for. All these variables are coded intuitively.

Individual rate of government and prime minister is used to measure dependent variables from NDI Public Attitudes Georgia April 2015, NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2019, and NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2022(n=2104). The dependent variables are coded from negative rate to positive rate to make interpretation intuitive. The independent variables from these three surveys are individual belief about whether it is important to protect rights of sexual minorities. It is originally coded from 1(not important at all) to 5(very important). To make interpretation intuitive, it is re-coded in a reverse way. Several control variables including religiosity, education, urban, sex, and age are used as well. All surveys and variables are selected based on data and survey question availability.

Results and Analysis

I present the results of generalized linear models with robust standard errors and clustered states in this section. All results are given with 95 percent confidence interval. Table 3.1 demonstrates the factors that influence state repression of sexual minorities. It shows that countries with lower global acceptance index of homosexuality are more likely to repress sexual minorities. All political regimes need to attain legitimacy and therefore involve in legitimation process based on various legitimacy narratives. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes the part of these narrative when public is hostile to homosexuality. I also find significant results for two interaction terms. States with homophobic societies tend to repress LGBTQ+ people more when they lack rational-legal legitimacy and accountability compared to homophobic countries with higher level of rational-legal legitimacy and accountability. The lack of accountability and rational-legal legitimacy forces political leaders to seek alternative modes of legitimation and the persecution of sexual minorities becomes handy and less costly mainstream society strongly opposes homosexuality and gay rights.

Table 3.1 also demonstrates other factors that lead to the repression of sexual minorities. First, countries with more Muslim population are more likely to repress sexual minorities. Many people in dominantly Muslim populated countries interpret some verses from Islamic book of Quran forbidding homosexuality and view homosexual acts as “haram,” meaning forbidden and proscribed under Islamic rules. Some countries with higher Muslim population enforce Sharia law drawn from Islamic rules. Most surveys and reports demonstrate that Islamic societies are hostile to homosexuality and most of

countries with higher percentage of Muslim population have lower global acceptance index of homosexuality. Many leaders in these countries drive their legitimacy from repressing sexual minorities. For instance, political leaders in Egypt have committed egregious human rights violations against LGBTQ+ people since Muslim Brotherhood was overthrown by the military. Political regime in Egypt after a military coup against Muslim Brotherhood faced a legitimacy crisis and therefore chose to persecute sexual minorities to signal to the public that it was entitled to rule. Egypt is not alone. There are countless cases of repression of sexual minorities in Muslim populated countries. Homophobic policies constitute an essential component of legitimization in these countries.

Results also shows that former British colonies are more likely persecute sexual minorities. The Buggery Act, which was adopted by British Parliament during the rule of British King Henry VIII in 1533, was later imported to overseas when British Empire expanded to different continents. This act was enforced in British colonies as well and inherited when former colonies became independent. Most of countries criminalizing homosexuality are former British colonies, although some of these colonies rarely enforce laws against homosexual acts and others have recently moved to repeal this colonial legacy.

Table 3.1 also provides empirical support that wealthy nations are less likely to repress sexual minorities. Economic development, industrialization, and urbanization establishes an environment that becomes more accepting of homosexuality. This is also connected to a third factor: democracy. Most of wealthy countries are democratic as ample research has argued that development causes democracy.

Table 3.1 also present interesting results regarding the role of Interstate war on state repression of sexual minorities. When political regimes are in war, they attempt to generate

rally around the flag effect based on foreign enemy to increase their popularity and legitimacy and therefore might not need to repress sexual minorities in their legitimization process. While this initial understanding might provide some explanation why interstate war is associated with absence of repression of sexual minorities, a rigorous qualitative study is required to explore the possible relationship between these two factors.

Table 3.1: Factors Influencing State Repression against Sexual Minorities

	Dependent variable:				
	(1)	State Repression against Sexual Minorities			(5)
		(2)	(3)	(4)	
Global Acceptance Index	-0.752*** (0.069)	-0.469*** (0.068)	-0.422*** (0.053)	-0.237*** (0.052)	
Legitimacy Score	-0.042 (0.077)	-0.111* (0.066)			
Democracy Score		-0.028* (0.015)		0.011 (0.020)	-0.042*** (0.016)
Percentage of Muslim Population		0.008*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)	0.011*** (0.002)
Interstate War		-0.558*** (0.170)		-0.394** (0.161)	-0.855*** (0.225)
Civil War		-0.007 (0.143)		0.027 (0.130)	0.024 (0.154)
GDP Per Capita (log)		-0.143*** (0.048)		-0.117** (0.046)	-0.307*** (0.040)
Population(log)		0.073* (0.044)		0.062 (0.043)	0.037 (0.048)
Revolutionary Governments		0.233 (0.198)		0.164 (0.201)	-0.004 (0.310)
Women Empowerment Index		-0.963 (0.609)		-0.368 (0.583)	-0.874 (0.553)
Political Party Competition		-0.001 (0.003)		-0.001 (0.003)	-0.003 (0.003)
British Colony		0.839*** (0.143)		0.947*** (0.142)	0.893*** (0.149)
Political Terror Scale		0.040 (0.071)		0.013 (0.071)	0.193*** (0.073)
Global Acceptance Index: Legitimacy Score	0.057*** (0.016)	0.040*** (0.014)			
Voice and Accountability			-0.283 (0.207)	-0.255 (0.238)	
Global Acceptance Index: Voice and Accountability			-0.102*** (0.038)	-0.075** (0.037)	
Constant	5.114*** (0.423)	4.806*** (0.960)	4.467*** (0.259)	3.296*** (0.994)	4.347*** (0.839)
Observations	2,869	2,741	3,279	2,600	2,918
R2	0.661	0.787	0.663	0.795	0.728
Adjusted R2	0.661	0.786	0.662	0.794	0.727
Residual Std. Error	0.917 (df = 2865)	0.730 (df = 2726)	0.911 (df = 3275)	0.718 (df = 2585)	0.808 (df = 2906)

Note:

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

Next, I present predicted average repression of sexual minorities in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 across the lowest and highest values of global acceptance index of homosexuality and its interaction with legitimacy score and voice and accountability variables. Figure 3.2 demonstrates the predicted average state repression across the values of global acceptance index of homosexuality based on models 2 (left plot) and 4 of Table 3.1 (right plot). The plot on the left shows that the predicted average state repression of sexual minorities goes down from 3.7 to 1. The plot on the right illustrates that the mean state repression declines from 3.4 to 1.3. Both plots suggest that the rise of global acceptance index of homosexuality decreases the state repression of sexual minorities significantly.

Figure 3.2: Acceptance Index and State Repression in All Countries

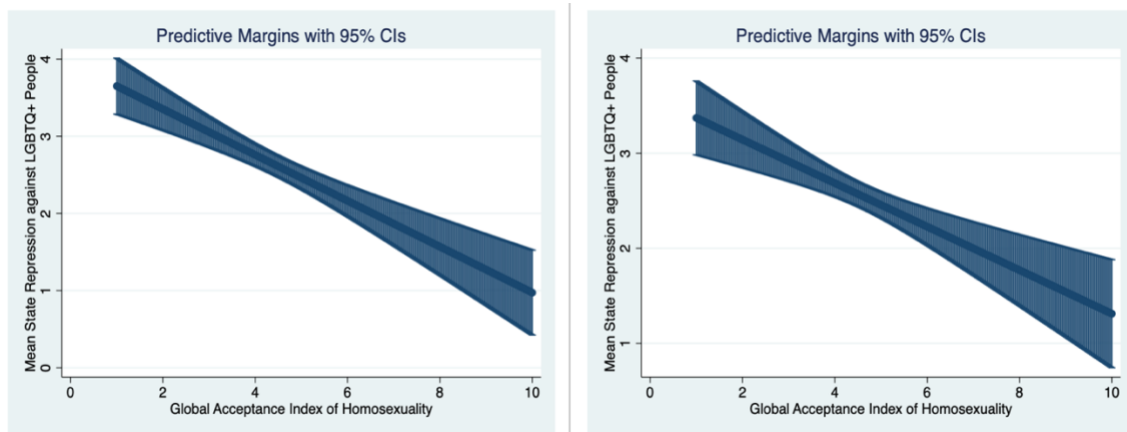
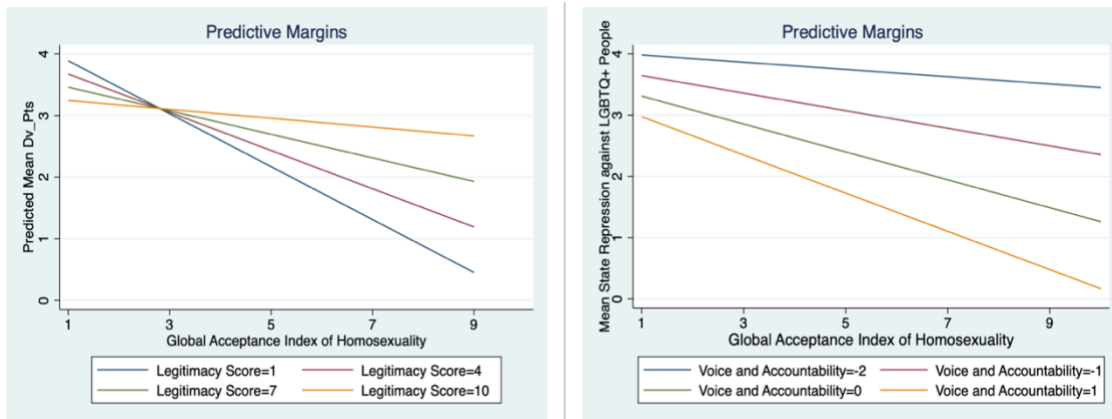


Figure 3.3 illustrates the predicted mean repression of sexual minorities across the values of interaction of global acceptance index of homosexuality with *legitimacy score* and *voice and accountability indicator*. The legitimacy score is measured in a decreasing order: a higher number means lower legitimacy. When legitimacy is low (Legitimacy score=10),

the relationship between homosexuality index and state repression becomes flatter. This result suggests that repression is more likely when public is hostile to homosexuality in countries where rational-legal legitimacy is low. By contrast, when legitimacy is high (Legitimacy score=1), the relationship between homosexuality index and state repression becomes steeper. Public acceptance of homosexuality leads to the decline of state repression in countries with higher rational-legal legitimacy than countries with lower rational-legal legitimacy. This result suggests that repression is more likely when public is hostile to homosexuality in countries where rational-legal legitimacy is low, compared countries where rational-legal legitimacy is high. The plot on the right of Figure 3.3 also shows similar results. Voice and accountability indicator is measured in an increasing order. At higher levels of voice and accountability (compared to its lower levels), public acceptance of homosexuality is more likely to lead to the decrease of state repression against sexual minorities. This result suggests that public hostility against sexual minorities causes more state repression in countries with lower voice and accountability compared to the countries with higher voice and accountability. Overall, Figure 3.3 suggests that repression of sexual minorities in homophobic societies is more likely when political regimes lack rational-legal legitimacy. Repression of sexual minorities in homophobic societies becomes necessary for political regimes to generate alternative modes of legitimacy when their rational-legal legitimacy is declining.

Figure 3.3: Repression, Legitimacy, Accountability, and Acceptance



Robustness Checks

The role of democratic institutions in mitigating state repression is the central challenge to the idea that countries repress to generate legitimacy. Previous literature has demonstrated that democratic institutions prevent state leaders from resorting to violence against citizens. Since public acceptance of homosexuality is higher in democratic states with strong political institutions, it is reasonable to believe that a third factor- democratic institutions rather public acceptance of homosexuality leads to the absence of state repression against sexual minorities. Although I control for democracy level, there is still a need to show the effect of public acceptance of homosexuality on state repression of sexual minorities in authoritarian settings. To address this endogeneity issue, I run all models against a subset of authoritarian countries where political institutions are less likely to prevent repression against sexual minorities. The results that are provided in Table 3.2 show that public acceptance of homosexuality is an important force for state repression of sexual minorities in authoritarian settings as well. Meanwhile, results also demonstrate that the interactions of legitimacy and accountability with public acceptance of homosexuality are no longer

significant. This is expected since authoritarian countries usually lack rational-legal legitimacy and therefore the effect of public acceptance on state repression against sexual minorities is equal across the lowest and highest values of state legitimacy.

Table 3.2: Factors Influencing State Repression against Sexual Minorities

	Dependent variable:				
	(1)	State Repression against Sexual Minorities			(5)
		(2)	(3)	(4)	
Global Acceptance Index	-0.738*** (0.209)	-0.385** (0.170)	-0.540*** (0.179)	-0.333** (0.139)	
Legitimacy Score	-0.183 (0.115)	-0.068 (0.109)			
Democracy Score		-0.017 (0.018)		0.016 (0.021)	-0.015 (0.017)
Percentage of Muslim Population		0.008*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.002)
Interstate War		-0.527 (0.335)		-0.358 (0.272)	-0.682** (0.303)
Civil War		-0.025 (0.147)		0.014 (0.138)	0.029 (0.151)
GDP Per Capita (log)		-0.014 (0.072)		-0.001 (0.054)	-0.059 (0.079)
Population(log)		0.161*** (0.057)		0.118** (0.051)	0.179*** (0.058)
Revolutionary Governments		0.083 (0.218)		0.071 (0.222)	-0.135 (0.227)
Women Empowerment Index		-0.522 (0.691)		-0.045 (0.620)	-0.592 (0.560)
Political Party Competition		-0.001 (0.004)		0.001 (0.003)	-0.0005 (0.003)
British Colony		0.848*** (0.171)		0.931*** (0.175)	0.729*** (0.168)
Political Terror Scale		0.016 (0.105)		0.022 (0.096)	0.053 (0.105)
Global Acceptance Index: Legitimacy Score	0.064** (0.026)	0.029 (0.024)			
Voice and Accountability			0.562 (0.611)	0.224 (0.465)	
Global Acceptance Index: Voice and Accountability			-0.243 (0.157)	-0.176 (0.122)	
Constant	5.987*** (0.905)	1.913 (1.532)	5.295*** (0.722)	1.733 (1.246)	0.608 (0.924)
Observations	1,391	1,349	1,308	1,272	1,498
R2	0.168	0.512	0.217	0.538	0.463
Adjusted R2	0.166	0.507	0.215	0.533	0.459
Residual Std. Error	0.943 (df = 1387)	0.729 (df = 1334)	0.916 (df = 1304)	0.713 (df = 1257)	0.741 (df = 1486)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Second, I examine the relationship between public acceptance of homosexuality and state repression in democratic countries as well. Table 3.3 demonstrates that results are still significant, which suggest that political institutions in democratic countries might fail to protect sexual minorities against state repression when public is hostile to homosexuality.

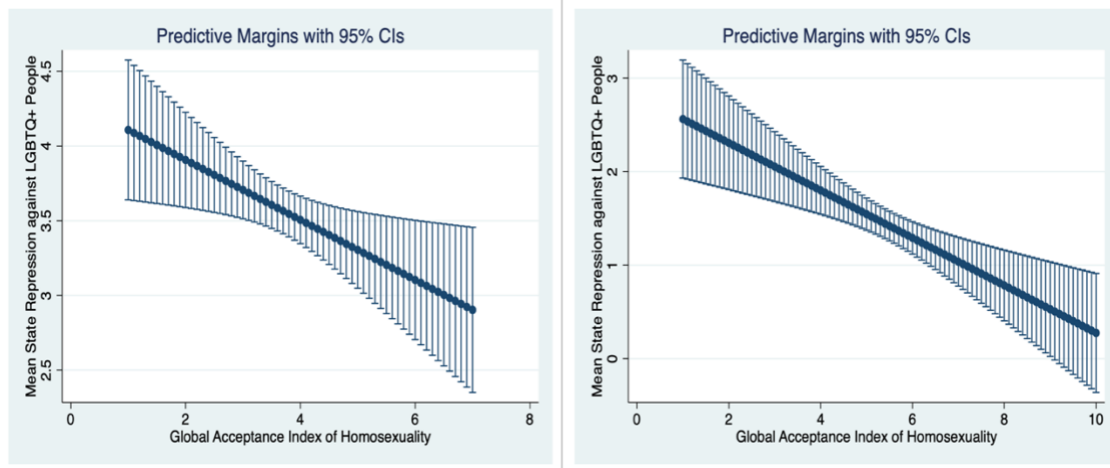
Table 3.3: Factors Influencing State Repression against Sexual Minorities

	Dependent variable:				
	(1)	State Repression against Sexual Minorities			(5)
		(2)	(3)	(4)	
Global Acceptance Index	-0.506*** (0.066)	-0.225** (0.089)	-0.505*** (0.094)	-0.293*** (0.103)	
Legitimacy Score	0.338*** (0.106)	0.102 (0.116)			
Democracy Score		-0.075 (0.081)		-0.076 (0.084)	-0.108 (0.083)
Percentage of Muslim Population		0.006* (0.003)		0.006* (0.003)	0.014*** (0.003)
Interstate War		-0.298 (0.238)		-0.291 (0.247)	-0.330 (0.243)
Civil War		-0.042 (0.228)		-0.029 (0.218)	-0.188 (0.232)
GDP Per Capita (log)		-0.298*** (0.076)		-0.307*** (0.092)	-0.434*** (0.069)
Population(log)		0.007 (0.063)		0.016 (0.061)	0.004 (0.067)
Revolutionary Governments		0.076 (0.233)		0.102 (0.237)	0.171 (0.258)
Women Empowerment Index		-2.700** (1.069)		-2.655** (1.102)	-2.062** (0.974)
Political Party Competition		-0.007 (0.005)		-0.008 (0.005)	-0.009 (0.006)
British Colony		0.607*** (0.211)		0.650*** (0.233)	0.751*** (0.225)
Political Terror Scale		-0.007 (0.093)		0.010 (0.094)	0.062 (0.096)
Global Acceptance Index: Legitimacy Score	-0.018 (0.022)	-0.012 (0.023)			
Voice and Accountability			-1.889*** (0.430)	-0.479 (0.403)	
Global Acceptance Index: Voice and Accountability			0.156** (0.075)	0.075 (0.070)	
Constant	3.564*** (0.437)	8.348*** (1.357)	4.746*** (0.444)	8.757*** (1.626)	8.205*** (1.160)
Observations	1,433	1,392	1,365	1,328	1,420
R2	0.682	0.776	0.670	0.777	0.748
Adjusted R2	0.682	0.774	0.669	0.775	0.746
Residual Std. Error	0.761 (df = 1429)	0.643 (df = 1377)	0.780 (df = 1361)	0.646 (df = 1313)	0.680 (df = 1408)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I also plot the predicted mean of state repression against sexual minorities across the values of global acceptance index of homosexuality in authoritarian and democratic countries separately. Figure 3.4 demonstrates that state repression of LGBTQ+ people is less likely in countries with higher level of public acceptance of homosexuality.

Figure 3.4: Acceptance and Repression in Autocracies (left plot) and Democracies (right plot)



Next, I examine potential relationship between trust in government and public opposition against homosexuality. Five surveys are analyzed from Georgia in different years: 1996, 2009, 2015, 2019, and 2022. Georgia is selected as a case study because it has overall a homophobic society. The average global acceptance rate within the Georgian population during the period of 2000-2020 is 3. This rate has gone below 3 during in recent years.

Georgia is also selected as a case-study because there are variations in governmental stigmatization of LGBTQ+ rights over years. While gay rights were not part of major political debates in the country during the 1990s, the protection of these rights became important issue for the Saakashvili government’s Euro-Atlantic integration during the 2000s. President Saakashvili developed Georgia’s pro-Western orientation, arguing that it is “not a new path for Georgia but rather a return to our European home and our European vocation—which is deeply enshrined in our national identity and history” (Saakashvili, 2007). Euro-Atlantic integration was perceived as “an external affirmation of

Georgia's European identity" (Gvalia et.al, 2013, p. 116). President Saakashvili adopted a rhetorically demonstrated his willingness to establish better conditions for LGBTQ+ community. He targeted patriarchal values, arrested clerical figures, and castigated clerical leaders in provoking anti-gay rallies in Tbilisi. The Saakashvili government's rhetorical attempts to improve gay rights are connected to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. President Saakashvili aimed to gain international legitimacy and recognition (Civil.ge 2013).

However, Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration plan started to lose its salience after Saakashvili left the office in 2013. Conservative and radical pro-Russian forces gained prominence in the following years. The Georgian society became polarized, sprouting cultural clashes, which have been posing "a serious obstacle to the country's stated ambitions to build democratic institutions and to forge closer ties with the European Union and the United States" (Gegeshidze and De Waal, 2021). Conservative forces and radical groups have called for the protection of traditional values. Georgian Orthodox Church has been vocal about "Georgian" values and expressed deep concerns regarding the erosion of these values. Georgian has lagged its progress in Euro-Atlantic integration. The EU Commission therefore did not recommend Georgia to be a candidate for the EU. Several pro-Western movements such as "Home, to Europe" and "Shame" have been mobilizing Georgians to press the government to make reforms and meet preconditions to be an EU candidate. Pro-Western Georgians believed that "anti-Western rhetoric of the government" has been an essential reason why the EU Commission refused to issue a recommendation to recognize Georgia as an EU candidate (Jamnews 2022).

In light of these political processes, the government has been opened more room for the violence against the LGBTQ+ community members. Alt-info, a right-wing group, has been expanding its activities in the country. The group members have adopted illiberal values “drawn from religious conservative ideas” (Gabritchidze 2022). They have actively organized rallies against March for Dignity where LGBTQ+ has faced violence and stigmatization. Georgian police have been reluctant to neutralize these anti-queer rallies and protect LGBTQ+ people. The conservative forces have also accused the US embassy of “moral occupation” of Georgia (cited in Gigitashvili 2021). Newly established Conservative Movement have been championing for the traditional values and strongly opposing LGBTQ+ rights (Gabritchidze 2022). Forces behind the Movement has asserted that Western “import” of homosexuality erodes traditional values (Human Rights Watch 2018).

Thus, governmental treatment of LGBTQ+ rights has varied from time to time in Georgia, making the country an excellent case to examine the relationship between trust in government and public opposition to homosexuality. Table 3.4 demonstrates when political leaders stigmatize sexual minorities, pronounce traditional values over “alien” homosexuality, they tend to obtain the support of those who believe that homosexuality is not justified and that rights of sexual minorities should not be protected. Models 1 and 2 demonstrate results from WVS Georgia 1996 when homosexuality has not been politicized in Georgia relative to 21st century. The results suggest that there is no association between trust in government and public opposition to homosexuality.

However, a relationship appears to emerge between support for the government and public opinion about homosexuality during President Saakashvili. Models 3 and 4 present

the results from WVS Georgia 2009 when Saakashvili was the Georgian president. The results suggest those who believe that homosexuality is not justified tend to have less trust in the government. This association could be linked to President Saakashvili's attempts to target patriarchal values. For instance, the arrest of Father Basili during his presidency was used to mobilize Georgians against him. His political party United National Movement lost to the opposition party Georgian Dream in the 2012 Georgian parliamentary elections (MacFarlane, 2015). Georgian Dream mobilized dominantly conservative and church-going Georgians against changes brought by President Saakashvili, who threatened patriarchal and traditional values.

Once Georgian Dream came to power, it adopted policies to protect patriarchal values. Many prisoners were released, and conservative forces gained momentum. For instance, one former prisoner, Giorgi Gabedava, became the primary organizer of anti-gay rally where Father Basili participated. Patriarch Ilia II, Georgian Orthodox Church's leader denounced homosexuality as "an anomaly and disease" (cited in Antelava, 2013). Models 5-6, 7-8, and 9-10 demonstrate results from 2015, 2019, and 2022 respectively. They suggest that individuals who are against rights of sexual minorities tend to rate the performance of Georgian Prime Minister positively. By contrast, individuals who believe that it is important to protect gay rights rate the performance of Georgian Prime Minister negatively. Results are still significant after controlling for religiosity. Since different individuals were prime ministers during these three different years, the association between support for prime minister and opposition to rights of sexual minorities is linked to Georgian Dream's support for patriarchal and traditional values and expanding the space for conservative forces in the country.

Table 3.4: Factors Influencing Trust in Government

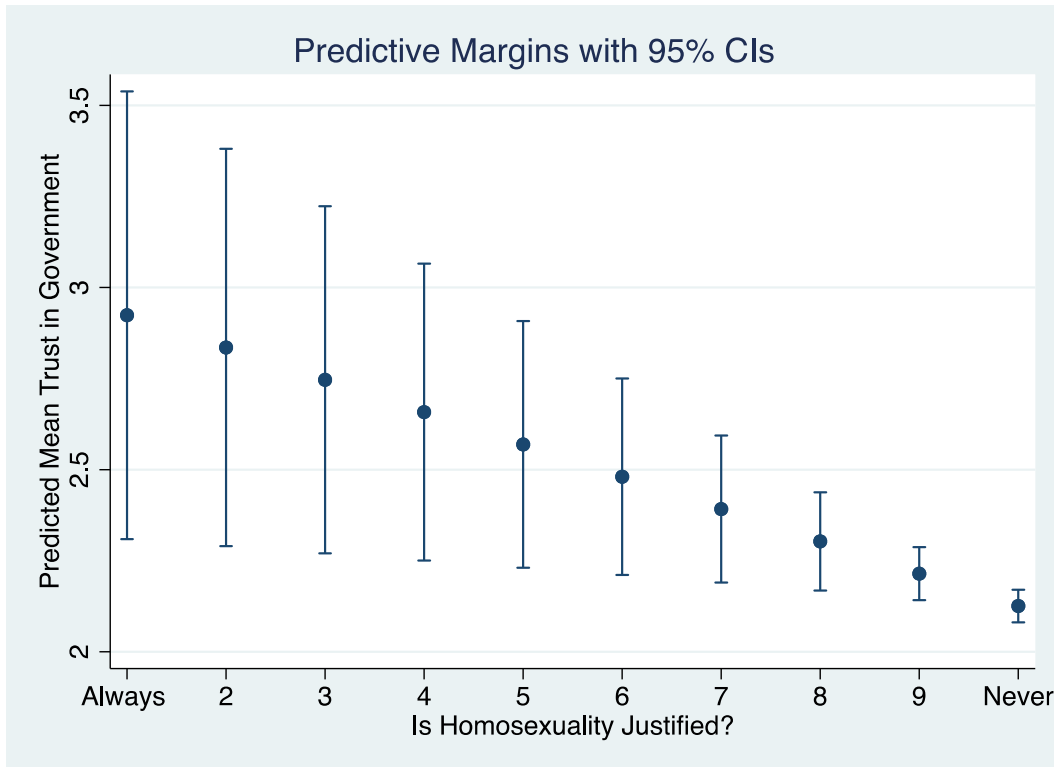
	Dependent variable:									
	Trust in Government				Rate Performance of Prime Minister					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Unjustified Homosexuality	0.005 (0.015)	-0.004 (0.015)	-0.063* (0.035)	-0.089** (0.035)						
Religiosity		0.008 (0.014)		0.026* (0.015)						0.091*** (0.017)
Income		0.008 (0.015)		0.019 (0.013)		-0.041*** (0.011)		-0.009 (0.016)		
Education		-0.004 (0.012)		0.006 (0.013)		0.019 (0.015)		0.043* (0.023)		-0.018 (0.022)
Urban		-0.196*** (0.044)		-0.049*** (0.008)		-0.114*** (0.038)		-0.064 (0.052)		-0.018 (0.024)
Gender		-0.008 (0.043)		-0.062 (0.044)		-0.005 (0.032)		0.178*** (0.054)		0.068 (0.052)
Age		0.006*** (0.001)		0.006*** (0.001)		0.062*** (0.020)		-0.063* (0.033)		0.095*** (0.034)
Against LGBTQ+ Rights					0.034*** (0.012)	0.044*** (0.014)	0.008 (0.017)	0.048** (0.021)	0.123*** (0.018)	0.113*** (0.019)
Constant	2.303*** (0.139)	2.249*** (0.204)	2.754*** (0.347)	2.830*** (0.381)	2.761*** (0.044)	2.796*** (0.122)	2.735*** (0.065)	2.312*** (0.179)	2.560*** (0.064)	2.068*** (0.161)
Observations	1,908	1,852	1,363	1,338	3,496	2,732	1,662	1,277	1,837	1,830
Log Likelihood	-2,547.216	-2,453.260	-1,666.543	-1,610.819	-4,235.076	-3,278.999	-2,106.012	-1,629.497	-2,738.096	-2,709.739
Akaike Inf. Crit.	5,098.432	4,922.521	3,337.087	3,237.637	8,474.152	6,571.998	4,216.025	3,272.994	5,480.192	5,433.477

Note: Models 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, and 9 -10 illustrate results from WVS Georgia 1996, WVS Georgia 2009, NDI Public Attitudes Georgia April 2015, NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2019, and NDI Public Attitudes Georgia July 2022 respectively. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

I also plot predicted mean trust in government given the highest and lowest values of public opposition to homosexuality. All predicted averages are based on full models where control variables are hold in their means. Figure 3.5 demonstrates the predicted mean trust in government given whether individuals believe homosexuality is justified based on the

World Values (Model 4 of Table 3.4). Those who believe that homosexuality is always justified tend to have higher trust in the Saakashvili government compared to those who believe that homosexuality is never justified.

Figure 3.5: Trust in Government and Public Opposition to Homosexuality, 2009



Figures 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8 demonstrate predicted mean rate of government performance given lowest and highest support for rights of sexual minorities. They all demonstrate that Those who believe that it is not important to protect the rights of sexual minorities tend to rate the government performance positively compared to those who think that the protection of rights of sexual minorities is not important.

Figure 3.6: Rate of Government and Public Opposition to LGBTQ+ Rights, 2015

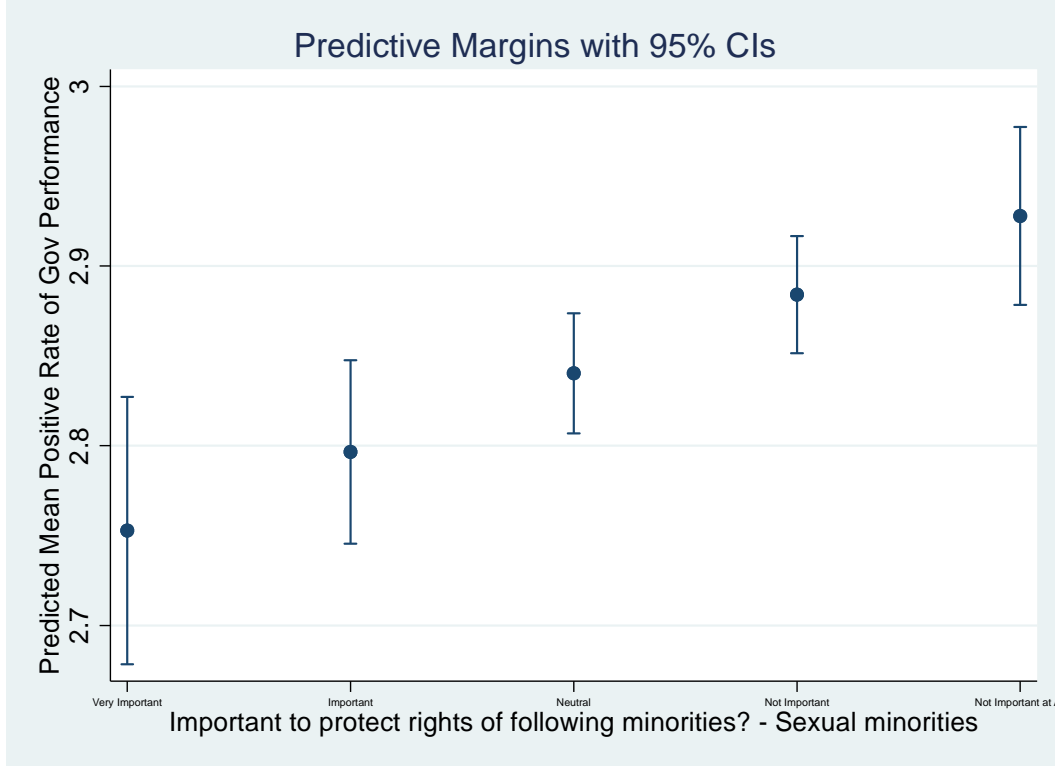


Figure 3.7: Rate of Government and Public Opposition to LGBTQ+ Rights, 2019

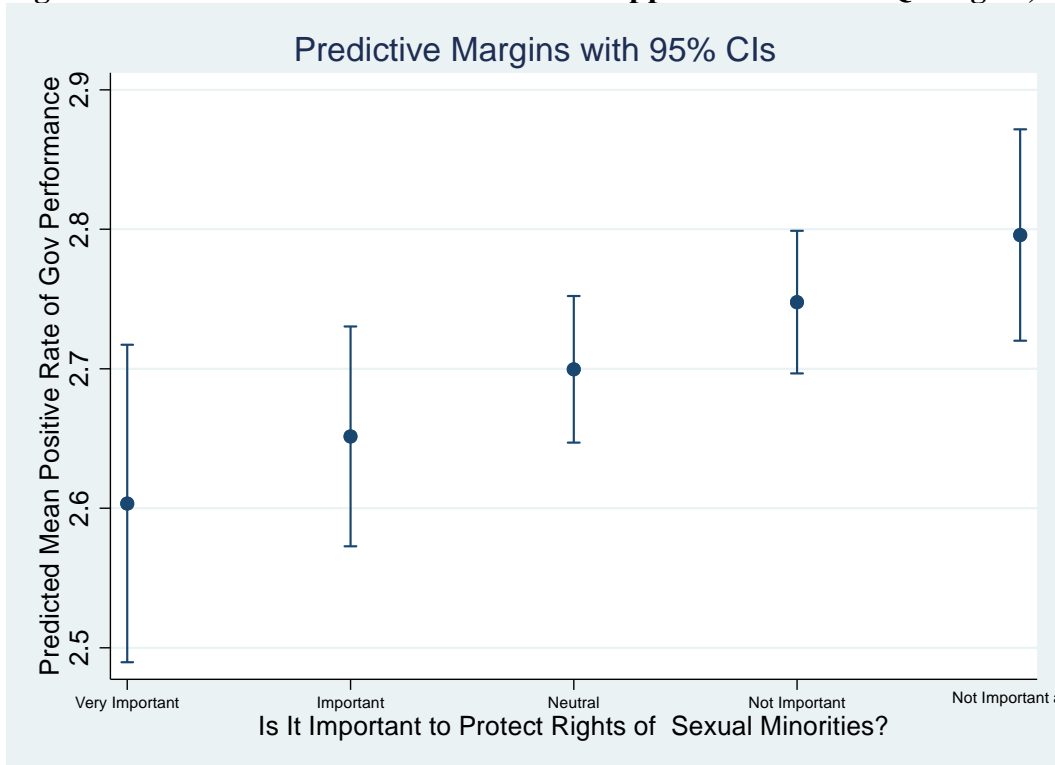
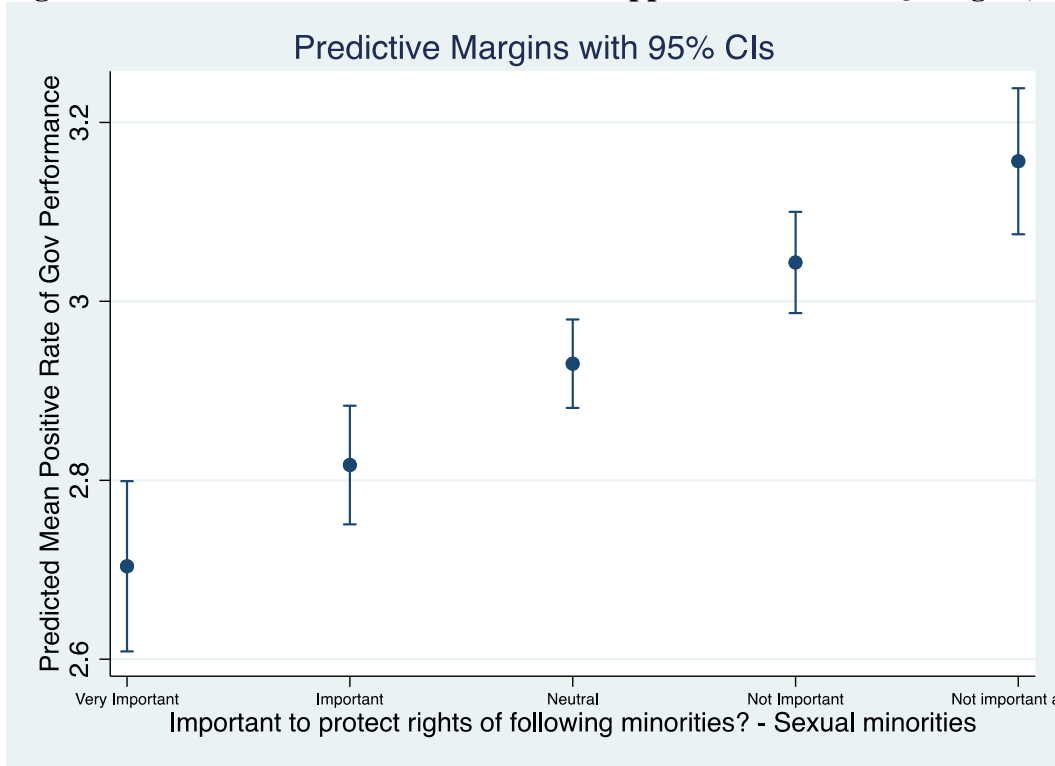


Figure 3.8: Rate of Government and Public Opposition to LGBTQ+ Rights, 2022



While these results from Georgia do not explicitly conform that the homophobic governmental policies lead to public support for the government in homophobic societies because they are based on survey data, they provide strong suggestions that there is an association between trust in government and public opposition against gay rights.

Overall, the results demonstrate that public acceptance of homosexuality is very important for the improvement of gay rights. Cultural values, sexuality norms, and traditional family play a significant role in state repression of sexual minorities. Political leaders incorporate homophobic elements into their legitimacy narratives when public is hostile to LGBTQ+ people. Political regimes need to generate legitimacy to prolong their survival. Legitimacy is essential for political stability. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes a useful technique for political leaders to present themselves as the protector of

traditional family values when there is strong societal stigmatization of LGBTQ+ people. Political regimes integrate their legitimacy narratives with homophobic elements to convince their constituents that they are entitled to rule, accomplishing voluntary complicity in homophobic societies. Oppressing sexual minorities in homophobic societies, particularly, becomes more likely when political regimes lack rational-legal legitimacy. The absence of rational-legal legitimacy forces political leaders to seek alternative modes of legitimacy relying on their persecution of sexual minorities in homophobic societies.

CHAPTER 4

WHY DO STATES REPRESS SEXUAL MINORITIES: DIVERSIONARY

HOMOPHOBIC NATIONALISM

Theoretical Framework

Why do some states with conservative societies repress sexual minorities while other conservative states don't? Studies demonstrate that political leaders in homophobic countries are more likely to repress sexual minorities relative to countries with a higher level of homosexuality acceptance. It is however puzzling why some homophobic countries persecute LGBTQ+ people more compared to other homophobic countries. I address this puzzle in this chapter and argue that political regimes in countries with homophobic societies tend to repress sexual minorities to divert public attention from domestic economic problems and generate public support. *Corruption, government ineffectiveness, and uneven economic development* sprout public resentment and discontent. Political regime acts to repress sexual minorities, implementing homophobic policies to divert public attention from poor economic conditions and discourage citizens from demanding for redistributive policies. The persecution of sexual minorities in homophobic societies helps generate a popular perception that it is entitled to rule, accomplishing voluntary public compliance. Political leaders usually incorporate homophobic elements to their nationalist narratives in traditional societies where national identity is fused with traditional family values and is based on heterosexuality. Instilling homophobic elements into nationalist diversionary tactics makes these tactics more

appealing to broader society where traditional family values and normative homosexuality is blended with national identity.

A nation is an imagined community where its members develop a strong sense of connection with their fellow nationals without personally knowing them and adopt characteristics and values associated with their nation, acting and thinking based on these characteristics (Anderson, 1991; Reicher & Hopkins, 2000). It is established in the literature that nationalism and sexuality are connected. Studies have contended that “sex and nation combine to produce notions, both real and imagined, of other nationalities’ sexual character and threat, and ideals of virility, fecundity, and respectability” (Pryke, 1998, p.529). In homophobic societies, national identity draws “upon familial imagery”, contributing to a close connection between normative heterosexuality and nationalist ideology (Wakefield et al., 2016). Historical research also demonstrates the modern conceptualizations of nation germinated an environment where heterosexuality was celebrated as the foundation of nation and homosexuality was denounced as a distortion, threatening the nation (Mosse, 1985). Heterosexualization of nation state aims to reinforce heteronationalism (Lazarus, 2011).

National identity building based on traditional values makes sexual minorities a “legitimate” target in conservative societies. For instance, Greenberg (2006, p.336) analyzed the relationship between homophobic violence and nationalism during the 2001 Belgrade gay pride in Serbia and argued that the violence happened at the “intersection of different modes of belonging, entitlement, action, and politics.” In homophobic societies where wider cultural beliefs reject homosexuality and traditional family has a national valorization, sexual minorities are perceived as “threatening the nation by undermining the

traditional family, failing to contribute to the reproduction of the nation, challenging national stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, and deviating from shared norms, especially those derived from religion.” (Mole, 2018)

It has been established in the literature that political leaders instill nationalist sentiments to divert public attention from poor economic performance and economic inequality. The previous research has found that “greater economic inequality prompts states to generate more nationalism as a diversion that discourages their citizens from recognizing economic inequality and mobilizing against it” (Solt, 2011, p.821). The rise of nationalist sentiments diverts public attention from poor economic performance for two reasons. First, nationalism masks economic inequality in a mainstream society. A nation is always perceived “as a deep horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 1991, p.7) irrespective of actual inequalities. The rejection of differences among members of a nation is central to the idea of nationalism, which is promoted to idealize shared communalities among its members while disguising differences among them (Renan, 1996, p.43). Second, redistribution becomes inappropriate and secondary to the issues with national significance. The claims for redistribution are viewed as “self-interested” and “narrow” and against uppermost duty of citizens before the nation when nationalist sentiments are elevated in a society (Hobsbawm, 1990, p.9; Tilly, 1998, p.171).

A nationalist diversionary becomes more appealing and easier in homophobic societies where heterosexuality and national identity are connected and therefore where it becomes easier for political leaders generate nationalism myth incorporating homophobic elements. This homophobic nationalism is “a state project that propagates a fear of homosexuality among its citizenry, in order to cohere a sense of patriotism and bolster

belief in the nation's competence and independence" (Rodriguez, 2017, p.394). Abundant empirical evidence around the world demonstrates that political leaders in homophobic societies have incorporated the heterosexualism and traditional-family values narratives into their diversionary nationalism to defuse public resentment associated with economic inequality and poor economic performance. For instance, "Putin's construction of homosexuality as both non-traditional and thereby non-Russian—in tandem with his rigorous defense of traditional values as the foundation of the Russian nation's greatness" has served to instill nationalistic sentiments within wider Russian society to divert public attention from economic problems in the second decade of 21st century (Mole, 2018; Sleptcov, 2018). Amid student protests in Turkey, President Erdogan addressed Turkish nation accusing gay activists of eroding "national and spiritual values" and praising Turkish youth for not being "LGBT youth" but holding "glorious history of this nation." He also made the following statement: "We will carry our young people to the future, not as the LGBT youth, but as the youth that existed in our nation's glorious past" (cited in BBC, 2021). The recent economic crisis in Turkey has caused social unrest, leading political leader to generate nationalist sentiments to divert public attention from poor economic performance. In a recent backlash against LGBTQ+ rights in Poland, sexual minorities were portrayed as "existing outside of and against the Polish nation", antithetical to "true Polishness", and "external threats to the Polish nation" even though they are ethnically Polish (Bratcher, 2021). The ruling nationalist party in Poland has targeted sexual minorities mainly since 2019 when the party chief faced corruption allegations and its popularity was declining (Plucinska & Wlodarczak-Semczuk 2019). In Tanzania, President John Pombe Magafuli targeted sexual minorities to shift attention from

corruption and social ills, asserting that homosexuality is “un-African.” Political leaders in Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe have made similar statements when they faced economic crisis (Gloppen & Rakner 2019).

The persecution of the LGBTQ+ people serves to nationalist diversionary in three ways. First, political leaders attempt to instill nationalist sentiments and unite people around a national identity against an out-group. Defining national identity necessitates not only circumscribing what national identity entails, but also what it does not. The connection between sexuality and nationalism plays an important role to identify who belongs to the nation and who does not (van den Berge et al., 2014). Social identity theory demonstrates that individuals tend to socially categorize themselves into social groups and define their social identity. Once they place themselves and others into social categorizations and identify themselves with a national community, they socially compare their in-group against an out-group. The research demonstrates that people tend to view themselves positively and develop prejudgments about the out-group when they socially compare their in-group against the out-group (Tajfel & Turner 1982). In the in-group and out-group comparison, sexual minorities are labelled “alien” and “imported”. Stressing on national identity based on heterosexuality and repressing and alienating sexual minorities as an out-group contributes to the rise of positive national feelings and sentiments. It becomes easier for political leaders to elevate nationalistic sentiments and successfully employ diversionary tactics when they incorporate homophobic elements.

Second, political leaders also obtain support of important conservative and religious institutions, which have more say in domestic politics. Clerical leaders have high moral authority in conservative societies. Many religious organizations have played a

critical role in national identity formation and nation building. Religious organizations are usually popular in homophobic societies. States collaborate with religious institutions and clerical leaders to sustain control over population. Signaling these influential leaders and organizations enable political leaders to obtain their support in promoting diversionary homophobic nationalism.

Third, diversionary homophobic nationalism also has international dimension. Political regimes instigate crackdowns on sexual minorities to gain international attention from mainly Western powers, whose responses are usually reactive under pressures from consistent international media reporting and global gay rights movements and organizations. Leaders in Western countries usually issue condemnations, threaten to impose sanctions, or cut previously agreed aid. Political leaders in homophobic societies frame these statements from Western countries as threats to sovereignty and national pride and cultural imperialism for domestic audience to raise nationalistic sentiments. will not bow the West. While diversionary war or conflict is costly, starting some limited confrontations with Western powers by repressing sexual minorities helps states to divert public attention from economic inequality, generating voluntary compliance. The government presents the persecution of sexual minorities as the protection of national pride and honor in homophobic societies. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes part of nationalist diversionary in states with lower societal acceptance of homosexuality. Thus, diversionary homophobic nationalism is effective in homophobic societies.

Three important measures demonstrate a country has a poor economic performance, which might lead to public unrest and dissent behavior. First, most economists have found that corruption slows down economic growth and reduces

investment (Mauro, 1995, 1997a, 1997b). A corruption-based system serves to deliver public services to those who pay bribes, limiting these services to those who do not and therefore establishing inferior and unfair distribution of public services. For instance, individuals are denied public health and education services unless they pay a certain amount of bribery. A corruptive system also opens room for service providers to effectively disregard established standards and provide inferior goods and services which weaken economy. Ordinary citizens usually suffer when public infrastructure projects implemented service providers are below minimum standards. A corruption-based system allows these providers to pay bribes and gain governmental permission to implement public infrastructure projects (Seligson, 2002, p.410). Finally, and most importantly, corruption eliminates meritocracy. Bribery allows a small section of population to have access to governmental resources and hold important bureaucratic positions, allowing them to accomplish high-quality life standards, while the rest of population is left to poverty and poor economic conditions. International organizations have also reported that “corruption violates the public trust and corrodes social capital... and can slowly erode political legitimacy” (World Bank, 1997, p.102-104). Corruption weakens state legitimacy, eroding public trust in political institutions. While some classic studies stressed that corruption might be “functional to the maintenance of a political system” (Huntington, 1968, p.64), the post-cold war scholarship demonstrates that corruption erodes public support for political regimes, making social unrest more likely. Previous studies have found that income inequality and poverty are higher in countries with higher level of corruption (Gupta et al., 1998). Corruption “causes declines in legitimacy perception”, eroding confidence in the incumbent government (Seligson, 2002, p.424). Corruption serves a

small portion of a population, undermining a perception of representatives of the government to the broader society. The rise of economic inequality and decline of confidence in political institutions germinate social unrest and public resentment. Political leaders act to repress sexual minorities to divert public attention from these problems.

H1: States with higher level of corruption are more likely to repress sexual minorities.

While public perception about corruption and mass civil disobedience undermines popular legitimacy of political regimes, questioning the representativeness and openness of the government to the public, poor economic performance causes declines in *specific legitimacy*. Conceptualized by Easton (1975), as “quid pro quo for the fulfilment of demands”, specific legitimacy has been referred as *performance legitimacy*, meaning that political regimes make their claims to legitimacy based on their economic performance in delivering public services and provide good life standards. Specific legitimacy has been contrasted against diffuse support, which means what political regimes are in actuality or what they represent, and which is “the general meaning it has for a person-not what it does” (Easton, 1975, p.444). While diffuse support tends to be long-term oriented, specific legitimacy is short lived contingent on economic performance. Previous studies have argued that the distinction between specific support and diffuse support “captures the concept of legitimation most appropriately” (Gerschewski, 2013, p.20). The performance-based legitimacy has particularly gained an increased scholarly attention recently (Hechter, 2009; Zhao, 2009; von Soest & Grauvogel, 2017). Meanwhile, some studies have contended that legitimacy entails more than a public compliance just because of economic

performance. Nevertheless, there is a scholarly consensus that ineffective governance and poor governmental performance can erode political legitimacy and produce social unrest (Lipset, 1959; Linz, 1978). Political regimes around the world have made claims to legitimacy based on their economic performance. Regimes with the ability to generate high quality public services and raise life standards have been celebrated as legitimate (Zhu, 2011). By contrast, economic crisis undermines political legitimacy. For instance, the Covid-19 pandemic led to economic crisis in some countries, questioning their performance legitimacy (Rolland, 2020). Political regimes in countries with homophobic societies tend to repress sexual minorities to divert public attention from poor economic performance and governance. When political regimes fail to deliver necessary public goods, they resort to violence against LGBTQ+ people to generate regime support within broader society and divert public attention from ineffective governance and failure to deliver public goods.

H2: States with government ineffectiveness and failure to deliver public goods are more likely to persecute sexual minorities.

In addition to poor economic performance, uneven economic development also weakens regime support and foster civil disobedience. Economic inequalities within a country regardless of overall economic performance, the rural-urban divide, and large income gap between economic groups sprout public resentment. Uneven access to economic resources, absence of equal economic opportunities, and accumulation of major resources in hands of very few germinate a negative public perception about the government. To avert public

discontent from uneven economic development, regimes politicize sexual minorities and consistently target LGBTQ+ community members to signal to the broader population that the government serves to public interests. The persecution of the sexual minorities is a political strategy for leader to reassert their credentials (Hady, 2019).

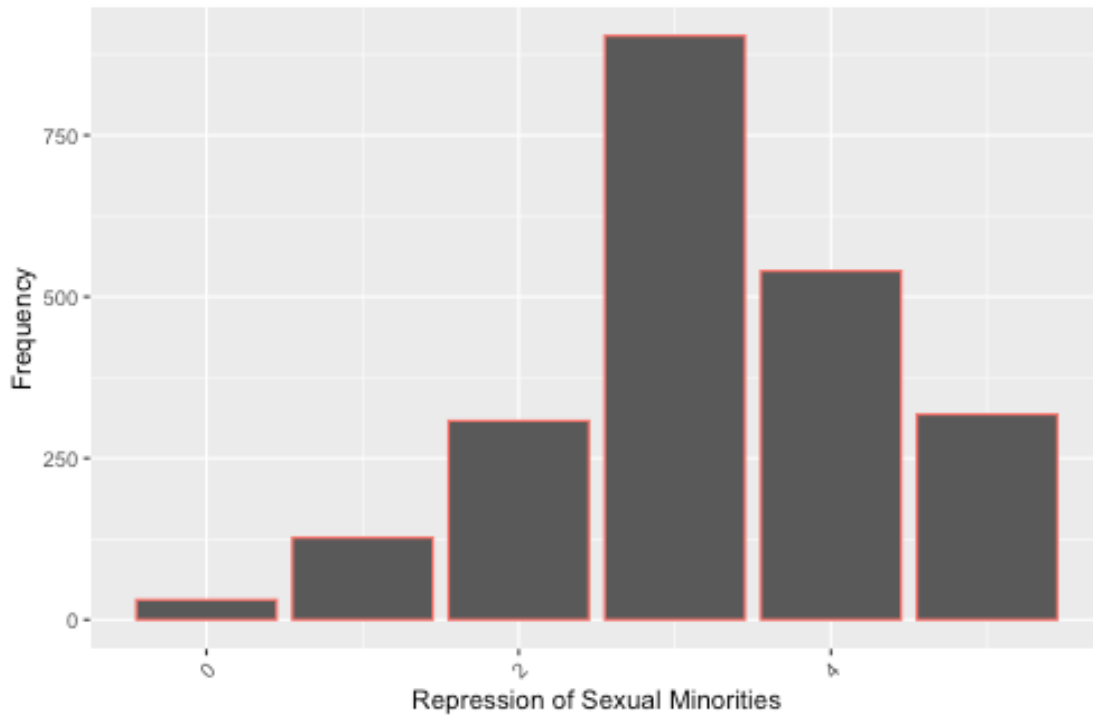
H3: States with uneven economic development are more likely to persecute sexual minorities.

Data and Methods

Data and Dependent Variable: I adopted *political terror scale* methodology to collect data about state repression against sexual minorities. Countries with advanced LGBTQ+ rights are coded as “0”. These are established democracies where gay rights are largely recognized and protected. Most of these states also consider accepting or already approved the same-sex marriage. Countries where political leaders don’t repress LGBTQ+ people but have sometimes failed to protect gay rights have been coded as “1”. Countries with a limited repression against sexual minorities and a large scale of non-protections of LGBTQ+ rights are coded as “2”. Countries where homosexuality is illegal and law enforcement repress sexual minorities occasionally is coded as “3”. These are the countries that usually refrain from widespread repression against sexual minorities. Although homosexuality is illegal in these countries, it is rarely enforced. Nevertheless, *occasional* LGBTQ+ repression remains. Countries with *widespread* repression against sexual minorities are coded as “4”. LGBTQ+ people regularly face arrest and imprisonment.

Political leaders publicly target sexual minorities in these countries. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes part of official state policy. Finally, countries with *systemic* state repression against sexual minorities are coded as “5”. The data are from 2000-2020 and state-year format. Figure 4. 1 below demonstrates the distribution of the dependent variable.

Figure 4. 1: Repression against Sexual Minorities in Conservative Societies



Independent Variables: *Corruption:* three measures of corruption are used. These measures are Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, World Bank’s Worldwide Governance’s control of corruption, and Bayesian Corruption Indicator. The first and second measures are coded in a decreasing order. Lower numbers mean higher

levels of corruption. The third measure is coded in an increasing order. Higher numbers mean higher levels of corruption. The first measure is used in major analysis. The last two measures are used for robustness checks as alternative measures of *corruption* independent variable. *Public services* variable is taken from Fragile State Index. Higher numbers mean the government is unable to provide public services. *Uneven Economic Development* is also taken from Fragile State Index and higher numbers mean higher uneven economic development. *Government Effectiveness* from World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators is used as a robustness check for governmental delivery of public services. Higher numbers mean more government effectiveness in delivering services.

Control variables: I also control for the following variables, which have been found to cause state repression. First, states involved in both interstate and civil war have tended to resort to repressive measures. I use binary *civil war* and *interstate war* variables from the *Correlates of War* dataset to control for the likelihood that the sexual minorities are repressed because of interstate and civil war. Second, sexual minorities might face persecution in countries with a large scale of human rights abuses. Some states frequently repress their citizens regardless of whether they are sexual minorities or not. I use *political terror scale* to control for this possibility. Third, two-third of countries where homosexuality is illegal are former British colonies. They have inherited laws from British colonial period to criminalize homosexuality. I use a binary variable indicating whether a given country is a *former British colony*. Fourth, studies have contended that countries with large Muslim populations are more likely to repress sexual minorities. I control for the *percentage of Muslim population* in a given country in a certain year. I also control for *polity score*, *women empowerment*, and *political party competition*. These democratic

indicators reduce the likelihood of repression of sexual minorities. Many studies have demonstrated that democratic countries are less likely to repress. Using World Bank data, *logged GPD* and *logged population* are also controlled for. *Global Acceptance Index* of homosexuality, developed by UCLA Williams Institute, is used to measure public acceptance of homosexuality. It is measured from “0” being lowest acceptability to “10” being highest acceptability. I control for this variable as well since it is found significant in previous chapter.

Models: I use generalized linear models to gauge the covariates of repression against sexual minorities. The results are adjusted by robust standard errors and clustered countries to eliminate autocorrelation since the data are based on state-year format. Dependent variable is measured as a categorical variable. However, parallel regression assumption is violated and therefore ordered logistic regression is less suitable to isolate the effect of global acceptance index of homosexuality on state repression of sexual minorities.

Results and Analysis

This section presents the results in 95 percent confidence interval. First, I demonstrate the regression results in Table 4.1 and then illustrate predicted mean of repression against sexual minorities across the lowest and highest levels of various independent variables. I also include some robustness checks. Consistent with three hypotheses, Table 4. 1 demonstrates that states with lower level of public services, uneven economic development, and higher levels of corruption are more likely to repress sexual minorities.

Meanwhile, global acceptance index, democracy score, percentage of Muslim population, British colony, and population also have effect on the repression of sexual minorities. Public acceptance of homosexuality plays a significant role in government repression of sexual minorities. Leaders repress sexual minorities in response to public expectations to boost their legitimacy and popularity. Studies have also found that democracy is a precondition for the progress over gay rights. However, this relationship is partly tautological since most democracy measurement entails respect for minority rights. Qualitative evidence suggests that homosexual acts are harshly punished in dominantly Muslim populated countries. Some provisions taken from Sharia law prohibits homosexuality and views homosexual acts unacceptable. Most of countries where homosexuality is criminalized are British colonies. Great Britain Empire banned homosexuality during the late medieval ages and the law criminalizing homosexuality was exported to colonies. While some colonies have been able to change the law, others still have laws forbidding homosexuality.

Table 4.1: Factors Influencing State Repression against Sexual Minorities

	Dependent variable:					
	State Repression against Sexual Minorities					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
TI: Corruption Perception Index	-0.029*** (0.007)	-0.019*** (0.006)				
FSI: Public Services			0.162*** (0.054)	0.163*** (0.054)		
FSI: Uneven Economic Development					0.273*** (0.058)	0.163*** (0.046)
Global Acceptance Index		-0.215*** (0.061)	-0.351*** (0.085)	-0.193*** (0.064)	-0.389*** (0.074)	-0.219*** (0.064)
Democracy Score		-0.035** (0.015)		-0.039** (0.015)		-0.036** (0.016)
Percentage of Muslim Population		0.008*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)
Interstate War		-0.564** (0.221)		-0.468* (0.283)		-0.389 (0.265)
Civil War		0.076 (0.131)		0.006 (0.151)		0.042 (0.147)
GDP Per Capita (log)		0.003 (0.050)		0.120 (0.075)		0.034 (0.058)
Population(log)		0.144*** (0.049)		0.157*** (0.053)		0.139*** (0.053)
Revolutionary Governments		0.011 (0.239)		-0.006 (0.243)		-0.024 (0.248)
Women Empowerment Index		-0.325 (0.609)		-0.128 (0.618)		-0.119 (0.607)
Political Party Competition		-0.003 (0.003)		-0.002 (0.003)		-0.002 (0.003)
British Colony		0.955*** (0.144)		0.798*** (0.155)		0.781*** (0.155)
Political Terror Scale		0.050 (0.063)		0.114* (0.066)		0.105 (0.064)
Constant	4.240*** (0.234)	1.984* (1.070)	3.461*** (0.573)	-1.287 (1.464)	2.780*** (0.499)	-0.269 (1.354)
Observations	1,878	1,527	1,484	1,247	1,484	1,247
R2	0.113	0.623	0.193	0.618	0.248	0.616
Adjusted R2	0.112	0.620	0.192	0.614	0.247	0.612
Residual Std. Error	1.085 (df = 1876)	0.718 (df = 1513)	1.033 (df = 1481)	0.727 (df = 1233)	0.997 (df = 1481)	0.729 (df = 1233)

Note:

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

Figure 4.2 shows the mean state repression against sexual minorities given lowest and highest values of Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index, which is coded from 4 to 100 in a direction of decreasing corruption perception. Figure 5 illustrates

that the mean state repression against sexual minorities rises from 3.8 to 2 as the level of cleanliness (opposite of corruption) increases from 4 to 100.

Figure 4.2: Repression and Corruption Perception Index

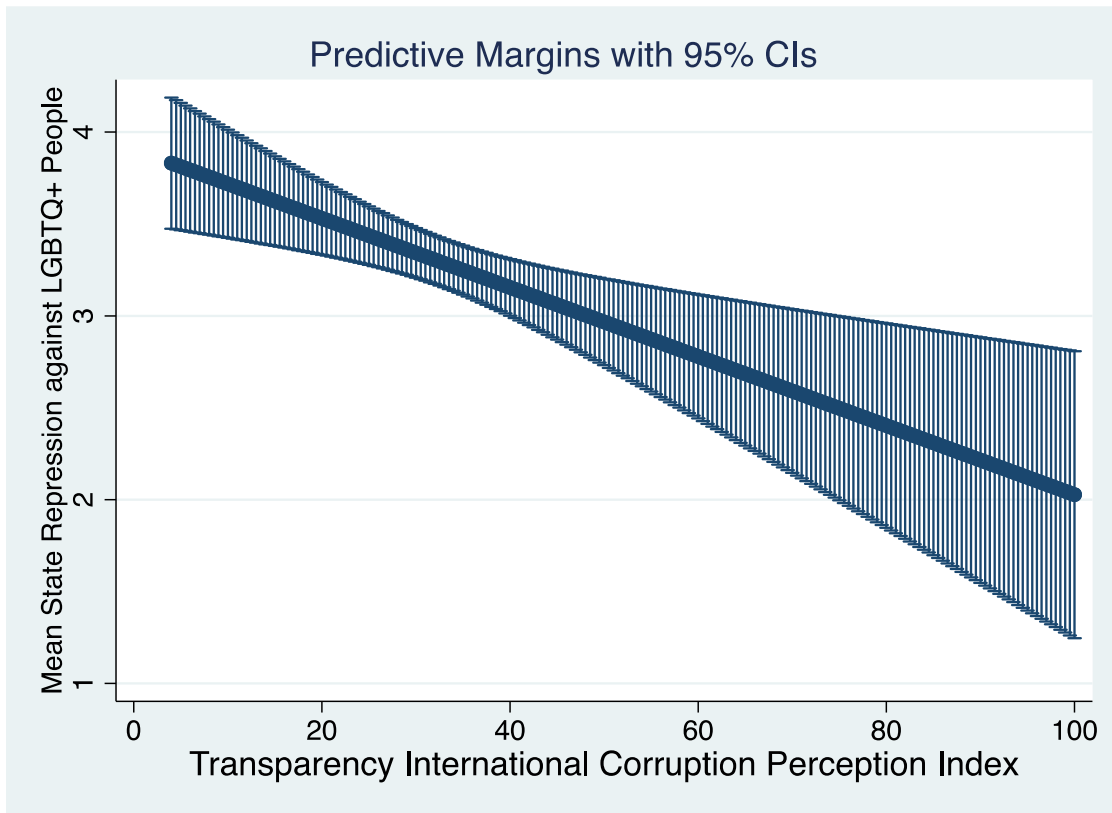


Figure 4.3 shows the mean state repression against sexual minorities given lowest and highest values of Fragile State Index's Public Service Indicator, which is coded from 0 to 10 a direction of declines effectiveness. The figure illustrates that the mean state repression against sexual minorities declines from 2.3 to 3.8 as the level of the government becomes less effective in delivering public services.

Figure 4.3: Repression and Public Services

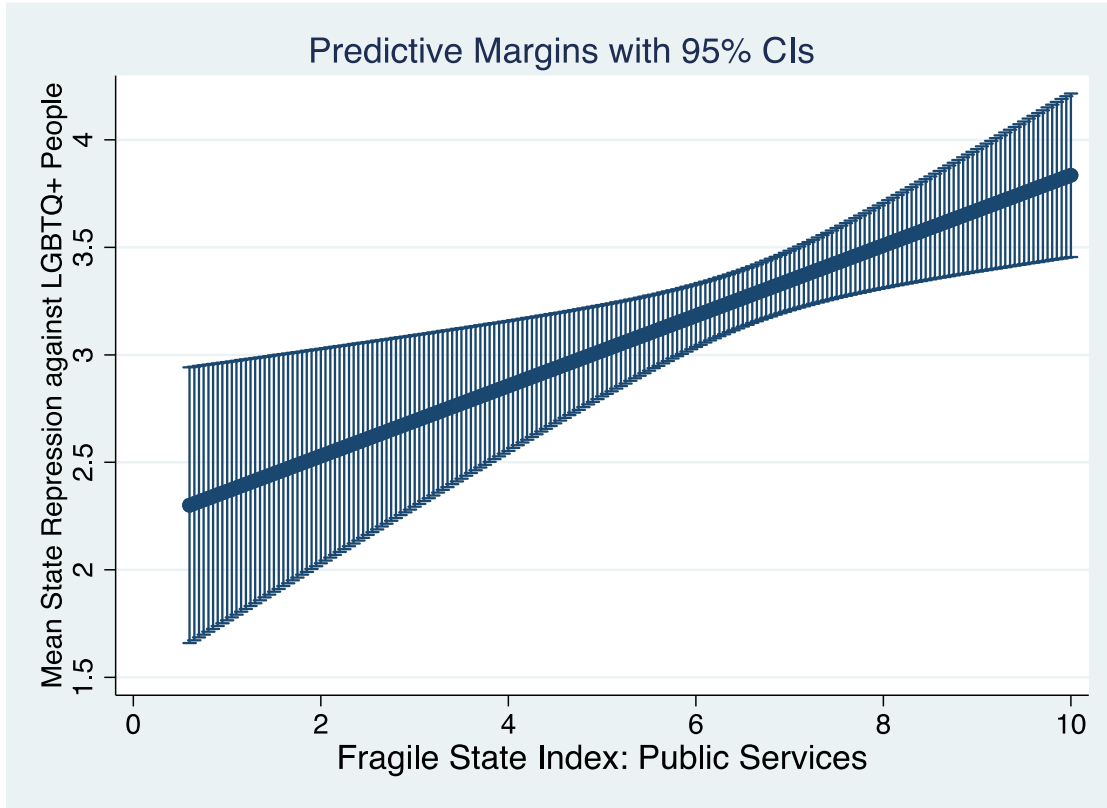
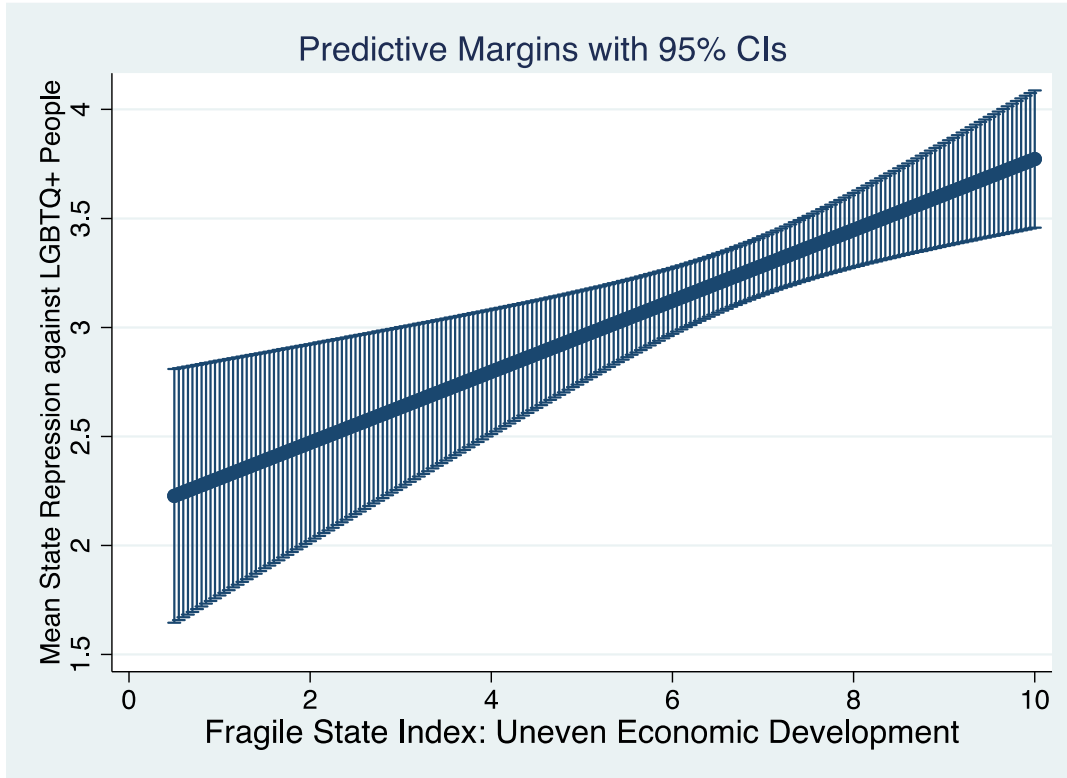


Figure 4.4 shows the mean state repression against sexual minorities given lowest and highest values of Fragile State Index's Uneven Economic Development Indicator, which is coded from 0 to 10 a direction of declines effectiveness. The figure illustrates that the mean state repression against sexual minorities declines from 2.2 to 3.8 as the level of the uneven economic development is rising.

Figure 4.4: Repression and Uneven Economic Development



Robustness Checks

I use alternative measures independent variables. For corruption variable, I use two additional measures: Bayesian Corruption Indicator and Control of Corruption Indicator from World Bank's Worldwide Governance. Bayesian Corruption is coded from 6(lowest level of corruption) to 75(highest level of corruption). Control of Corruption indicator is coded from -2(highest level of corruption) to +2(lowest level of corruption). Results from both variables suggest that countries with higher levels of corruption are more likely to repress sexual minorities. Government effectiveness from the World Bank Worldwide Governance indicators is the measure how well the government can provide services to citizens and how effective its governance. It is coded from -2(lowest level of effectiveness)

to +2 (highest level of effectiveness). The results demonstrate that states with lower government effectiveness are more likely to repress sexual minorities. These results suggest that political leaders repress sexual minorities to divert public attentions from poor economic performance and obscure public demands for redistributive policies.

Table 4.2: Factors Influencing State Repression against Sexual Minorities

	Dependent variable:					
	State Repression against Sexual Minorities					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Bayesian Corruption Indicator	0.018** (0.007)	0.019*** (0.007)				
WB: Control of Corruption			-0.436*** (0.118)	-0.325*** (0.112)		
WB: Government Effectiveness					-0.423*** (0.133)	-0.326*** (0.125)
Global Acceptance Index		-0.208*** (0.061)	-0.320*** (0.076)	-0.176*** (0.061)	-0.313*** (0.079)	-0.162** (0.063)
Democracy Score		-0.038** (0.015)		-0.030** (0.015)		-0.031** (0.014)
Percentage of Muslim Population		0.009*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)		0.009*** (0.002)
Interstate War		-0.617** (0.248)		-0.563** (0.222)		-0.558** (0.219)
Civil War		0.053 (0.119)		0.068 (0.122)		0.041 (0.128)
GDP Per Capita (log)		-0.012 (0.043)		-0.021 (0.046)		0.010 (0.050)
Population(log)		0.127*** (0.048)		0.136*** (0.048)		0.163*** (0.049)
Revolutionary Governments		0.120 (0.219)		0.095 (0.224)		0.062 (0.222)
Women Empowerment Index		-0.254 (0.597)		-0.251 (0.598)		-0.082 (0.598)
Political Party Competition		-0.003 (0.003)		-0.003 (0.003)		-0.003 (0.003)
British Colony		0.937*** (0.140)		0.946*** (0.141)		0.929*** (0.143)
Political Terror Scale		0.084 (0.058)		0.054 (0.061)		0.072 (0.059)
Constant	2.297*** (0.392)	0.545 (1.096)	4.255*** (0.320)	1.288 (1.061)	4.246*** (0.345)	0.407 (1.117)
Observations	1,910	1,629	2,113	1,627	2,113	1,627
R2	0.045	0.617	0.173	0.611	0.171	0.610
Adjusted R2	0.044	0.614	0.172	0.607	0.170	0.607
Residual Std. Error	1.084 (df = 1908)	0.703 (df = 1615)	1.022 (df = 2110)	0.714 (df = 1613)	1.023 (df = 2110)	0.715 (df = 1613)

Note:

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

Next, I plot predicted mean of state repression of sexual minorities given the lowest and highest values of alternative measures of independent variables. Figure 4.5 illustrates that repression becomes more likely when the level of corruption goes up. The plot on the left

side shows that the predicted mean repression of LGBTQ+ people goes from 2.4 to 3.8 when we move from the lowest value of Bayesian Corruption Indicator to its highest value. Similarly, the plot on the right shows that predicted mean repression increases from 2.5 to 3.8 as the level of corruption goes up.

Figure 4.5: Repression and Corruption

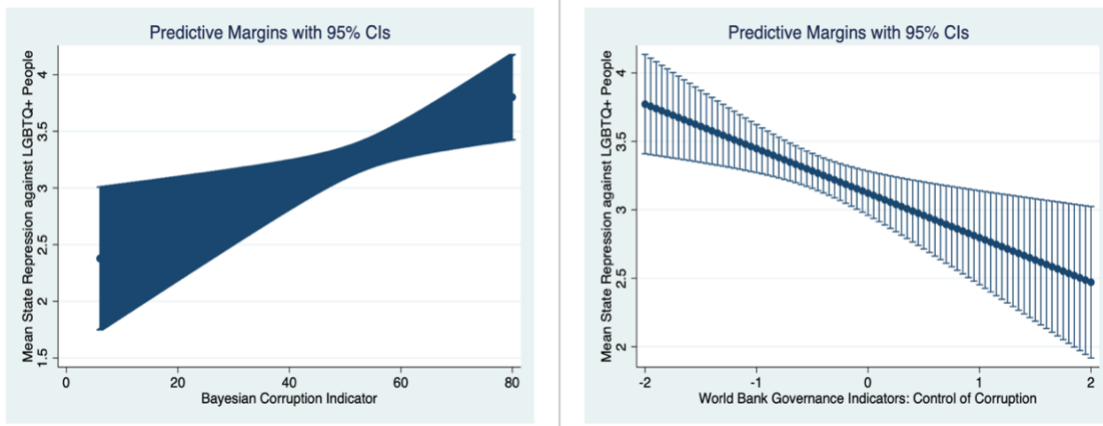
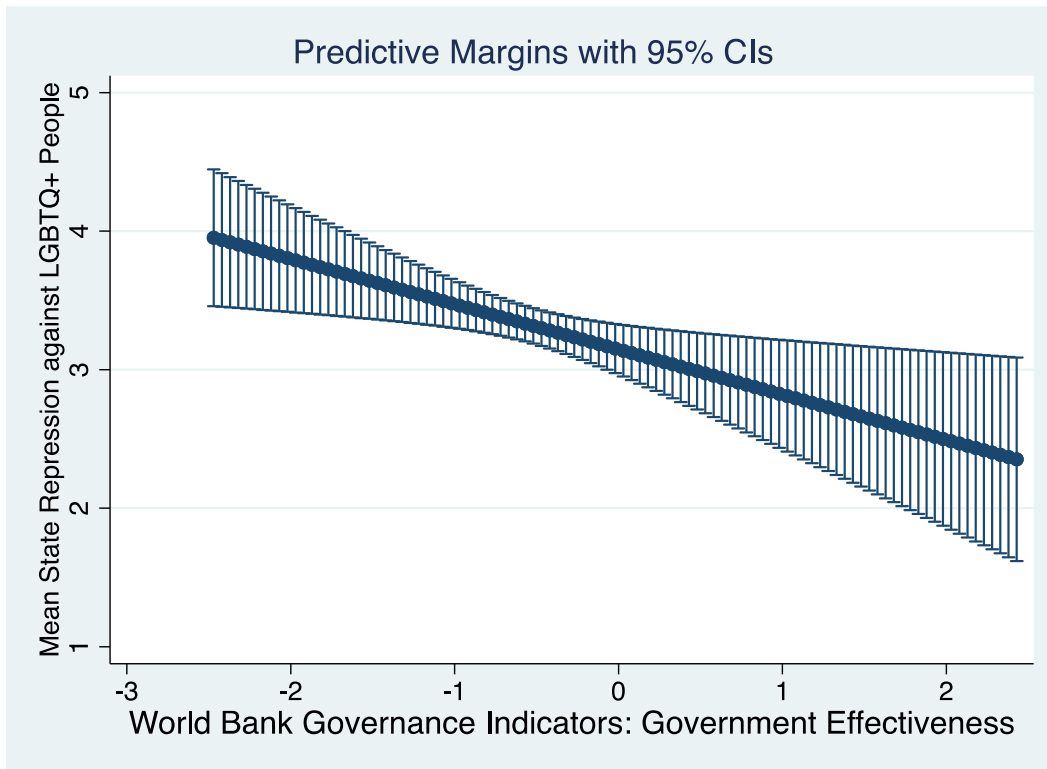


Figure 4.6 shows the mean state repression against sexual minorities given lowest and highest values of World Bank Group’s Government Effectiveness Indicator, which is coded from -2.5 to 2.5 a direction of increasing effectiveness. Figure 4.6 illustrates that the mean state repression against sexual minorities declines from 4 to 2.4 as the level of the government becomes more effective. Thus, all results demonstrate that poor economic conditions lead to state repression of sexual minorities in homophobic societies.

Figure 4.6: Repression and Government Effectiveness



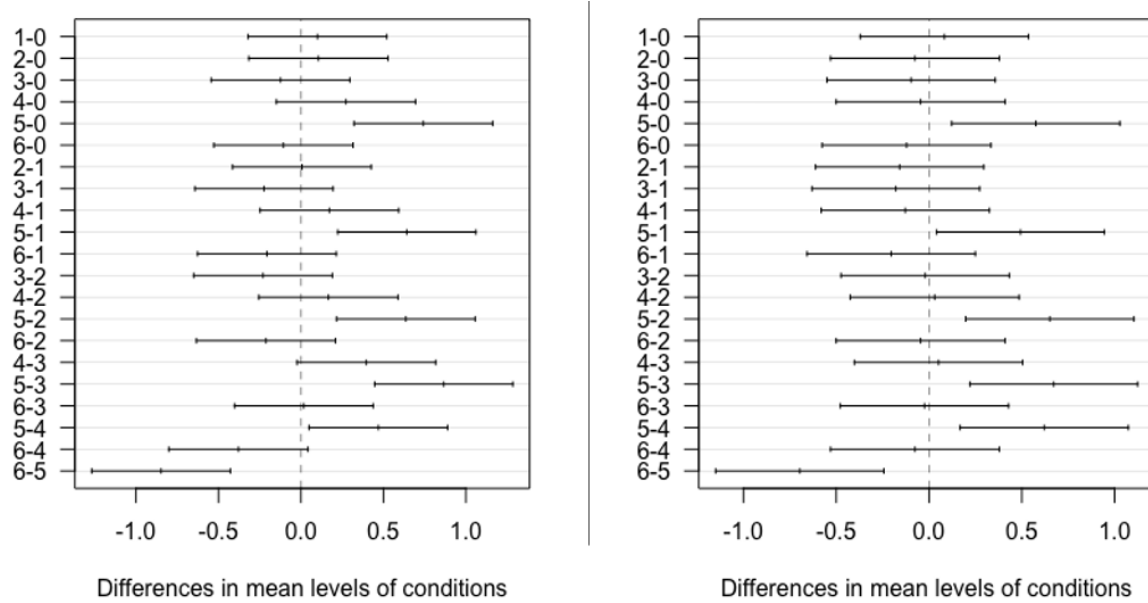
Next, I present some results from survey experiments conducted among 472 Arizona State University students. Experiments have three parts: pre-test questions about individual opinions about the US responses to the repression of sexual minorities in foreign countries, six experimental conditions and control group, and post-test questions. Experimental conditions are *Shared Identity* (1), *Different Identities* (2), *National Interests* (3), *No Strategic Importance* (4), *Harsh Repression* (5), and *Low-Intensity Repression* (6). *Control Group* is coded “0”. All experimental conditions describe a situation where LGBTQ+

people are repressed in a hypothetical country. In *shared identity* group, the repressive country is described as a Christian nation with English being an official language. In *different identities* group, the repressive country is described as a Muslim country with Arabic being a primary mode of communication. In *national interests* group, the repressive country is presented as strategic for American national interests. In *no strategic importance* condition, the repressive country is portrayed as having no strategic importance for the US national interests. The *harsh repression* condition describes that law enforcement in the repressive country torture and extrajudicially kill LGBTQ+ people. The *low-intensity* repression condition demonstrates that the law enforcement of the repressive country release sexual minorities after detained them. The *control group* describes the repressive country with good cuisine and landscape. Each group has either 66 or 67 respondents. Once respondents read their randomly assigned experimental text, they then are asked to act as an advisor to the US President and provide guidance how the US government should act concerning the repressive country. Appendix A describes details of experiments.

I first examine post-treatment differences among experimental groups. To do so, I develop four dependent variables based on five post-test survey questions: *imposing economic sanctions*, *cutting previously agreed aid*, *the US support for local LGBTQ+ organizations*, and *funding local LGBTQ+ organizations in the repressive country*. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 present Anova results of post-test differences among groups regarding these four dependent variables. Figure 4.7 demonstrate differences in mean levels of conditions concerning support for economic sanctions (left plot) and support for previously agreed military or economic aid (right plot). Both plots in Figure 4.7 show that respondents assigned to *Harsh Repression (5)* group are more likely to support imposing economic

sanctions and cut previously agreed economic or military aid to the repressive country compared to respondents assigned to all other groups.

Figure 4.7: Mean Differences in Support for Economic Sanctions and Cutting Aid



However, Figure 4.8 demonstrates there are not differences in mean levels of conditions when it comes to supporting (left plot) and funding (right plot) local LGBTQ+ organizations in the repressive country.

Figure 4.8: Mean Differences in Supporting and Funding Local LGBT Organizations

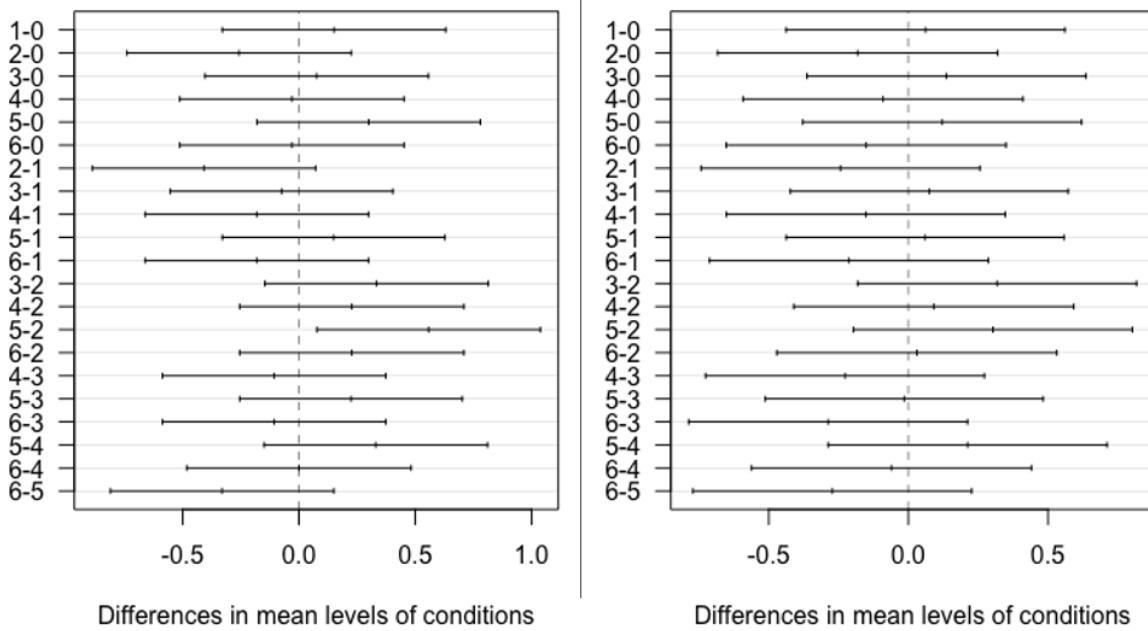
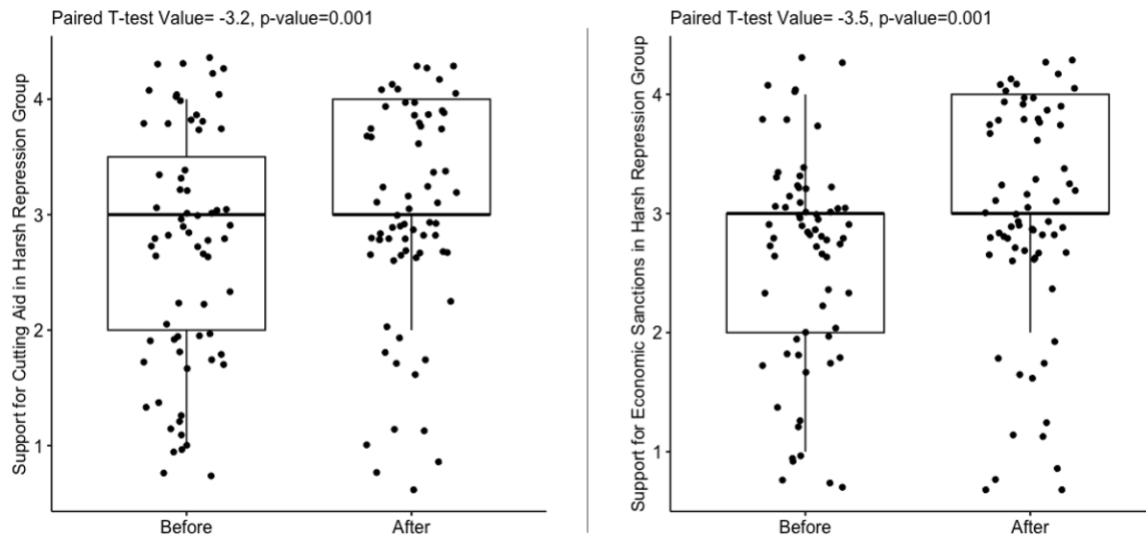


Figure 4.8 illustrates results of paired t-tests regarding the support of individuals in harsh repression group for cutting previously agreed economic or military aid (left plot) and imposing economic sanctions(right) before and after the treatment. The results demonstrate that individuals become more likely to support cutting previously agreed aid and imposing economic sanctions after they read about harsh repression in the repressive country.

Figure 4.8: Support for Cutting Aid and Economic Sanctions in Harsh Repression



These results provide potential suggestions that Western responses to the repression of sexual minorities in foreign countries tend to be reactive, short-term, and short-sided. Political leaders in countries with homophobic countries commit egregious human rights abuses against sexual minorities to draw international attention and Western reaction. Once these egregious human rights violations are extensively reported by Western media, the public in Western countries tend to be supportive of applying punitive measures such as sanctions and cutting aid. Western political leaders are consequently pressed by public, media, and various human rights organizations to issue condemnations and possibly impose sanctions against repressive countries. Political leaders in homophobic societies frame these Western responses as interventions to national sovereignty. They act to “protect” national traditional values against Western “import” of homosexuality. Regimes in homophobic countries signal to the public that they act to confront with Western reactions to protect traditional national values. However, results suggest that when it comes

to supporting and funding local LGBTQ+ organizations, which are key to improvement of gay rights, public becomes less determined. Sanctions or condemnations against a repressive country provides political leaders in this country better framing opportunity compared to funding and supporting local LGBTQ+ organizations, since these punitive measures are directly against the country.

CHAPTER 5

WHY DO STATES REPRESS SEXUAL MINORITIES: OPPOSITION TO LIBERAL WORLD ORDER

Theoretical Framework

Why do some *nondemocracies* repress sexual minorities more than other *nondemocracies*?

I argue that state repression of sexual minorities in *nondemocracies* is connected to opposition to the US-led liberal international order: authoritarian countries that are against the US-led international liberal order politicize sexual minorities for domestic reasons. First, countries opposing the liberal international order repress sexual minorities to crackdown domestic pro-Western civil society organizations and opposition. The repression of sexual minorities by countries opposing the US-led liberal international order draws international attention from the Western world. Leaders from Western democracies issue condemnations and call for the termination of repression of sexual minorities and demand improving gay rights. Using these calls from Western countries, authoritarian regimes opposing the US-led liberal international order frame homosexuality as “*Western-imported*”, “*alien*”, and sometimes a new form of *Western imperialism*. Political leaders politicize sexual minorities to target domestic pro-Western oppositional forces, which are framed as “Western spies” or “serving the West”, or sometimes “traitors”. These narratives become appealing to anti-Western authoritarian countries’ domestic audience and establish negative public perception about domestic pro-Western oppositional forces. Political regimes in anti-Western authoritarian countries use these narratives to discredit domestic pro-Western civil society and opposition, which have been a challenge to the survival of

authoritarian regimes. Political leaders in authoritarian anti-Western countries are cautious of Western-supported protest movements and civil disobedience that might bring about colored revolutions. Second, repression of sexual minorities serves to diverting public attention from ineffective government and poor economic performance that undermines state legitimacy. Once the repression of sexual minorities draw attention in Western media and consistently reported and condemnations are issued by political leaders in Western democracies, political regimes in authoritarian anti-Western countries frame Western reactions as “intervention to national sovereignty”, “imposition of moral distortion upon our country” to raise nationalist sentiments. These statements become appealing to public in anti-Western authoritarian countries where society is hostile to homosexuality. The raise of nationalist sentiments helps political leaders to obscure demands for redistributive policies and neutralize possible social unrest and civil disobedience. Anti-Western authoritarian countries with poor government effectiveness and lower level of legitimacy are more likely to resort to violence against sexual minorities compared other anti-Western authoritarian countries with relatively high level of government effectiveness and political legitimacy. By propagandizing on their population “to guard against westernization and protect their own culture, homophobia has become a rallying cry that serves to mobilize and unite the masses” (Hairsine, 2019). These causal relationships between state repression of sexual minorities, anti-Westernism, and government effectiveness and legitimacy are outlined below.

Anti-Western authoritarian countries have been opposing the US-led Liberal Order since the end of the cold war. While they have developed some political and economic ties with Western democracies, they have refused to accept rising weight of Western

democracies in international system and denied Western standards of political life. Although despite their political and economic ties, voting behavior in United Nations has demonstrated the divergence between Western democracies and authoritarian countries that oppose the US-led liberal international order. By controlling major media outlets in the country, they spread false information in mainstream society that homosexuality is imported from the West. This assertion helps them garner support in domestic politics to strengthen their geopolitical positions vis-à-vis Western democracies. For instance, the state-controlled media in Russia spread “a dominant narrative representing non-heterosexuals as threatening the future survival of the nation, as imposing the sex-radical norms of a minority onto the majority, or as connected to an imperialistic West which aims to destroy Russia” (Persson, 2015, p.256). Russian Sputnik attempts to discourage the public to call for integrating into the West by asserting that integration will bring homosexuality. Russia is not alone in propagandizing these homophobic narratives. Political leaders in Nigeria, China, Uganda, Zimbabwe have asserted that homosexuality is a “white disease” imported by the West. Political leaders in anti-Western countries assert that homosexuality is a “product” of the West and therefore “alien” to their countries. Political regimes in anti-Western countries with overly traditional values against liberal values tend to repress sexual minorities to boost their popularity and legitimacy in domestic politics.

Politicizing and repressing sexual minorities decreases the cost of government to repress oppositional forces and civil society groups that might involve in collective action challenging the regime survival. Repression is strategic and important calculations are necessary when deploying repression (Ritter & Conrad, 2016). Previous research has

mainly argued that repression is not a direct result of sadistic or irrational leaders but an outcome of strategic calculation. While deciding whether they will deploy repressive measures, the leaders use a strategic approach to estimate the benefits and costs of repression given different institutional constraints (Moore, 1998; Poe, 2004).

Costs of resorting to repression against oppositional forces decline significantly when these forces are weak. Domestic pro-western opposition forces and human rights organizations, primary challenges for survival of authoritarian anti-Western countries, become easy targets when an anti-Western regime portrays homosexuality as the western-imported and asserts these forces and organizations will bring homosexuality to the country. In particular, the vague language in the anti-gay laws gives “sweeping powers to governments wishing to curb opposition” as it becomes easier to “criminalize one’s political opponents by accusing them of violating moral laws.” (Reid, 2015) The imprecise legal language in ant-LGBTQ laws allows the leaders to get around established legal protections and accuse their opponents of “violating laws against same-sex relationships” (Maietta, 2019).

Anti-Western leaders first securitize sexual minorities by adopting “gay propaganda” laws and then crackdown on different human rights organizations and other nongovernmental entities and prevent them from receiving foreign funding from mainly Western countries by blaming these entities for violating moral laws and promoting Western-imported homosexuality. For instance, the former Nigerian president signed anti-gay laws, which criminalized public displays of affection among homosexual couples, outlawed same-sex marriage, and brought penalizations for organizations expressing support for gay rights. He then attempted to use these laws to challenge his presidential

opponent accusing him of “of entering into a Faustian pact with four unspecified Western nations to introduce same-sex marriage in Nigeria in exchange for supporting his candidacy” (Reid, 2015). Once political leaders generate negative perceptions about the Western world within broader society, they then crack down pro-Western opposition forces and civil society. Targeting these pro-Western groups and organizations becomes “legitimate” once the concept of the Western world is linked to homosexuality.

Authoritarian countries opposing liberal international order become more repressive when they lack government effectiveness to deliver public services to most of the population. A higher level of corruption and economic failures increases the likelihood of social unrest and civil disobedience. Political leaders resort to violence against sexual minorities to divert public attention from these economic problems. Grave human rights violations against sexual minorities draws attention from international media and gay rights organizations, which press political leaders in Western democracies to issue nondominations and open the debate of imposing sanctions and other punitive measures. Political leaders in countries against the US-led liberal international order propagandize these Western reactions as a new form of cultural imperialism and threats to national sovereignty to mobilize people behind themselves and divert public attention from domestic problems by raising nationalist sentiments.

Previous research has demonstrated that sexuality and nationalism are connected. Pryke (1998, p.529) argued that “sex and nation combine to produce notions, both real and imagined, of other nationalities’ sexual character and threat, and ideals of virility, fecundity, and respectability”. Defining national identity necessitates not only circumscribing what national identity entails, but also what it does not. The connection

between sexuality and nationalism plays an important role to identify who belongs to the nation and who does not. It demonstrates if there is compatibility between the advancement of gay rights and the imagined nation (van den Berge et al., 2014). Anti-western regimes attempt to raise nationalist sentiments by asserting that homosexuality is not part of their identity but western-imported. The leaders in these regimes associated sexual minorities with the West, where the spread of liberal and post-materialist values has increased the tolerance for gay rights (Inglehart & Norris 2003). For instance, state-sponsored homophobia in Russia is viewed as a “larger project of negotiating Russia’s geopolitical identity” and the country’s strong championing of ‘traditional values’ is seen as “a boundary-making move, delineating Russia from the West and seeking to restore Russia’s place in world politics by positioning the country as a leader in a transnational conservative alliance.” (Edenborg, 2018, p. 67) The country passed gay propaganda laws to use them “in part to define itself in opposition to the West” (Campbell, 2013). The repression of sexual minorities also serves to raise the nationalist sentiments about loyalty to nation and state. Regime regimes in countries opposing the US-led international liberal order portray sexual minorities as Western-imported and therefore disloyal. Sexual minorities are perceived as even spies and traitors in anti-Western authoritarian countries. For example, the Putin regime has benefited from “constructing gays and lesbians as disloyal enemies of the state” (Mole, 2018).

National identity building based on conservative values in anti-western countries has made sexual minorities a “legitimate” target of repressive measures. Greenberg (2006, p.336) analyzed the relationship between homophobic violence and nationalism during the 2001 Belgrade gay pride in Serbia and argued that the violence happened at the

“intersection of different modes of belonging, entitlement, action, and politics.” Russia has instilled anti-western sentiments and narratives in Serbia through its state-sponsored media outlets such as Sputnik, which has consistently linked homosexuality to the West to discourage regional countries from integrating with the West. Likewise, Mikuš (2011) maintained that homophobic violence stems from the clash of the old system based on nationalist and conservative views with cosmopolitanism and liberal democracy. Those against LGBTQ rights in the Balkans have called “for preserving the ‘true’ Serbian/Croatian nation against Western ‘ailments’ such as homosexuality.” In national identity building under conservative and traditional values, sexual minorities are perceived as “threatening the nation by undermining the traditional family, failing to contribute to the reproduction of the nation, challenging national stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, and deviating from shared norms, especially those derived from religion.” (Mole, 2018) This connection between national-identity building and homosexuality is very strong in anti-western countries where sexual groups are viewed as disloyal, Western-imported, and therefore non-national. For instance, “Putin’s construction of homosexuality as both non-traditional and thereby non-Russian—in tandem with his rigorous defense of traditional values as the foundation of the Russian nation’s greatness—has successfully legitimized the marginalization of the country’s LGBT citizens” (Mole, 2018; Sleptcov, 2018).

Anti-Western countries allow a limited level of confrontation with Western powers to instill nationalist sentiments to society. For instance, in response to President Obama’s statement that gay rights are human rights, the president of Uganda, an anti-Western country rebuked the West “for assuming the position of ‘global prefects’ and asserted that

his government “equally reject attempts to prescribe ‘new rights’ which are contrary to our values, norms, traditions, and beliefs.” (Quoted in Chidza, 2015).

Authoritarian anti-Western countries become more repressive and use repression of sexual minorities for diversionary purposes when their performance legitimacy is undermined. The performance legitimacy refers to economic performance of political regimes. Its origins go to Easton classification of political support into diffuse and specific legitimacy. While former refers to what the political system itself is, the latter shows how well a political regime is capable of developing an effective government and delivering public goods. The performance legitimacy has gained an increased scholarly attention as many political regimes have attempted to justify their rule by their economic performance. The performance legitimacy is essential for authoritarian survival. Previous literature has established that economic factors are essential for the maintenance of political legitimacy in authoritarian countries where rational-legal legitimacy is questioned because lack of free and fair elections and accountability. Studies demonstrate that sustained civil disobedience and mass political protests become widespread when citizens lose their confidence in political institutions and government (Thyen & Gerschewski, 2018). Political protest, a “disruptive collective action that is aimed at institutions, elites, authorities, or other groups on behalf of the collective goals of the actors or of those they claim to represent” (Tarrow, 1991, p.11), is tightly connected to the question of legitimacy (Thyen & Gerschewski, 2018). Early literature has demonstrated that political violence and mass demonstrations are direct consequences of declining legitimacy (Crozier et al., 1975). Political protests occur not just because of resentment with certain policies or political leaders but also dissatisfaction with the whole political system and regime. The eruption of mass political

protests signals that a political regime is in a legitimacy crisis (Linz & Stepan 1996). Previous studies have found empirical evidence that individuals become more likely to approve violent behavior and political protests and participate in mass demonstrations when state legitimacy is questioned (Muller, 1970; Worchel et al., 1974; Funderburk, 1975; Muller, 1972). The repression of sexual minorities serves to appease public discontent. It aims to divert public attention from social problems that might cause political protests. Numerous studies have demonstrated that corruption slows economic growth and erodes legitimacy (Mauro, 1995, 1997a, 1997b; Seligson, 2002, p.410; World Bank, 1997, p.102-104). Corruption makes a small component of population rich, leaving most people in poverty. I hypothesize that authoritarian anti-western political regimes resort to violence against sexual minorities when they have a higher level of corruption. Political leaders in these countries use the repression of sexual minorities to divert public attention from social problems that might cause public discontent and civil disobedience.

H1: Anti-Western regimes are more likely to repress sexual minorities.

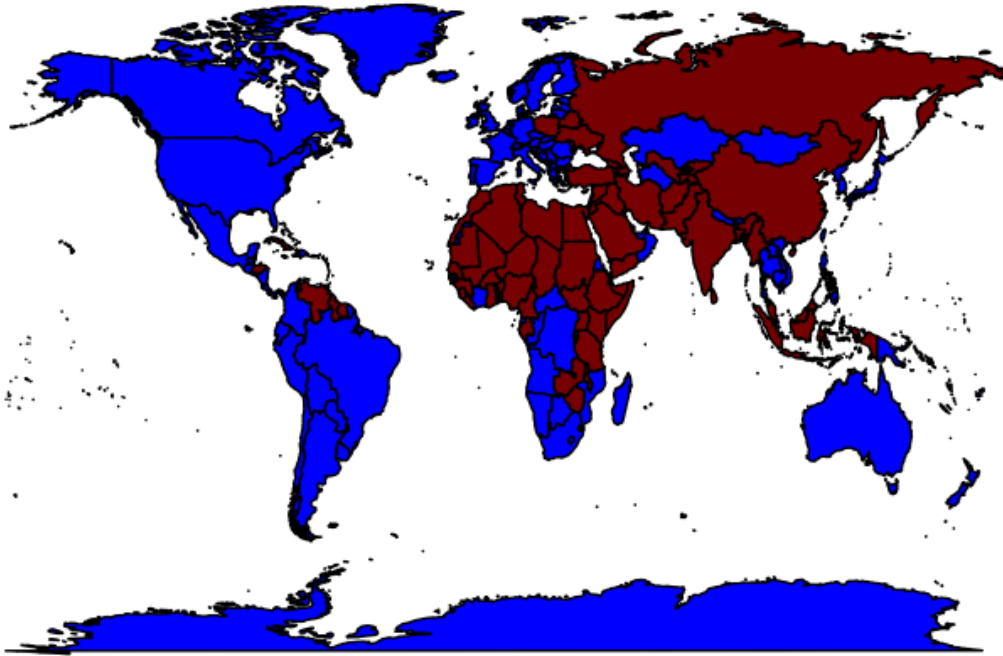
Methods and data

Data and Dependent Variable: The dependent variable is state repression against sexual minorities. State repression is defined as “*the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions*” (Robert J. Goldstein 1978, p. xxvii). The human rights violations by anti-western regimes

against sexual minorities are state repression since these regimes perceive LGBTQ+ people as having beliefs and ideas challenging anti-western policies as alternatives to liberal world order. Anti-western regimes believe that homosexuality is the product of liberal world order and therefore perceive it as challenging for their regimes. Although these groups do not pose credible violent threats to state security, their beliefs are still perceived as challenging by anti-western regimes. Davenport (2007) articulates that state repression “definition does not specify that a behavioral threat must exist” and perceives these groups as challenging and involving deterring them by using repressive measures.

I collected the new dataset from the reports of international organizations about state-sponsored homophobia. Based on previous practice, the dependent variable is coded as “1” if sexual minorities are faced with arrest, displacement, extrajudicial killings, torture, and “0” otherwise. Figure 5. 1 illustrates the map showing the countries that repress sexual minorities. Countries in red color repress sexual minorities from time to time.

Figure 5. 1: Countries Repressing Sexual Minorities



Independent Variables: To measure *Opposition to Liberal International Order*, Ideal Points dynamic state preferences estimated Bailey et al. (2017) based on United Nations General Assembly voting data. These states ideal points are estimated on a single dimension, which “reflects state positions toward the US-led liberal order” (Bailey et al., 2017, p.430). I also use an alternative measure of opposition to liberal international order by a binary variable, which demonstrates membership in the illiberal Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) that “are associated with (varying degrees of) cross-nationally organized opposition to the liberal world order in their discourse and/or policy positions” (Bromley, Schofer, Longhofer 2020, 291). These organizations are Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra America (ALBA).

Control variables: I also control for the following variables, which have been found to cause state repression. First, states involved in both interstate and civil war have tended to resort to repressive measures. I use binary *civil war* and *interstate war* variables from the *Correlates of War* dataset to control for the likelihood that the sexual minorities are repressed because of interstate and civil war. Second, sexual minorities might face persecution in countries with a large scale of human rights abuses. Some states frequently repress their citizens regardless of whether they are sexual minorities or not. I use *political terror scale* to control for this possibility. Third, two-third of countries where homosexuality is illegal are former British colonies. They have inherited laws from British colonial period to criminalize homosexuality. I use a binary variable indicating whether a given country is a *former British colony*. Fourth, studies have contended that countries with large Muslim populations are more likely to repress sexual minorities. I control for the *percentage of Muslim population* in a given country in a certain year. I also control for *polity score*, *women empowerment*, and *political party competition*. These democratic indicators reduce the likelihood of repression of sexual minorities. Many studies have demonstrated that democratic counties are less likely to repress. Using World Bank data, *logged GPD* and *logged population* are also controlled for. *Global Acceptance Index* of homosexuality, developed by UCLA Williams Institute, is used to measure public acceptance of homosexuality. It is measured from “0” being lowest acceptability to “10” being highest acceptability. I control for this variable as well since it is found significant in previous chapter.

Models: I use logistic regression to gauge the covariates of repression against sexual minorities in authoritarian regimes, since the dependent variable is dichotomous.

The results are adjusted by robust standard errors and clustered by countries to eliminate autocorrelation since the data are based on state-year format.

Results and Analysis

In this section, I present the results of large-n regression models. The data analysis findings are presented in Table 5.1. All results are in a 95 percent interval. The results indicate that authoritarian countries that oppose the US-led liberal international order and that have membership in illiberal organizations are more likely to repress sexual minorities compared to other authoritarian countries. The political regimes in these countries target sexual minorities for political gains in domestic politics. Pro-Western political opponents and civil society become “legitimate” target in anti-Western countries when leaders politicize homosexuality.

Table 5.1: Factors Influencing Repression against Sexual Minorities in Autocracies

	Dependent variable:					
	State Repression against Sexual Minorities					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Opposition to Liberal Order	-0.750*** (0.148)		-0.778*** (0.211)			-0.777*** (0.214)
Membership in Illiberal Organizations		1.175*** (0.184)		0.877*** (0.255)		0.865*** (0.261)
Global Acceptance Index			-0.804*** (0.099)	-0.790*** (0.099)	-0.793*** (0.098)	-0.812*** (0.100)
Democracy Score			-0.015 (0.025)	-0.022 (0.025)	-0.018 (0.025)	-0.020 (0.025)
Percentage of Muslim Population			0.0003 (0.002)	-0.005 (0.003)	0.002 (0.002)	-0.006* (0.003)
Interstate War			-0.301 (0.912)	-0.244 (0.867)	-0.376 (0.859)	-0.191 (0.915)
Civil War			0.336 (0.209)	0.347* (0.209)	0.291 (0.207)	0.381* (0.211)
GDP Per Capita (log)			0.339*** (0.069)	0.270*** (0.068)	0.318*** (0.066)	0.281*** (0.070)
Population(log)			0.281*** (0.075)	0.249*** (0.073)	0.282*** (0.073)	0.259*** (0.075)
Revolutionary Governments			-0.443 (0.334)	0.076 (0.319)	-0.013 (0.311)	-0.359 (0.342)
Women Empowerment Index			0.693 (0.687)	-0.590 (0.682)	-0.102 (0.652)	0.154 (0.714)
Political Party Competition			0.006 (0.006)	0.006 (0.006)	0.006 (0.006)	0.007 (0.006)
British Colony			0.307 (0.190)	0.676*** (0.181)	0.582*** (0.177)	0.412** (0.193)
Political Terror Scale			0.081 (0.129)	0.060 (0.129)	0.084 (0.126)	0.047 (0.131)
Constant	-2.334*** (0.137)	-2.655*** (0.166)	-7.637*** (1.367)	-5.855*** (1.337)	-6.706*** (1.305)	-6.778*** (1.395)
Observations	1,592	1,608	1,374	1,387	1,387	1,374
Log Likelihood	-637.543	-630.103	-494.982	-497.237	-503.325	-489.308
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,279.087	1,264.206	1,017.964	1,022.474	1,032.651	1,008.616

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

To interpret these results, the predicted mean state repression across lowest and highest values of independent variables are illustrated in Figures 5.2 and 5.3. Figure 5.2 illustrates predicted probability of repression against sexual minorities increases substantially in countries opposing the US-led liberal international order. These results suggest that the state repression of sexual minorities during the 21st century is linked to a global backlash against the international liberal order in authoritarian regimes: nondemocracies that oppose the liberal world order campaigned by the West tend to repress sexual minorities for domestic political gains.

Figure 5.2: Repression and Opposition to Liberal International Order

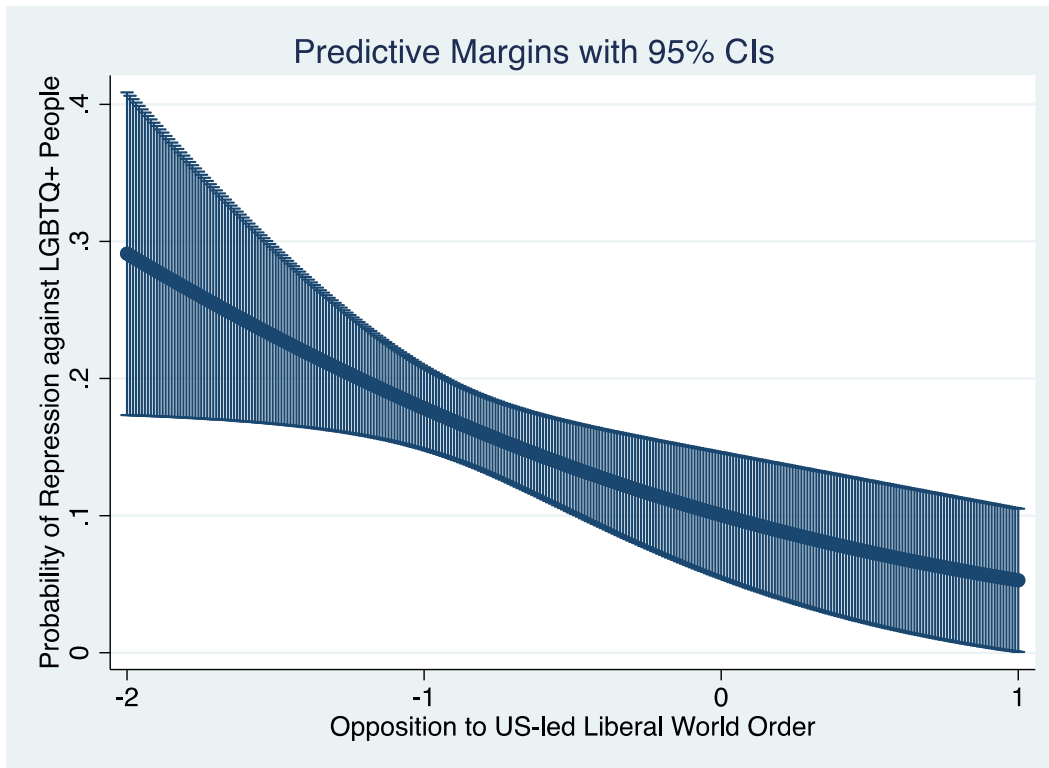


Figure 5.3 demonstrates the predicted probabilities of state repression against sexual minorities given the absence and presence of membership in illiberal organizations, an alternative measure of opposition to liberal international order. The results demonstrate that the probability of state repression against sexual minorities is 9 percent for the countries which are not members of illiberal organizations. The probability of repression rises to 18 percent for those countries which are members of illiberal organizations.

Figure 5.3: Repression and Membership in Illiberal Countries



CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

While state repression literature has provided us with excellent explanations of why states tend to repress, it is less explored why vulnerable minority groups face harsh human rights violations even though they do not threaten state security. The literature has primarily focused on ascertaining the repression-dissent nexus and found that states repress when they face threats. This finding is well established in the literature and therefore called the law of coercive responsiveness. Studies particularly demonstrate that states primarily repress during civil wars since that is when they mainly feel threatened. However, state repression against unthreatening groups has not been well studied.

This dissertation examined state repression against sexual minorities from various aspects. First, it gauged state repression of LGBTQ+ people in all states to ascertain broader patterns and provide insights about underlying reasons for persecution of sexual minorities across countries. I found that Political regimes tend to persecute sexual minorities in countries with homophobic societies to signal to the majority that they represent a broader society and therefore are entitled to rule. The persecution of sexual minorities becomes part of legitimation strategies of political regimes in countries with homophobic societies. I further found that the effect of global acceptance index of homosexuality on state repression of sexual minorities is not even. States with homophobic societies tend to repress even more when their rational-legal legitimacy is undermined.

Second, this dissertation examined state repression against sexual minorities in countries with lower acceptance index of homosexuality. The results demonstrate that political regimes resort to violence against sexual minorities when they are likely face

social unrest in form of mass protests and demonstrations because poor economic performance. Inability to deliver public goods and services, uneven economic development, and government ineffectiveness generate public resentment and dissatisfaction with the regime. Political leaders use the repression of sexual minorities to divert public attention from social problems that might cause public discontent and civil disobedience. They implement nationalistic homophobic policies to discourage citizens from demanding for redistributive policies. Instilling homophobic elements into nationalist diversionary tactics makes these tactics more appealing to broader society where traditional family values and normative homosexuality is infused with national identity.

Third, it explored state repression within nondemocracies and found that strict human rights abuses against LGBTQ+ people are the result of the backlash against the international liberal world order in the 21st century: authoritarian regimes that are against the liberal order tend to repress sexual minorities to stand against pressures and sanctions from western countries. This backlash is more likely in anti-western countries with lower level of political legitimacy measured by high levels of corruption. Faced with legitimacy challenges at home, political leaders in anti-western countries assert that LGBTQ is a "product" of the West. This assertion also helps them gather support in domestic politics to advance their interests in geopolitical competition with the West. Leaders in anti-western countries with overly traditional values against liberal values tend to repress sexual minorities to boost their popularity and legitimacy in domestic politics. The egregious human rights abuses against sexual minorities tends to draw attention from Western media and gay rights organizations, which press Western governments make condemnations and sometimes impose sanctions. Leaders in these anti-Western then frame these

condemnations and sanctions as threats to sovereignty and cultural imperialism, which become appealing to homophobic public.

I tested these conjectures against new country-year data and results consistent with these arguments. Gay rights have been politized. Politicians have repressed or improved gay rights for political purposes. Violence against sexual minorities allows political regimes to obtain various political gains when the public is hostile to homosexuality. I conclude that public acceptance of LGBTQ+ people is paramount to the overall improvement of gay rights. Results also suggest that the external attempts to improve LGBTQ+ rights at conservative countries produce backlash and help political leaders to generate diversionary homophobic nationalism. This becomes more useful for local political leaders and determinantal to gay rights. Political leaders propagandize external attempts as cultural imperialism and threats to nation and sovereignty. Sexual minorities consequently become the target of more violence. Global gay rights organizations and movements should adopt long-term policies to gradually improve LGBTQ+ rights, as short-term reactions and nondominations produce backlash.

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APPENDIX A

CHAPTER 4: EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN

This study uses an experimental research design to explain why Western democracies are willing to support LGBTQ+ movements and prioritize gay rights in their foreign policies in some countries while ignoring the repression of sexual minorities in other countries. There are six experimental conditions and a control group. Each group has either 66 or 67 respondents. The total number of respondents is 472.

The experiment has three parts. The first part includes pre-test, distracting, and socio-economic background questions. The respondents are assigned to one of the conditions in the second part. The third part cover post-test questions to measure whether subjects believe that the US should support a given LGBTQ+ organization and impose sanctions against a repressive country.

Part I: Pre-Test, Distracting, and socio-economic questions

1. US supreme court overturned abortion rights, upending Roe vs. Wade. Do you support this court decision?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know
 - d. Prefer not to say

2. Do you support background checks for gun sales in the United States?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know

- d. Prefer not to say
3. The United States should work towards building stronger relationships with Russia.
- a. Completely agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Somewhat disagree
 - d. Completely disagree
 - e. Don't know
4. Who is the current speaker of the United States House of Representatives?
- a. Andy Biggs
 - b. Nancy Pelosi
 - c. Lloyd Austin
 - d. Don't know
5. Do you support gay marriage?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
6. Where would you place yourself on the liberal-conservative scale where 1 is extremely liberal and left-oriented, while 10 is extremely conservative and right-oriented?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, don't know

7. Are you White, Black or African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, or some other race?

- a. White
- b. Black or African American
- c. Hispanic / Latino
- d. Asian
- e. American Indian or Alaska Native
- f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- g. Middle Eastern
- h. Other [fill in the blank]

8. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, an Independent, or a Democrat?

- a. Republican
- b. Lean Republican
- c. Democrat
- d. Lean Democrat
- e. Independent
- f. Other
- g. No Party Preference

9. Republican Party is more supportive of restricting access to abortion.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I do not know
10. Have you been involved in gay activism?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to say
11. Democratic Party is more supportive of increasing taxes on higher-income people.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know
12. The US should get involved in foreign crisis situations only when it directly threatens American national interests.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
13. Do you have a close friend or family member who is LGBTQ+?
- a. Yes

- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

14. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of *the Russian people*:

- a. Very favorable
- b. Somewhat favorable
- c. Somewhat unfavorable
- d. Very unfavorable

15. The US should cut previously agreed military or economic aid to the countries that repress sexual minorities to force them to improve gay rights.

- a. Completely agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Somewhat disagree
- d. Completely disagree

16. Which one of these categories best describes your total combined family income for the last year?

- a. Less than \$20,000
- b. \$20,000-\$34,999
- c. \$35,000-\$49,999
- d. \$50,000-\$74,999

- e. \$75,000-\$99,999
- f. \$100,000 or more
- g. Don't know
- h. Prefer not to say

17. The US should support foreign countries in crisis.

- a. Completely agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Somewhat disagree
- d. Completely disagree

18. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Transgender woman
- d. Transgender man
- e. Nonbinary
- f. Other [fill in the blank]
- g. Prefer not to say

19. Has any member of your immediate family (parents, siblings, spouses, or children)

ever been a member of the U.S. military?

- a. Yes

- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

20. What is the name of the current president of Turkey?

- a. Benjamin Netanyahu
- b. Hassan Rouhani
- c. Receb Tayyip Erdogan
- d. Vladimir Putin
- e. Don't know

21. Do you support LGBTQ+ rights?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of Turkey:

- a. Very favorable
- b. Somewhat favorable
- c. Somewhat unfavorable
- d. Very unfavorable
- e. No opinion/don't know

23. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of *the Russian government*:
- a. Very favorable
 - b. Somewhat favorable
 - c. Somewhat unfavorable
 - d. Very unfavorable
24. The US should impose economic sanctions and cut all trade and financial relations with countries that repress sexual minorities.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Somewhat agree
 - c. Somewhat disagree
 - d. Strongly disagree
25. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of *Russia*:
- a. Very favorable
 - b. Somewhat favorable
 - c. Somewhat unfavorable
 - d. Very unfavorable
26. The US should provide military assistance to foreign countries by providing them with modern weapons when they face military aggression.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Somewhat disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

27. The US should allocate funds for local LGBTQ+ organizations to improve gay rights and support gay activism in countries where sexual minorities are repressed.

- a. Yes
- b. No

28. How important is religion in your life?

- a. Not at all important
- b. Not very important
- c. Rather important
- d. Very important

29. The US should impose sanctions on aggressive states by cutting all trade and financial relations with them.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Somewhat disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

Now you are about to be given a scenario and be asked about your opinion about it.

Please read the following prompt in its entirety.

Part II: Treatment and Control

Condition 1: Shared Identity

Please read the following prompt in its entirety. You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. This country and the United States share a common language, culture, and religion. It is a predominantly Christian nation with the English language as a primary means of communication. This repressive country also supports liberal international order and has taken a path of democratization.

Condition 2: Different Identities

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. This country and the United States are very different in terms of language, culture, and religion. It is a dominantly Muslim-populated country with an authoritarian government and the Arabic language as a primary means of communication.

Condition 3: National Interests

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. This country is strategically important for the United States. It provides oil and gas to

American markets. If this country decided to limit oil and gas exports to the United States, this might lead to a rise in gas prices in the United States. This country is very important for American national interests.

Condition 4: No strategic importance

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. This country is geographically far from the United States and has very little strategic importance to the United States.

Condition 5: Harsh Repression

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. Reliable media sources demonstrate that dozens of LGBTQ+ people have been rounded up by police and then taken to secret detention centers where they have been tortured, raped, and extrajudicially killed.

Condition 6: Low-intensity repression

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. Some members of sexual minorities have been arrested for their sexual orientation in a country. However, reliable media sources report that all LGBTQ+ people have been released shortly after they were rounded up by state police. There is no sign of torture or inhuman and degrading treatment.

Control Group

You are a primary advisor for the US President who asked you for your opinion about the following scenario. A country has persecuted sexual minorities for their sexual orientation. This small country is a mountainous country with beautiful lakes and landscapes. The small country is also well-known for its tasty cuisine and popular music.

Part III: Post-Treatment Questions

30. Overall, the US government should aid LGBTQ+ organizations and promote gay rights in this repressive country.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

31. The US should impose economic sanctions against this country cutting all trade and financial relations.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

32. The US should cut previously agreed military or economic aid to this country to force its government to improve gay rights.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

33. The US should allocate funds for LGBTQ+ organizations in this country to improve gay rights.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

34. The US should make advancing gay rights globally a foreign policy priority.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

35. The United States should restore its leadership role in advancing LGBTQ+ equality and human rights more broadly on the global stage

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Somewhat agree
- c. Somewhat disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

APPENDIX B

CHAPTER 4: IRB APPROVAL



EXEMPTION GRANTED

Kim Fridkin

CLAS-SS: Politics and Global Studies, School of (SPGS)
480/965-4195

Fridkin@asu.edu

Dear [Kim Fridkin](#):

On 8/31/2022 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Western Support for Global Gay Rights: Shared Identity, National Interests, and Repression Intensity
Investigator:	Kim Fridkin
IRB ID:	STUDY00016441
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IRB Social Behavioral 2019_posted 09082021_1.docx, Category: IRB Protocol;• recruitment postings-2.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;• recruitment_methods_consent form_24-08-2022.pdf, Category: Consent Form;• Supporting Document 08-24-2022.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interviewquestions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 8/31/2022.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

REMINDER - - Effective January 12, 2022, in-person interactions with human subjects require adherence to all current policies for ASU faculty, staff, students and visitors. Up-to-date information regarding ASU's COVID-19 Management Strategy can be found [here](#). IRB approval is related to the research activity involving human subjects, all other protocols related to COVID-19 management including face coverings, health checks, facility access, etc. are governed by current ASU policy.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Namig Abbasov