The limits of shame: UN shaming, NGO repression, and women's protests

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Abstract

Within the human rights literature, a growing number of studies have focused on the factors that explain engagement in protests. Most prior studies of this type give little or no consideration to the effect of these factors on gender. Recently, though, some scholars have begun focusing on the gender dimension, exploring why women engage in protests specifically. In this study, we examine a previously unexplored factor, that of naming and shaming by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), and its effect on the likelihood of women's protest activities. We argue that UNHRC shaming increases the likelihood of women engaging in protests. Moreover, given its pre-eminent position within the UN, UNHRC shaming should be much more effective in mobilizing women in comparison with shaming by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, in countries where governments actively repress NGOs, the effect of UNHRC shaming on women's protests should be smaller.

Keywords

Introduction

On 25 May 2022, a group of civil society organizations (CSOs) wrote an open letter to the Permanent Representatives of Member and Observer States to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), urging them in the upcoming 50th session to take more stringent action against the

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Taliban government's radically discriminatory policies against Afghan women. In the letter, the organizations wrote that "this is the most serious women's rights crisis in the world today" and requested the UN human rights body "express solidarity and support […] women and girls in and from Afghanistan, including women human rights defenders who continue to advocate for equality and non-discrimination despite threats and risks."[1] Subsequently, on 8 July, the UNHRC passed a public resolution condemning the Taliban government for its mistreatment of women. Emboldened in part by the express support of the international community, women's groups such as the Afghan Powerful Women's Movement organized what most international media called a "rare protest" on 13 August to counter the Taliban government's hard-line positions on women's rights (Zucchino and Akbary, 2022).[2]

From this example, we ask the question: What effect does naming and shaming by the UNHRC have on the likelihood of women engaging in protest?[3] Past scholarship suggests that naming and shaming, defined here as "publicity from global human rights NGOs, global news coverage from widely circulated magazines, and [UNHRC] resolutions" (Hafner-Burton, 2008: 696) has mixed effects on shamed states (Lebovic and Voeten, 2009; Murdie and Peksen, 2013; Vadlamannati et al., 2018). Moreover, a growing body of literature has focused on the impact of UNHRC shaming on target states (Lebovic and Voeten, 2006; Vadlamannati et al., 2018; Adhikari, 2021). However, these types of studies do not differentiate between different domestic audiences in shamed states, such as women (Hafner-Burton, 2008). Consequently, the gendered dimension of naming and shaming remains underexplored beyond a select few studies on international non-governmental organization (INGO) shaming (Murdie and Peksen, 2015a).

In this study, we posit that UNHRC naming and shaming increases the likelihood of women engaging in protests for two reasons. First, UNHRC shaming provides women with greater information about human rights conditions domestically, generating grievances (Murdie and Peksen, 2015a), while simultaneously reducing the costs of mobilization (Murdie and Bhasin, 2011) and creating opportunities that lead to increased protests (Ausderan, 2014). Second, there is reason to suggest that UNHRC shaming has a particularly large effect in comparison with shaming by (I)NGOs because "states would react more strongly to a condemnation issued by the UNCHR compared to one from an NGO [as] it signals that a group of states (for example, at least a majority of the UNCHR members) has agreed to it" (Esarey and DeMeritt, 2017: 594). Thus, the overall effect of UNHRC shaming should bring a heightened sense of empowerment amongst women living in target states, increasing the likelihood of protests regardless of the nature of such demonstrations (violent vs. non-violent). Thus, we address two lacunae within the literature: the potentially powerful effect of *UNHRC shaming* on the likelihood of *women's protest activities*. Additionally, we argue that the positive effect of this naming and shaming is conditional on the presence of a robust set of domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in target states (Murdie and Davis, 2012). Thus, our corollary argument rests upon the assumption that NGOs are present and have the autonomy to operate within shamed states. However, if NGOs are actively repressed in shamed states, as Chaudhry (2022) suggests is the case in many instances, the UNHRC shaming campaigns will be less effective at encouraging and helping women to engage in protest activities.

We utilize a series of negative binomial regressions on a sample of 142 countries from 1991 to 2009 to estimate the effect of UNHRC shaming on the likelihood of women protesting, including on whether protests were violent or non-violent, as well as to estimate the impact of NGO repression in shamed states on the likelihood of women's protests after UNHRC shaming. We have a number of notable findings as a result. First, we show that UNHRC shaming increases the likelihood of women's protests and has a particularly powerful effect in comparison with other types of shaming such as INGO shaming. In fact, the effect is powerful enough that it increases the

likelihood of women engaging in *violent* protests also. However, we also find that the effect of UNHRC naming and shaming is somewhat mitigated by NGO repression in shamed states. These findings have a number of significant implications. For instance, our findings suggest that more focus is needed on the UNHRC in general, especially regarding disparate population groups (like women) within shamed states. Further, more attention needs to be paid to the repression of NGOs within the shaming literature going forward. If NGO repression has become increasingly common over time (Chaudhry, 2022), this has serious implications for how transnational advocacy networks and naming and shaming operate in the international system. For instance, if domestic NGOs are being actively repressed, this could remove the pressure from below aspect of the spiral model that scholars have noted as being necessary in the shaming process (Risse et al., 1999; Murdie and Davis, 2012).

This paper proceeds as follows: First, we outline the relevant literature on the mobilization of women and naming and shaming; second, we provide our theoretical stories related to UNHRC shaming and women's protests; third, we outline our research design and analysis; and finally, we provide concluding remarks and avenues for future research.

The gendered impact of naming and shaming

Over time, scholars have begun paying increasing attention to the effects of a variety of naming and shaming campaigns in target states (Franklin, 2008; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Murdie, 2009). Despite optimism regarding the potential impact of naming and shaming campaigns, initial studies provided mixed results at best. Hafner-Burton (2008), for instance, found no evidence of naming and shaming improving human rights conditions in target states and instead argued that any amount of evidence of shaming by INGOs having a positive effect on human rights conditions in target states was anecdotal at best and simple cheap talk at worst. In contrast, Murdie and Davis (2012) suggest that it is not enough to expect that shaming by itself would have any effect on the domestic human rights conditions of shamed states, but instead requires shaming by outside actors such as states, international organization, or INGOs be combined with the presence of domestic human rights organizations to improve human rights conditions.

This debate led to an increasingly diverse body of literature suggesting that naming and shaming can improve human rights conditions in targeted states and can provide the conditions for further political mobilization domestically. Franklin (2008), for instance, finds that shaming by NGOs and foreign governments of select Latin American governments between 1981 and 1995 reduced repression, although the effect was short-lived. Interestingly, shaming by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), of interest given the topic of this paper, was found to have no effect. DeMeritt (2012), in contrast, demonstrates that INGO and UN shaming reduces the likelihood of the government engaging in extrajudicial killing, with the UN being better equipped to shame target states. Likewise, Krain (2012) finds that shaming by both NGOs and the UN reduces the severity of genocides, highlighting the power of the shaming effect of transnational advocacy networks overall.

Meanwhile, Murdie and Peksen (2015b), most relevant to our study, focus on naming and shaming and women specifically, rather than on the general populace as other studies do. Murdie and Peksen (2015b), for instance, look at the impact of shaming by international women's rights organizations (WROs) on the rights of women domestically. In doing so, they find that shaming by these WROs has a particularly powerful effect on the rights of women in target states. However, Murdie and Peksen (2015b) do not include other elements commonly included in the naming and shaming literature such as the effect of UN shaming on women.

Thus, the impact of UNHRC naming and shaming on women generally remains underexplored at this juncture.

The UNHRC should have a significant effect on women given the organization's central role in the international human rights regime and its increasing focus on the gender dimension. For instance, former UNHRC Chief Navanethem Pillay articulated this by stating that "[The] recognition of the gender dimension in all activities has been part and parcel of UN strategies aimed at putting an end to the social, political and economic discrimination that women face (United Nations News, 2008)."[4] This was further highlighted in the UNHRC's recent (March 2022) Independent Fact-Finding Mission report on Libya, which focused on the alleged atrocities committed by the Libyan government "specifically against women and children"[5] and drew attention to the necessity of the international community supporting women's causes in Libya and elsewhere (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2020).

The source of shaming and women's protest activities

Recently, some scholars have begun focusing on the effects of naming and shaming campaigns by the UNHRC specifically (Lebovic and Voeten, 2006; Franklin, 2008; Hafner-Burton, 2008; Vadlamannati et al., 2018; Adhikari, 2021). Much of the literature on UNHRC naming and shaming focuses on the reputational costs attached to UNHRC shaming. For instance, when the UNHRC publicly shames governments, the act of shaming brands shamed states as outsiders (outcasts) within the international community of states, which in turn attaches greater political risk to any state interacting with the shamed states (Vadlamannati et al., 2018; Barry et al., 2013).

Shaming by the UNHRC can also provide both information and signals to non-governmental groups domestically, shaping perceptions of domestic human rights violations and attitudes toward the targeted government. In this instance, we can liken the effect of UNHRC shaming to the "CNN effect," in which information on human rights violations published in the international context provides information to domestic opposition groups (Livingston and Eachus, 1995). In fact, information of this type greatly shapes domestic perceptions of human rights conditions. For instance, Carlson and Listhaug (2007) find evidence that individual perceptions of domestic human rights violations change based upon coverage of domestic human rights violations. Similarly, Davis et al. (2012) suggest that public condemnation of human rights abuses has a negative effect on domestic public opinion toward the government. In shamed states, people become less likely to believe that the government respects human rights because of the shaming. Finally, Ausderan (2014) finds that public condemnation by the UNHRC provides significant information on domestic conditions to those living in shamed states that may have been hidden previously. As a result of this new information provided by the UNHRC, individuals are then more likely to perceive the human rights conditions within their states as being poor.

Furthermore, Ausderan (2014) posits that the effect of shaming can be linked to the contentious politics literature. The logic holds that by shaping perceptions of human rights conditions in shamed states, shaming creates conditions where perceptions of relative deprivation also increase (Davies, 1962; Murdie and Peksen, 2015a). According to Gurr (1968: 24), this sense of relative deprivation can then lead people to engage in anti-government behavior such as protests and even rebellion depending upon "the intensity and scope of relative deprivation among members of a collectivity." Coupled with support from shaming actors, this provides marginalized communities with a window of opportunity for collective mobilization (Chenoweth and Ulfelder, 2017). In effect, people are more aware of poor conditions within their states because shaming shines a light upon those violations and now have an opportunity to "do something about it." Relatedly, Adhikari (2021) shows

that UNHRC shaming leads to increased donor support for NGOs and CSOs, which in turn helps mobilize disgruntled populations. Thus, it can be argued that shaming by the UNHRC can increase the likelihood of individuals, especially from marginalized populations, engaging in activities such as protests subsequently.

One marginalized group that is subject to this mobilization effect (and subsequently should have a higher likelihood of engaging in protests) is women living within shamed states. Murdie and Peksen (2015a: 182) look at the factors that explain why women engage in protests and find that they respond to the same types of conditions as men in general. For instance, "if a woman is in a state that does not respect her right to hold office or her right to equal employment, she is more likely to have grievances," which may increase the likelihood of protest. We can see evidence of this finding in various recent and prominent women-led protests, including the "women's march" on Washington, DC after Donald Trump was elected in 2016 (Berry and Chenoweth, 2018) as well as in the diffusion of the #MeToo movement globally starting in late 2017 (Lee and Murdie, 2021).

Naming and shaming can increase the likelihood of mobilization for women also. First, naming and shaming provides women with basic information about the magnitude of human rights violations taking place within their states and demonstrates to them that their rights are being violated. This information can act as a means of comparison with other countries, as women are now able to compare the conditions they live under with those in other states. Women can observe, from the naming and shaming, that high levels of gender inequality are present within their states, for example (Murdie and Peksen, 2015a). This additional information also allows them to update their perceptions of government behavior not only at an individual level but at a collective level as well. Providing that increased information reduces the cost of women mobilizing, as they are aware that others have similar information and attitudes toward the government. Ultimately, the act of naming and shaming allows for the easier mobilization of women to engage in and lead protests by reducing the perceived costs of action against the government that is perceived to be violating their rights (Murdie and Bhasin, 2011).

Moreover, UN shaming provides women with an increased opportunity to engage in protests. As demonstrated by Hafner-Burton (2008) and Ausderan (2014), by shedding light on violations, in this case against women, naming and shaming creates conditions (opportunities) that can lead to greater participation in protests. In this instance, women have greater awareness of the violations of human rights carried out within their states. This, in turn, reduces their support for the government. This means that the cost of mobilization decreases for women, as they have a greater expectation of others sharing their views and subsequently become more likely to engage in protests. Thus, naming and shaming by the UNHRC creates a window of opportunity for women to engage in protest activities. This leads to our first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Naming and shaming by the UNHRC will increase the likelihood of a state experiencing women's protests.

We argue above that UNHRC naming and shaming should increase the likelihood of shamed states experiencing women's protests. There is also reason to suggest that being shamed by the UNHRC has a particularly outsized effect on state behavior in comparison with being shamed by NGOs[6] in general (Terman and Voeten, 2018). Many states, for instance, care about their international reputations and are subsequently quite responsive to shaming tactics by the UNHRC (Kinzelbach and Lehmann, 2015). This is so because shaming by the UNHRC represents a consensus amongst a large number of states willing to go on the record signaling dissatisfaction with

current policies and a need for policy change in shamed states. Esarey and DeMeritt (2017), for instance, suggest that given the complexity and contradictory nature of interests pursued by the various member states of the UNHRC, the mere existence of the resolution by the UNHRC shaming a state provides a powerful signal of support to populations within shamed states. Therefore, UNHRC shaming should have a more powerful effect on women in target states in comparison with that from INGOs, including those INGOs that are linked specifically to women's rights. Thus, our expectation is that UNHRC shaming should increase the likelihood of women's protests in comparison with shaming by INGOs. This leads us to our second hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1b:** Naming and shaming by the UNHRC will have a larger effect on the likelihood of women protesting than naming and shaming from INGOs.

The effect of UNHRC shaming on women's non-violent and violent protests

There is also reason to suggest that UNHRC naming and shaming will have different effects on the types of protests women engage in, i.e., non-violent or violent protests. According to Hafner-Burton (2008: 692), naming and shaming "could have the accidental side effect of providing incentives for groups to orchestrate acts of violence" within the shamed state. However, we cannot simply assume that the effect of UNHRC shaming would increase the likelihood of women engaging in both non-violent and violent protest. Chenoweth and Lewis (2013), for instance, argue that violent and non-violent campaign onsets are explained by separate factors that often are opposing to each campaign type. Likewise, Chenoweth and Ulfelder (2017: 300) argue that although "the grievances that give rise to both non-violent and violent rebellion may be similar, the processes through which these different types of contentious behavior emerge, mature, and succeed are quite distinct." According to Chenoweth and Ulfelder (2017), non-violent protests are dependent on agency within states, including on mass mobilization, loyalty shifts, and legitimacy challenges toward the government, all things provided through effective naming and shaming. In contrast, violent campaigns are subject to the constraints of structural factors such as military capacity and skill. Having said that, much of the literature on women's engagements in contentious politics focuses on non-violent protests (Murdie and Peksen 2015a). Thus, we argue that UNHRC shaming should increase the likelihood of women's non-violent protests in shamed states.

However, we also expect that UNHRC naming and shaming should increase the likelihood of women engaging in *violent* protests for two reasons. First, because UNHRC shaming provides such a powerful signal to women within shamed states, it may help overcome reluctance, information deficits, and mobilization obstacles that would have previously hindered women from engaging in violent protests. The logic here follows closely with Hypothesis 1b—that UNHRC shaming provides a greater impetus for women to protest against the state than shaming by non-state entities. Similarly, the powerful effect of UNHRC shaming may lead shamed states into responding in such a way that increases the likelihood of women's violent protests. For instance, shamed states may fear the potential consequences of powerful shaming by the UNHRC, and will preemptively respond by placing restrictions on domestic CSOs, hindering these CSOs abilities to mobilize (Smidt et al., 2021). If that is the case, women in the shamed state may no longer have the option of non-violent protest through normal avenues and may instead engage in violent protests. This leads us to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: Naming and shaming by the UNHRC will increase the likelihood of states experiencing women's non-violent protests.

Hypothesis 2b: Naming and shaming by the UNHRC will increase the likelihood of states experiencing women's violent protests.

NGO repression, UNHRC shaming, and women's protests

The effect of UNHRC shaming, however, may be conditional on certain factors, namely the presence of a robust population of domestic NGOs. The importance of domestic NGOs was first posited by Keck and Sikkink (1998) in their "boomerang model," whereby they posit that international NGOs and domestic NGOs form networks where information, resources, information, and other elements are shared that allow NGOs to pressure governments to improve conditions. Following this, Risse et al. (1999), created the "spiral model," a revision on the boomerang model, in which they argue that pressure from above (the international theater) from actors that include IGOs, INGOs, and states, and pressure from below (domestic NGOs) initially force domestic governments to provide shallow concessions that eventually turn into deep-seated improvements in human rights conditions domestically. Murdie and Davis (2012) test the veracity of this assertion and find that international shaming works when there is a concentration of domestic human rights organizations present that makes the shaming from above "stick" domestically.

Indeed, NGOs have been used widely as a tool to promote women's causes in developing countries (Kopecky and Mudde, 2008).[7] According to Chaudhry (2022, 2), NGOs can "influence electoral politics, aid mobilization," thereby supporting marginalized groups to voice their discontent. It is in this vein that consolidated democratic donor states often support local NGOs that promote gender equity in their missions (Ottaway and Carothers, 2000; Quintelier and Deth, 2014). In Albania in 2011, for example, the UNHRC coordinated with UN Women to mobilize and work with local women's grassroots movements and CSOs prior to local municipal elections. These efforts allowed women to directly address their demands to local governments regarding domestic violence, the lack of employment opportunities, and other gender-related issues. Further, these local organizations are particularly useful for raising awareness about a state's human rights abuses as they are deeply entrenched in the society they operate within.

Since the UN often works in tandem with local NGOs, the presence of domestic NGOs within the shamed state should strengthen the spiral effect. To this point, Murdie and Peksen (2015a) look at the impact that the targeted campaigns of international WROs coupled with the presence of domestic WROs has on conditions within targeted states and find that these campaigns are particularly effective at pressuring governments into enacting gender reforms. Given this, it should come as no surprise that some foreign aid donors have found CSOs and NGOs to be particularly useful in encouraging women's political involvement. Indeed, Diamond (1994) argues that local NGOs have been highly successful in helping traditionally excluded groups—such as women—to voice their concerns in a legitimate fashion. Furthermore, Pospieszna (2015) mentions that support for women's causes has yielded significant positive gains in regard women's empowerment. For instance, grassroot NGOs benefit women in two particular ways—by helping women recognize their rights (mental empowerment) and helping them to practice those recognized rights (legal empowerment).

Despite the positive effects that NGOs have had on human rights conditions in many states generally, there is a growing perception in many governments and with governmental elites that NGOs represent insidious foreign policy tools of the West. NGOs have been used to increase the

organization and mobilization of marginalized groups. They at times also provide necessary resources for anti-government protests (Dupuy et al., 2016). And these organizations, in many cases, actively partner with donor states and other international organizations to further causes of marginalized communities, including that of women. It is because of these reasons that some states perceive NGOs as threats to regime/state stability. Given this, many countries recently have begun placing strict limitations on how NGOs operate domestically. For instance, Viktor Orban, Hungary's Prime Minister, asserted that "we're not dealing with civil society members but paid political activists trying to help foreign interests here" to justify his administration's effort to curtail the rights of foreign-funded NGOs such as Women for Women Against Violence and Labrisz Lesbian Association.

Likewise, a similar effort to curtail the activities of "foreign-funded" NGOs can be seen in India. In 2017, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led government restricted The Lawyers Collective—an NGO with the stated goal of furthering women's constitutional and human rights—from receiving foreign grants because the advocacy group had a history of representing critics of the government's sectarian policies (Mohan, 2017).[8] The BJP government also responded with similar hostility to NGO-supported activity elsewhere. For instance, in the aftermath of a Supreme Court decision on 28 September 2018 that ruled unconstitutional the barring of women from entry to Hindu temples, the Home Minister at the time voiced his displeasure at the women activists seeking access to the temple by claiming that those attempting to prevent women from entering the temple were merely trying to affirm central historical Hindu tenets.[9] Despite opposition from the BJP government, efforts to bar women from entering the temple after the Supreme Court decision were rendered largely unsuccessful because of local NGOs' activism. This led the BJP government to enact further restrictions on NGO activity. In fact, these responses to NGO activity by the BJP government were part of a larger trend within India under Modi, as the government revoked the licenses of thousands of NGOs through means such as the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act, which prohibits NGOs from receiving foreign funding for acts that threaten "national interest."

Today more than 130 countries have responded to the growing presence of CSOs by actively repressing NGOs. In these countries, these non-state actors are sometimes violently repressed by governments, to significant reputational costs to governments engaging in this type of behavior. Yet, according to Chaudhry (2022), many states have become increasingly likely to repress NGOs administratively, where they place strict limits on foreign funding and the degree of activities that NGOs can engage in. Administrative repression, in this case, is a less overt type of repression designed to limit the ability of NGOs to mobilize populations against the government. In doing so, administrative repression limits the impact that NGOs might have on domestic populations engaging in protest activities.

Thus, in states that actively repress domestic NGOs, naming and shaming by the UNHRC may not increase the likelihood of women engaging in protest to the same level as in UNHRC shamed states where domestic NGOs are not repressed. Active repression, whether violent or administrative repression, deprives women of support from international actors like the UNHRC, from mobilization resources that would help organize protest activities, and would increase the risk of engaging in protest activities also. Although UNHRC shaming still acts as a signal for mobilization in this instance, active repression of domestic NGOs counters this shaming effect to an extent. Thus, our third hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 3: The likelihood of women's protests will be lower following naming and shaming by the UNHRC if domestic NGOs are actively repressed.

Data and methodological approach

To assess the empirical merits of the hypotheses mentioned above, we utilize time-series, cross-sectional data spanning from 1991 to 2009 covering 142 countries with a number of negative binomial regressions to model the event-count data for women's protest activities.[10] Because there is a positive contagion in our dependent variable (see Figure A1 in Appendix 1), this is the most appropriate modeling strategy as it allows us to account for the over-dispersion in the variable.[11] We also include the Huber–White sandwich estimator of variance to obtain robust standard errors. Furthermore, to control for both the problems of autocorrelation and potential simultaneity in both the outcome and explanatory variables, we include a one-year lag ($t − 1$) of the outcome variable (Beck and Katz, 1995) and a one-year lag of all the time-variant explanatory variables in our models respectively.

Dependent variable

Because we are interested in the influence of UN shaming on women's protest activities, our data includes only those events where the main actors were women. We use data on women's protests based on a new coding of the updated Integrated Data for Events Analysis dataset from Virtual Research Associates (Bond et al., 2003). This dataset compiles protest events against state offices or officials from Reuters Global News Service. For an event to be considered as women protest, we only include protests where the main actors were stated to be "woman," "women," or "feminist" either in the header or the body of the reporting.[12] Further, we also differentiate between women's violent protests and women's non-violent protests. For violent protests, we consider protests that contain the threat or the use of force. Examples include attacking a government official or office, destroying government property, or a bombing of a government official's home. On the other hand, non-violent protests are events that include symbolic acts of opposition in order to pursue a particular set of goals. These acts include protest marches, demonstrations, boycotts, and sit-ins (Murdie and Bhasin, 2011). In all, we created three different outcome variables to test our hypotheses: (1) all women protest (including both violent and non-violent protest); (2) women's non-violent protests; and (3) women's violent protests. We provide the distribution of these three variables in Online Appendix 1a.

Independent variables

We obtain data on UN human rights shaming from Vadlamannati et al.'s (2018) database. In this study, we created a dummy measure with the value "1" if UNHRC member states censure a given country by adopting a public resolution in the prior year and "0" otherwise. Furthermore, to investigate the robustness of the effect of UN shaming on women's protests, we also consider the severity of shaming. To do so, we utilize a decomposed measure of shaming, where a dummy variable for each category of shaming is included.[13] The UNHRC has four options to deal with the suspected human rights-abusing state. First, the UNHRC may open a case against other states to assess the credibility of levied accusations; such states are not put in the spotlight. This form of shaming is coded as 1. For the next level of shaming (i.e., coded as 2), states are targeted and are censured, but the shaming takes place in closed sessions, meaning that a confidential report is issued against the accused state. This usually happens when the allegations of human rights violations have some merits. The next level (coded as 3) comes with an advisory or critical statement from the chair of the UNHRC. Such statements are issued only when the accused states are proved to have committed minor but not widespread human rights abuses. The final and the most severe

form of condemnation constitutes a public resolution against the accused state's human rights practices. While the first three forms of condemnations impose little backlash, issuance of public resolutions garners significant media and public attention (Lebovic and Voeten, 2006).[14]

To empirically test our hypothesis that NGO repression has a direct and meaningful impact on women's ability and willingness to mobilize even in the face of UN condemnations, we utilize data on NGO repression obtained from Chaudhry (2022). The data contains both administrative and violent crackdowns on NGOs by state authorities. Administrative crackdown refers to barriers created by state authorities for NGOs to weaken their effectiveness. Such hurdles include ensuring that the registration process is as cumbersome for NGOs as possible, making it extremely difficult or prohibiting NGOs altogether from receiving foreign funding, and barring NGOs from being involved in any form of political activity. These variables are coded from a variety of data source including the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index, the USAID NGO Sustainability Index, the NGO Law Monitor, and CIVICUS.[15] Second, we include data on violent crackdown against NGOs, including prosecution against NGO activists and other human rights defenders. The coding for this variable is based primarily on reports published by Amnesty International.[16]

Control variables

To avoid omitted variable bias, we include several relevant variables that might affect women's protests. First, we include a women's political rights variable in our models. We expect countries that guarantee women's right to participate in political activities such as freedom of speech and greater voting rights to experience fewer protests. Similarly, we also expect states that uphold women's economic rights such as equal wages to men to experience a lower likelihood of women's protests. These variables range from zero (no guarantee of rights and systematic discrimination against women) to three (guarantee of internationally recognized socioeconomic rights). We obtain data on women's political and economic rights from the Cingranelli–Richards Human Rights database (Cingranelli et al., 2014).

We also control for women's presence in national parliaments by including the percentage of women in the lower houses of parliament using Cole's (2012) dataset. We expect that a higher percentage of women in legislative bodies will diminish the need for protest in general and more specifically against the government. In our study, the variable ranges from 0 to 49. Next, we control for the percentage of the female population, as we expect states with larger proportions of women will embolden them to voice grievances easier. Additionally, we also include the percentage of females in the labor force in our analyses, as we expect that having more women in the labor force may result in fewer protests more broadly as much of their economic need would have been met. The tendency is that those who work are more likely to be more satisfied with their present situation compared with the unemployed and have fewer motives and less time to demonstrate (Schussman and Soule, 2005). Furthermore, we control for the number of women's INGOs present within a country to consider the fact that such organizations help women mobilize more easily, thus increasing the incidence of women's protests. The information on the percentages of female population, female labor force, and number of women's INGO was obtained from Murdie and Peksen (2015a).

Moreover, in line with the resource mobilization approach, poor economic conditions in a country might also fuel grievances that result in more protests (Bell et al., 2013; Tilly, 1978). As such, our models include the natural log of GDP per capita (in 2005 constant US dollars) obtained from World Bank's World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2012). Also, regime type may affect women's likelihood to engage with and initiate protests. We include Polity2 scores using the Polity IV dataset obtained from Marshall et al. (2016). Moreover, protests are more likely to take

place in states in the middle of the Polity spectrum (Murdie and Peksen, 2015b). To account for this possible inverted-U relationship, our models also include the squared value of Polity scores.

We also posit that media coverage of UN shaming affects the degree of exposure of atrocities committed within the state to its population. More concretely, we expect higher media coverage to increase the likelihood of women engaging in protests. To account for this phenomenon, we control for the number of events about each country that appear in Reuters Global News Service in the given year. This variable is obtained using Murdie and Peksen (2015a). Following Murdie and Peksen's (2015a) model specification, we also include five world region dummy variables to control for unobserved region-specific effects. The regions are Asia-Pacific; former Soviet Union–Eastern Europe; Middle East–North Africa; Latin America–Caribbean; sub-Saharan Africa; and Western Democracies–Japan, which serves as the reference category. Table A1 in Online Appendix A provides the descriptive statistics of all of the variables used in our analyses.

Analyses and results

The results in Table 1 show the effects of various determinants of all women's protests (Model 1), women's violent protests (Model 2), and women's non-violent protests (Model 3). After controlling for possible confounders across these three different models, we find that countries shamed by the UNHRC in the prior year experience more women's protests in general, including both violent and non-violent protests, in the following year relative to a country that was not shamed by the UNHRC. This result supports Hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 2b where we argue that women are more likely to engage in protest, be it violently or non-violently, following naming and shaming by the UNHRC.

We conduct several additional analyses to assess the robustness of our findings in Table 1. First, we use an alternative measure of UN shaming that considers the different degrees of condemnations. The results suggest that a more severe form of shaming (i.e. the issuance of public resolution) is associated with a greater number of women's protests, in terms of both violent and non-violent protests (Appendix Table B1). Next, we specify a model in which we replace the year fixed effects with year-random effects where we estimate error component models that are specific for years (distributed normally with a zero mean and a variance to be estimated; see Online Appendix Table B2).[17] Third, we substitute the media coverage bias variable, which is the number of all events about each country that appeared in Reuters Global News Service in the given year, with the *New York Times*' reporting on naming and shaming by the UNHRC (see Online Appendix Table B3). Lastly, to ameliorate the potential problem of selection bias, we employ a regression with an endogenous treatment effect where we model the determinant of naming and shaming by the UNHRC in the first step, before modeling it non-linearly in the second step. The non-linear prediction equation for UN condemnations and the linear estimation of total number of women's protests are estimated simultaneously. By doing so, we are accounting for the possibility that the probability of a given country experiencing women's protests is non-random and this allows us to alleviate bias in our statistical estimates that are caused by selection effects. We present this result in Online Appendix Table B4. These alternative specifications do not change the substantive results of our findings that naming and shaming by the UNHRC does have a positive and significant effect on the total number of women's protests, regardless of protest type.

Regarding the effect of various control variables on the number of women's protests, we find that countries with higher scores for women's economic rights, countries with more female representation in parliament, and countries with higher proportion of women in the labor force in the prior year tend to have a smaller number of women's protests (including violent and non-violent protests) in the following year than countries with lower economic scores for women, countries with smaller numbers of

Table 1. Analyses of all women's protests, women's violent protests, and women's non-violent protests.

|	All protests	Violent protests	Non-violent protests
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
UN Shaming$_{t-1}$	0.819***	0.854***	0.763***
	(0.128)	(0.142)	(0.132)
Women's Political Rights$_{t-1}$	0.0782	0.103	0.0451
	(0.0817)	(0.092)	(0.0876)
Women's Economic Rights$_{t-1}$	−0.234***	−0.254***	−0.22**
	(0.0628)	(0.0726)	(0.0678)
% Women in Parliament$_{t-1}$	−0.002	−0.005	0.003
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
% Female Population$_{t-1}$	0.051*	0.0554*	0.0528*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
% Female Labor Force$_{t-1}$	−0.02**	−0.02**	−0.017**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Women's INGO$_{t-1}$	0.038***	0.039***	0.036***
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Log GDP$_{t-1}$	−0.014	−0.068	0.139***
	(0.039)	(0.044)	(0.041)
Polity$_{t-1}$	0.095**	0.102**	0.0425
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.035)
Polity Squared$_{t-1}$	−0.0047**	−0.0069***	−0.00406*
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.0016)
Media Coverage (Reuters)$_{t-1}$	0.003	0.005	0.006
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)
All Protests$_{t-1}$	0.039***		
	(0.004)		
Violent Protests$_{t-1}$		0.053***	
		(0.005)	
Non-violent Protests$_{t-1}$			0.077***
			(0.01)
Year and region dummies	Included	Included	Included
Constant	−0.103	−0.142	−3.471*
	(1.153)	(1.38)	(1.349)
Observations	2508	2508	2508

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05. INGO, International non-governmental organization.

female representatives in parliament, and countries with lower proportion of women in the labor force respectively. On the other hand, the presence of women's INGOs in a given country in the previous year has a positive and significant effect on the number of protests regardless of violent or non-violent. This finding is consistent with Murdie and Peksen's (2015a) argument that women's organizations greatly facilitate the collective mobilization of women. The share of women population also has a positive and significant effect on the number of women's protests in the following year. We also find that improved women's political rights do not have any impact on the number of women's protests generally, demonstrating some evidence that better political rights for women may represent weak concessions by governments with minimal risks to state stability (Adhikari et al., 2022). Finally, a country's GDP only exerts a positive influence on women's non-violent protests.

To further examine the impact of UN shaming on women's protest, we compute the marginal effects by analyzing the difference in the number of women's protests when there is no naming vs. shaming by the UN and when a state was shamed for its human rights practices by international women's NGOs. To do so, we hold the continuous control variables at their mean values and the categorical control variables at their modal categories. Figure 1 shows the marginal effect of naming and shaming by the UN human rights body on all women's protests, women's violent protests, and women's non-violent protests. Using the coefficients estimated from the negative binomial regression model reported in Table 1, we find that the expected number of all women's protests increases from 6 to 13.7 when there is naming and shaming by the UNHRC in the preceding year. Similarly, UNHRC shaming increases both women's violent protests from 4.9 to 11.5 and non-violent women's protests from 1.2 to 2.5. Crucially, these effects are substantially greater than naming and shaming made by women's NGO.[18] While the increase in the number of all women' protests when there is one or more instance of UN shaming relative to no UN shaming in a given year in a specific country is about 7.7, the increase is only about 4.8 when there is one or more women's human rights NGO shaming relative to no such shaming.[19] Thus, this result supports Hypothesis 1b and we can conclude that UN shaming has a bigger impact on mobilizing women to protest than shaming that comes from women's human rights NGOs.[20]

Interactions between NGO restriction and UN shaming

While our results in the preceding section reveal that naming and shaming by the UNHRC in the prior year has a positive and significant effect on the number of women's protests in the following
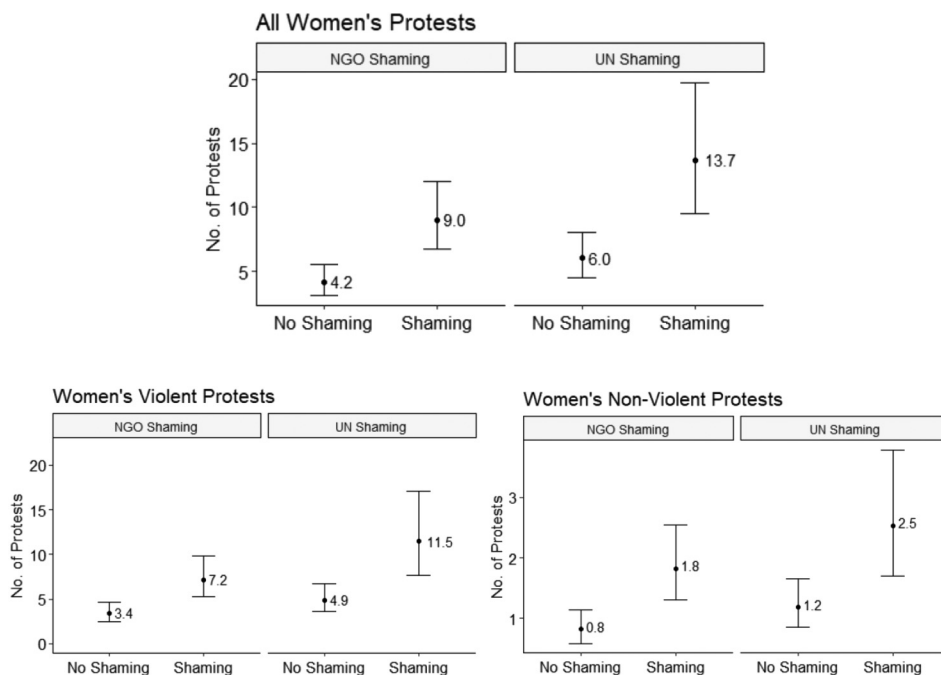
Figure 1. Effects of UN shaming vs. international non-governmental organization shaming.

year, we argue that this relationship can be conditioned by the extent to which NGOs are being repressed in target states. In other words, countries that do not allow non-state entities such as human rights organizations to operate freely may dampen the ability of women to protest. As such, in this section we examine how both administrative and violent repression of domestic NGOs interacts with UNHRC shaming in the prior year in predicting the number of women's protests in the following year. By doing so, we are able to explicate whether the effect of UNHRC shaming on the number of women's protest is attenuated when there are crackdowns on the NGOs as stated in Hypothesis 3.

Table 2 presents the negative binomial regression results of the interaction between UNHRC shaming and barriers to political activities for NGOs (Model 4), as well as the interaction between UN shaming and violence against NGO activists (Model 5) with regards to the number of women's protests. In both models, we find that not only does the effect of UN shaming remain positive and significant, but the effects of barriers to political activities for NGOs and violence against NGO activists are also positive and significant. In other words, administrative or violent repression of domestic NGOs in the prior year results in an increased number of women's protests in the subsequent year. However, when we interact the UN

Table 2. Interactive effect of UN shaming and NGO crackdown on women's protests.

DV = All Women's Protests	Model 4	Model 5
UN Shaming$_{t-1}$	1.032*** (0.15)	1.268*** (0.206)
Barriers to Political Activities for NGOs$_{t-1}$	0.17* (0.08)	
Barriers to Political Activities for NGOs$_{t-1}$ × UN Shaming$_{t-1}$	−1.023*** (0.271)	
Violence against NGO Activists$_{t-1}$		0.03*** (0.006)
Violence against NGO Activists$_{t-1}$ × UN Shaming$_{t-1}$		−0.053** (0.017)
Women's Political Rights$_{t-1}$	0.0944 (0.0818)	0.0324 (0.0913)
Women's Economic Rights$_{t-1}$	−0.221*** (0.0638)	−0.175* (0.0723)
% Women in Parliament$_{t-1}$	−0.001	−0.0008
	(0.0046)	(0.006)
% Female Population$_{t-1}$	0.048*	0.024
	(0.021)	(0.025)
% Female Labor Force$_{t-1}$	−0.017**	−0.022***
	(0.005)	(0.006)
Women's INGO$_{t-1}$	0.0375***	0.0321***
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Log GDP$_{t-1}$	−0.0132	0.0539
	(0.0385)	(0.0527)
Polity$_{t-1}$	0.098**	0.114**
	(0.033)	(0.044)
Polity Squared$_{t-1}$	−0.007***	−0.007**
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Media Coverage (Reuters)$_{t-1}$	0.004	−0.004
	(0.005)	(0.004)
All Protests$_{t-1}$	0.038***	0.037***
	(0.004)	(0.004)
Year and region dummies	Included	Included
Constant	0.0049	0.134
	(1.151)	(1.335)
Observations	2508	1397

Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

shaming variable with the two crackdowns on NGOs variables—Barriers to Political Activities for NGO and Violence against NGO Activists—separately, the estimated coefficient becomes negative and significant. What this suggests is that when there is administrative or violent repression of domestic NGOs in a given country in a particular year, the number of women's protests is likely to be smaller following UN shaming compared with another similarly shamed country where there is less repression of domestic NGOs. This is in line with our expectation that although naming and shaming by the UNHRC acts as a signal for mobilization, active repression of domestic NGOs deprives women of the resources that would facilitate protest activity, lowering the likelihood of women's protest.

We also find that the negative and significant coefficient on our interaction terms persists when we alter our statistical models in several ways. First, when we change the dependent variable to either women's violent or non-violent protests, the interactive effect between UN shaming and barriers to political activities, as well as the interactive effect between UN shaming and violence against NGO activists, remains negative and significant (see Table B5 and B6 in Appendix B). Second, the direction and significance of the interaction terms remain the same when we run the models with year random effects instead of year fixed effects (Table B7 in Appendix B). Finally, our substantive conclusion about the interactive effect remains unchanged even when we use an alternative measure of UN shaming that considers the different degrees of condemnations (see Table B8 in Online Appendix B). All of these suggest that our finding regarding the interactive effects between UN shaming and NGO crackdown on the number of women's protests are robust to different model specifications.

To better depict how the UNHRC's shaming influence on women's protests is moderated by the severity of the crackdown on NGOs, we plot the marginal effect of the interaction terms from Models 4 and 5 in Table 2, while holding constant the other confounders in Figure 2. The general trend suggests that countries that are named and shamed by the UN tend to have a higher number of women's protests than countries that are not named and shamed, and this relationship is highly conditional on the degree of repression of domestic NGOs in those countries. Specifically, the predicted number of women's protests in a country that is named and shamed
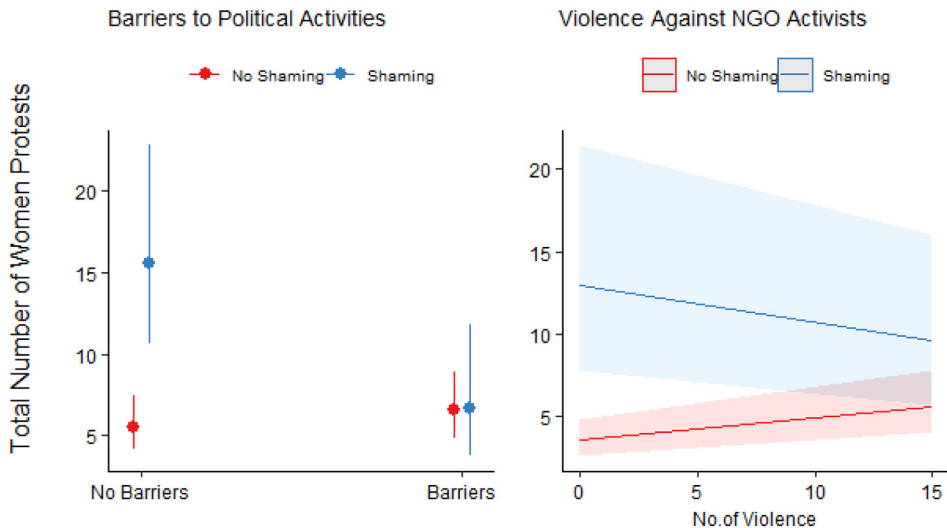
Figure 2. Marginal effects of naming and shaming and non-governmental organization crackdown on the number of women's protests.

by the UN is 6.6 if the NGOs are facing barriers to political activities compared with 15.6 in a country that is also named and shamed but does not have any barriers for NGOs to engage in political activities. Meanwhile, in countries that are not being named and shamed, there is no significant difference in the number of women's protests regardless of the presence barriers for NGOs to engage in political activities. This result suggests that having administrative barriers for NGOs greatly reduces the likelihood of women's protests even though the presence of UN shaming may create an incentive for them to mobilize.

In a similar vein, we also observe a similar trend when examining how UNHRC shaming interacts with violent crackdowns on NGO activists in predicting the number of women's protests. As the number of violent activities against NGO activists increases in shamed countries, the number of women's protests tends to decrease. For example, the total number of women's protests in countries that are being named and shamed but do not have any violence against their NGO activists is about 12.6. This number, however, decreases to 10 in similarly shamed countries that record 10 reported cases of violence against their NGO activists. One possible reason for this finding is that in countries that are shamed by the UNHRC, violence against NGO activists results in fewer protests because such states may try to prevent further erosion of their international reputations after shaming. As evidence of this, Murdie and Bhasin (2011) argue that, owing to the greater media spotlight after shaming, leaders in shamed countries may reduce violence to avoid further bad press. On the other hand, in a scenario where a particular country is not shamed and there is less media spotlight, the frequency of women's protests in that country slightly increases as violence against NGO activists increase. Specifically, we find that the number of women's protests increases from 3.6 to 4.8 when violent acts against NGO activists increase from 0 to 10. Nonetheless, after about 10 incidents of violence against NGO activists, the difference between shamed and other countries is indiscernible. Based on these findings, we find strong support for Hypothesis 3 that women are less likely to protest following naming and shaming by the UNHRC if domestic NGOs are being actively repressed.

Conclusion

A growing body of literature highlights the factors that predict when women are more likely to engage in contentious political activities such as protests. Studies have shown, for instance, that women respond to similar factors to men when choosing to engage in non-violent protests (Murdie and Peksen, 2015a). However, some factors remain unexplored, namely the effect that naming and shaming by international organizations such as the UNHRC have on the likelihood of women's violent and non-violent protest. We provide three arguments for the effect that shaming by the UNHRC has on women's protests. First, we argue that shaming by the UNHRC increases the likelihood of women engaging in protest activities. This is so because naming and shaming from the UNHRC provides women with information, allowing them to update their assessments of government behavior, and making mobilization easier for women to engage in protests. Second, we argue that shaming by the UNHRC should have a particularly strong effect, especially in comparison with actors such as INGOs, on women's protests. This is so because shaming by an entity whose members are states provides a more powerful signal of support to marginalized groups, including women, compared with shaming by non-governmental organizations. However, we also argue that the likelihood of women engaging in protest is conditional on whether domestic NGOs, which provide critical sources of information and help with mobilization, are being actively repressed by the government (Chaudhry, 2022). In testing our assertions, we find significant empirical support for our proposed hypotheses, with shaming by the UNHRC acting

being particularly strong in increasing the likelihood of women's protests, both violent and non-violent, but also being conditional on whether NGOs are actively repressed by the government.

Our initial tests show that naming and shaming by the UNHRC can effect some change in target countries, as women appear to respond to naming and shaming from the UN by engaging in and leading protests. First, this appears to be in contrast to much of the literature that argues that naming and shaming by international actors by themselves does not produce any changes in conditions within target states (Hafner-Burton, 2008). Our findings that the UNHRC has a strong standalone effect may suggest that the UNHRC is a uniquely powerful naming and shaming actor because of its position as the preeminent international human rights body. However, some caution is needed here, as we did not investigate whether this increased protesting by women subsequently improved women's rights conditions within target states. Some literature suggests that women's protests can subsequently influence domestic conditions positively. Banaszak et al. (2021) find that in states characterized as having high levels of gender equality, increasing numbers of women's protests reduce the gender gap further. Meanwhile, the effects of shaming by the UNHRC could also have negative effects. For instance, the increasing number of women's protests as a result of UNHRC shaming may raise the specter of increased repression by the government in response, worsening conditions for women domestically. These possible consequences and others require further exploration in future scholarship.

We also find that UNHRC naming and shaming has a stronger effect in increasing the likelihood of women engaging in violent protests compared with non-violent protests. However, at this juncture, it remains unclear why UNHRC naming and shaming would increase the likelihood of violent protests at a greater rate than with non-violent protests. It may be the case again that the UNHRC, as the preeminent UN human rights body, has an outsized effect on mobilization, providing a strong signal of support to women (and other domestic groups) that provides them with the means and confidence to engage more forcefully against the government. It is also possible that shamed states respond differently to UNHRC shaming, creating conditions in which violent protest increases (Smidt et al., 2021). However, more research needs to be done on the strength of the effect of UNHRC naming and shaming on contentious political activities in future scholarship.

Finally, it is important to explore the implications that our findings on NGO repression have for shaming processes more generally. Utilizing a new dataset from Chaudhry (2022), we find that active repression of domestic NGOs by target governments decreases the effect that UNHRC shaming has on the likelihood of women engaging in protest. Much of the literature on the effect that naming and shaming has on target states is predicated on the spiral model (Risse et al., 1999). In the spiral model, pressure comes from two sources. Pressure from above comes from INGOs, IGO such as the UNHRC, and states. Meanwhile, pressure from below comes from domestic NGOs. Given studies confirming this process, such as Murdie and Davis (2012), domestic NGOs are integral to the improvement of human rights conditions domestically. If NGOs are actively repressed in many countries, as demonstrated by Chaudhry (2022), then the pressure from below is being removed from the shaming campaign equation. Thus, we also must assume that naming and shaming will be less effective as a tool for improving human rights when domestic NGO repression is widespread. Thus, it is imperative that more research be conducted on NGO repression to see what effect it has on transnational advocacy networks and the success of naming and shaming campaigns.

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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/01/call-urgent-debate-womens-rights-crisis-afghanistan-50th-session-un-human-rights, accessed 24 August 2022.
2. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/world/asia/afghan-women-taliban-protests.html, accessed 24 August 2022.
3. We use "UN Human Rights Council" or "UNHRC" as a proxy language that includes "UN human rights body" and UN Commission on Human Rights in meaning throughout this paper. Also, throughout this paper, we use "naming and shaming" and "shaming" interchangeably.
4. https://news.un.org/en/story/2008/09/272742-un-human-rights-chief-urges-greater-efforts-halt-gender-discrimination, accessed 20 April 2022.
5. https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/libya/index, accessed 20 April 2022.
6. Contrastingly, Koliev et al. (2022) find that shaming by both NGOs and the UNHRC separately are effective at shaping the views of citizens on their leaders in shamed states.
7. https://www.undp.org/content/dam/china/docs/Publications/UNDP-CH03%20Annexes.pdf , accessed 11 April 2022.
8. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/09/opinion/narendra-modis-crackdown-on-civil-society-in-india.html, accessed 11 April 2022.
9. https://www.ndtv.com/kerala-news/ashram-of-kerala-religious-preacher-swami-sandeepananda-giri-who-backed-sabrimala-verdict-attacked-l-1938432, accessed 11 April 2022.
10. Our models are based primarily on Murdie and Peksen (2015a).
11. While the Poisson distribution can be used to model for count data, it assumes that the mean is equal to the variance after accounting for the predictors (King, 1989), making it not the best model for a dependent variable that is over-dispersed.
12. See Murdie and Peksen (2015b: 185) for the detailed coding scheme.
13. We create a dummy variable for each of the four categories and include them in our analysis in Table B1 in Online Appendix B. We do this so as to not assume linearity in the effects from one degree of severity to the next.
14. See Figure A1b in Online Appendix 1b for a graphical depiction of the distribution of the variable.
15. See Online Appendix 1c for the distribution of both violent and administrative crackdowns on NGOs.
16. Chaudhry (2022: 15–16) provides a detailed discussion on the coding procedures.
17. In this approach, we are treating the years in our data as a sample out of a larger set of years. Thus, estimating the parameters of the population of years (e.g. the variance of typical year average women's protests over years) from the sample of years (each with an average number of women's protest) is a reasonable thing to do.
18. See Murdie and Peksen (2015b) and Online Appendix C for the measurement details of women's human rights NGO shaming and Table C1 in Online Appendix C for the regression results.
19. We observe similar pattern when looking at violent and non-violent protests separately.
20. To further clarify our findings, we are not suggesting that UN shaming generates more women's protests than shaming coming from women's human rights NGOs. In fact, Figure 1 reveals that there are overlapping confidence intervals in the number of protests when there is shaming made by the UN and women's NGOs, suggesting that the numbers of protests caused by both types of shaming are statistically not different from each other. Instead, what Figure 1 reveals is that when there is shaming, be it coming from the UN or women's NGO, the number of protests will increase, and the magnitude of this increase is larger with UN shaming.

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