



Sanctions and Nonviolent Protest Mobilization - The Struggle against Apartheid

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Abstract

This paper addresses the puzzle of why people join nonviolent anti-regime protests despite facing severe repressions from their governments. It inspects the role of international sanctions in the mobilization of nonviolent protests. Following previous research on sanctions, it theorizes that the imposition of sanctions can have an important signalling function and lend psychological support to protestors thereby positively impacting protest mobilization. The hypothesis that protest mobilization increases after the imposition of sanctions and the expectation that local media can help transmit this international moral boost by reporting about sanctions will be tested in a single case study format investigating one of the most prominent sanctioning regimes in UN history - South Africa.

Keywords

Sanctions, Nonviolent protest, Signalling, South Africa



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“Sanctions Hurt but Apartheid Kills!” –

Moses Mayekiso (General Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers)¹

1. Introduction

What helps nonviolent protests succeed? Domestically, people have to overcome the collective action problem, that is, a situation in which people despite being in favor of collective action do not support it because of associated costs such as repression, which is why they opt to free-ride (Olson, 1965). Aside from domestic solutions for overcoming the free-riding issue, there can be important exogenous influences like international sanctions which can help overcome the collective action problem, facilitating protest mobilization.

So far, peace and conflict scholars are divided on the effects of international sanctions on protest mobilization. Hellmeier (2021) argues that sanctions increase support for the regime because blame for economic hardship is shifted to foreign interveners. Others find that sanctions and the threat thereof can stimulate anti-government protests (Allen, 2008; Grauvogel et al., 2017). Contributing to the discussion about the effect of sanctions on protest mobilization I ask the research question: How do sanctions affect mobilization for nonviolent campaigns? To address this question, I will analyze the role by the media in protest mobilization. Following Liou et al. (2022), I test whether local newspaper reports about the imposition of sanctions have an important signaling function and lend psychological support to the protestors thereby positively impacting protest mobilization. The proposed causal relationship will be tested on the second defiance campaign in South Africa (1984-1994) – a successful case of protest mobilization cumulating in the end of apartheid. To assess the effect of sanctions, the second defiance campaign will be contrasted with the more unsuccessful mobilization in the first defiance campaign (1952-1961).

After elaborating on my theory and causal mechanism, I discuss my research design and case selection. The subsequent analysis is followed by a critical discussion of the findings, the limitations of the study and a possible alternative explanation. My conclusion summarizes the findings and suggests further research.

¹ Quoted in Maloka, 1999.

2. Theory

Nonviolent resistance is the employment of “nonviolent methods such as protests, strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations, without using or threatening physical harm against the opponent” (Chenoweth & Cunningham, 2013, p.271). Nonviolent protests are often faced with brutal repression or imprisonment (Chenoweth et al., 2017). Therefore, when analyzing nonviolent protest mobilization, the question arises why rational individuals “take the personal risk to challenge the existing order” (Zunes, 1999, p.161). The collective action problem captures this social dilemma: When it comes to collective action, everyone seeks to gain advantages of others’ involvement without bearing the burden of participation themselves (Olson, 1965). Nonetheless, if everyone seeks to evade the costs and relies on free riding instead, collective action fails (ibid). Similarly, in nonviolent protest organization, despite agreeing with a campaign’s overall objective, joining a movement is expensive for protestors because they risk repression and would benefit from successful collective action regardless by free riding.

Even though one-sided violence harms protest mobilization by disincentivizing participation, it can help nonviolent campaigns by causing security force defection and attracting international support (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). Sutton et al. (2014) highlight the important role of the media in causing these domestic and international backlashes. The media can have an important communication function **within a country** by publicizing repressive events which cause public outrage and thereby increase mobilization (Hess & Martin, 2006). In addition, by reporting about human rights violations in a country, local media reports can make state leaders **abroad** aware of violations of international human rights law (Sutton et al., 2014). International awareness of repression can induce international sanctions to compel change in a repressing regime’s actions.

Conventional wisdom holds that there should be a positive relation between sanctions punishing a repressive regime and the success of nonviolent campaigns (Nossal, 1989; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). However, the impact of sanctions on protest mobilization is disputed. Proponents of the so-called rally-around-the-flag effect argue that sanctions may incite nationalist sentiments and more support for the leading regime because targeted governments shift the blame to foreign interveners (Hellmeier, 2021; Weiss, 2014). Others find that foreign threats and sanctions stimulate anti-government protests (Allen, 2008; Grauvogel et al., 2017). Government power derives from its authority, that is, people’s belief in the regime’s right to rule them, human resources meaning persons and institutions cooperating with the regime and

providing it with skills, knowledge, and material resources, as well as intangible factors such as the “population’s habits and attitudes toward obedience and submission” (Sharp, 2008, p.1375). Isolating a government economically and politically might severely undermine its power and its ability to counter mobilization efforts as projected by Sharp (2008). Grauvogel et al. (2017) find that sanction threats can have a signaling function and can “work as an international stamp of approval for would-be protestors” (p.86). Revealing a regime’s diminishing powers, sanction threats have thus the potential to increase “previously existing dissent within the targeted regime” (ibid). Similarly, the actual imposition of economic sanctions can increase the success of nonviolent campaigns (Liou et al., 2022). Following from this, I hypothesize: **The more sanctions are imposed on a target government, the more successful nonviolent protest mobilization.**

In addition to testing this hypothesis, I hope to complement previous quantitative studies on the relationship between sanctions and protest mobilization by testing a plausible causal chain connecting the two variables (Figure 1). Liou et al. (2022) propose for future research that sanctions must meet three conditions to increase protest mobilization through broader media coverage: They are 1) multilateral 2) high-cost and 3) respond to one-sided violence. This paper focuses especially on sanctions imposed in response to human rights violations. It is expected that these types of sanctions, as opposed to sanctions in response to for example, trade violations, will be more prominent in the media (Liou et al., 2022). Sanctions impose high costs on the target and signal how isolated a country is in the international community (Levy, 1999). This signaling function is expected to be particularly salient when sender countries incur high costs themselves for example by giving up important investment

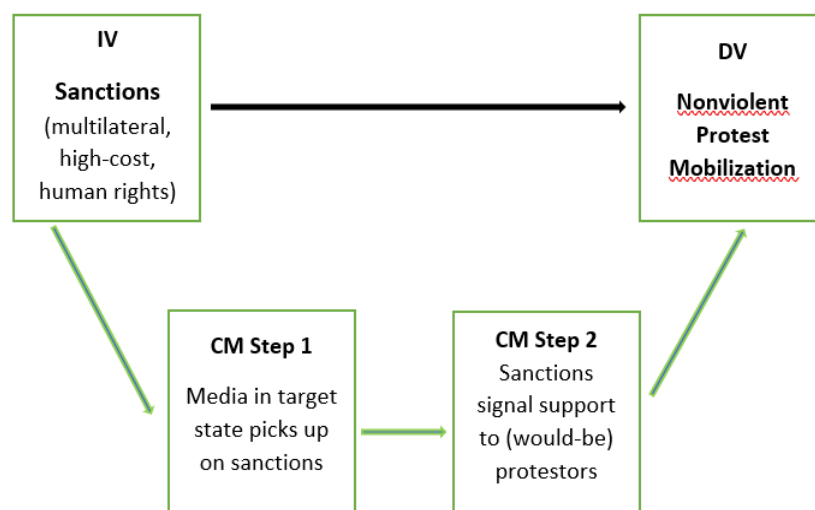


Figure 1: Illustration Causal Mechanism (based on Liou et al., 2022, p.21)

opportunities when imposing sanctions. Putting words into actions underscores the international community's determination to punish and makes support for protestors more credible (Liou et al., 2022). Broad media coverage is expected to transmit this signal of moral support for citizens which nonviolent groups can use to further mobilize the domestic public (ibid). Moreover, sanctions can legitimize protests acknowledging that a regime is in the wrong which induces would-be protestors to join the nonviolent campaigns (Grauvogel et al., 2017; Wood, 2008).

3. Research Design, Case Selection and Operationalization

3.1 Case Selection

Nonviolent protests had an immense impact on ending the apartheid regime in South Africa (Zunes, 1999). It is acknowledged that both leading opposition groups, the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC), formed militant wings from the 1980s onwards. Although the lines between violence and nonviolence were blurred during this second defiance campaign (1984-1994), most resistance consisted of peaceful protests and work boycotts (Zunes, 1999; Seidman, 2000). Therefore, my theory about nonviolent protest mobilization is applicable.

Because a positive correlation has been established between sanctions and protest mobilization (Grauvogel et al., 2017; Liou et al., 2022) and this paper aims to test the causal mechanism connecting the two variables, South Africa was selected as a typical case well-suited for testing theories (Ruffa, 2020). The effect of sanctions on nonviolent protest mobilization can be analyzed by comparing the second defiance campaign (1984-1994) which saw successful mobilization of the masses after comprehensive sanctions had been imposed with the unsuccessful first defiance campaign (1952-1961) where mobilization stagnated and during which sanctions were absent. The single-case study format ensures high internal validity by tracing the steps from the independent variable to the dependent variable (Gerring, 2007). As such, this research paper mimics the method of process-tracing. Crucially, this method can help evaluating explanatory hypotheses as well as providing insights into causal mechanisms (Collier, 2011) thereby allowing me to test my hypothesis and observe the proposed causal mechanism.

3.2 Operationalization and Data Collection

Dependent Variable and Independent Variable:

The first indicator for successful protest mobilization is the number of protestors. This data is expected to be found in Chenoweth and Lewis' NAVCO 2.0 dataset (2013). It collects data on 250 nonviolent and violent mass movements from 1945 to 2006 including on "participation size". Because nonviolent action is based on the idea that a government's power ultimately derives from the consent and obedience of the people it follows that if a sufficiently diverse protestor base withdraws power, it raises the regime's political costs (Sharp & Finkelstein, 1973). Therefore, a more valid measure of protest mobilization adds a second indicator, the variable "participation diversity" from the NAVCO 2.0 dataset (Chenoweth & Lewis, 2013). Statements and interviews supporting the nonviolent movements complement the measure for a heterogenous protestor base qualitatively.

The independent variable, sanctions, is defined as a sender country's attempt to impose costs on a target country and persuade it to change its policies (Allen, 2008). The variable "international material repercussions" in the NAVCO 2.0 dataset (Chenoweth & Lewis, 2013) indicates the presence/absence of sanctions. However, the binary coding of the variable does not reveal **why** sanctions have been imposed. This will be addressed in the operationalization of the causal mechanism in the next paragraph.

Causal Mechanism:

Liou et al. (2022) suggest that multilateral, high-cost, human rights sanctions "are more well-known to local citizens, leading to more opportunities for building domestic sympathy" (p.21). These types of sanctions are expected to be covered more extensively in the media which should increase mobilization. For clarity, the causal mechanism is addressed in two parts.

The first part of the mechanism establishes whether local media outlets reported about internationally imposed sanctions. From 1985 instead of being coordinated through the UN and remaining on a voluntary basis sanctions became more high-cost and were multilaterally imposed (Levy, 1999). It, therefore, remains to be answered whether sanctions were issued in response to regime repression. Sabinet is a suitable database for searching newspapers reporting about sanctions because it collects data on South African News from 1978 to the present, and hence, covers the second defiance campaign – the focus of this analysis. Due to my language capacities, I restricted myself to analyzing newspapers in English. I identified several independent newspapers after an initial search which are listed in my references. For

sanctions to be human rights sanctions, sender countries should consider the actions of the target country to be wrong and punishable. Therefore, I searched for the text strings “sanctions”, “violence”, “repression”, and “condemnation”. Because the literacy rate in South Africa in the 1980s was about 80% (World Bank, 2019), most people were potentially capable of reading newspapers. Hence, the local media could take a transmitter function of sanctions.

The second part of the causal mechanism should indicate that sanctions were perceived as support rather than an obstacle and psychologically reinforcing rather than damaging. Within the scope of this paper, opinions of different protest groups from political representatives of the ANC and the PAC, church representatives and union members have been drawn on selectively to observe how the sanctions were perceived by the population. Secondary sources are used to complement the data collection.

By combining qualitative and quantitative data, I account for a valid measurement of the respective concepts. The interpretation of quantitative data is repeatable and consistent i.e. reliable (Kellstedt & Whitten, 2013). In contrast, my personal interpretation of the qualitative data on people’s opinions about sanctions may pose an issue regarding reliability. The replicability of this paper is, nevertheless, enhanced because I provide clear indicators on how the sources have been selected and analyzed.

4. Analysis

4.1 The effects of sanctions on protest mobilization (IV → DV)

From 1948 to the early 1990s, Apartheid existed in South Africa as an institutionalized system of segregation dividing the population by alleged racial groups and withholding citizens’ rights from all non-White members of South Africa (Clark & Worger, 2016). After imposing some light sanctions in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre in 1961 (Lodge, 2011), countries started to impose more comprehensive sanctions in September 1985, after the regime’s declaration of the state of emergency and the ever-worsening repression of the black majority (Levy, 1999; Manby, 1992).

In South Africa, campaign size visibly increased after the imposition of far-reaching sanctions. At the beginning of the second defiance campaign in 1984, the dataset logs a participation number of 3 (100,000-499,999 participants). From 1990, the campaign size increases to between 500,000 to 1 million participants and from 1992 to 1994 -coded as the highest value 5- over 1 million people participate in the protests and boycotts. The NAVCO 2.0 dataset differentiates various measures for diversity from gender to class and ethnic

diversity (Lewis & Chenoweth, 2013). In the binary code, every variable in the dataset is coded as 1 indicating a diverse protester base. This is in line with findings of the secondary literature. Zunes informs that more white people started “boycotting stores which refused to serve all races” (1999, p.159). In the 1980s the churches became increasingly outspoken about apartheid and helped organize protests (Borer, 1996). Moreover, labor unions predominately supported international pressures (Maloka, 1999, p.189) as did students (Pogrud, 1990).

In the temporal comparison to the first defiance campaign from 1952 to 1961 which marks a period of absence of sanctions coded as 0 in the NAVCO dataset, campaign size stagnated at between 10,000 to 99,999 (coded as 2) participants (Lewis & Chenoweth, 2013) indicating unsuccessful and low protest mobilization. In contrast, the diversity of protestors in the NAVCO dataset appeared to be high from the beginning. This may be explained by the fact that diversity is coded as a dichotomous variable. It is only natural that the majority group - blacks had a share of about 76% between 1946 and 1990 (Chimere-Dan, 1992) - represent different genders, social classes, and religions. Therefore, the quantitative analysis can be misleading. Arguably, it was more important that influential fractions such as parts of the white population or the church started to openly support the nonviolent protests. During the first defiance campaign, many whites were still wary about the black demands (Zunes, 1999). However, the continued nonviolence created a “significant attitudinal changes among whites” (ibid, p.165). Hence qualitative indicators suggest that the protest movement got more diverse in gaining new allies during the second defiance campaign. This may potentially be the case because protests were legitimized by international sanctions (Grauvogel et al., 2017).

Therefore, the initial empirical evidence in comparison to the counterfactual of unsuccessful protest mobilization supports the hypothesis that sanctions positively influenced protest mobilization.

4.2 Were sanctions human rights sanctions and were they picked up by the local media? (CM1)

No sanctions existed during the first defiance campaign where the international community restricted itself to merely condemning the South African regime (Levy, 1999; Jones, 2015). The reports about sanctions dramatically increased with the issuance of comprehensive sanctions in 1985. Whereas in 1984, the string search for “sanctions” in the Sabinet database gives 286 hits, with the imposition of more far-reaching sanctions in 1985 and in 1986, the output increases to 646 hits and 928 hits respectively. This indicates that the media caught on to the sanctions.

In addition, I find support that sanctions were imposed in response to human rights violations. In 1984, the possibility of comprehensive sanctions was put back on the table. The Socialist Group in the European Parliament “condemned the apartheid system of racial segregation and pledged support for liberation movements” (Eastern Province Herald, 1984). British shadow foreign minister Denis Haley condemned the South African action as “disgraceful”, and he argued that “Britain should consult its European allies about possible economic sanctions against South Africa” (The Star, 1984). Several African States – already applying unilateral sanctions themselves - heavily advocated for more costly Western sanctions. They expressed deep concern over the increased repression in South Africa and the “violence perpetrated by the Pretoria regime against the defenseless population.” (The Star, 1985c).

In 1985, with the West imposing comprehensive sanctions against South Africa, the Canadian government clearly links sanctions to human rights violations and “condemned the South African Government’s use of violence, arbitrary arrest and detention which it said were measures of repression and control” (Daily Disspatch, 1985). Former Australian Prime Minister Fraser reaffirms the stance for greater economic pressure and sharpened sanctions against South Africa describing apartheid as “a system which denies any semblance of human dignity” (The Star, 1985a).

Sanctions were imposed to have a positive signaling function and lend symbolic support to the opposition movements. Both the UK and US hoped to “send a brisk signal to the South African Government” (The Argus, 1985). Essentially, “the impact sought is psychological and meant to encourage the processes of change [in South Africa].” (The Star, 1985e). As the US was a major trading partner of South Africa and the UK had made large investments in the country, the sanctions clearly raised the cost for the South African regime when compared to the first defiance campaign. By incurring high costs, the international community arguably underlined its resolve to support the black population and cause an abandonment of apartheid.

Thus, the empirical evidence supports the assumption that sanctions were reported about by the independent media and that state leaders made a clear connection between the repression under the apartheid regime and the imposition of sanctions.

4.3 Were sanctions perceived as positive signals and psychological support? (CM2)

On the one hand, the positive effect of sanctions was contested. Proponents argued that the main effect of sanctions was ultimately borne by the black community without having a notable

effect on the South African Regime's discriminatory and repressive actions against its people. US Ambassador to South Africa, Herman Nickel, explained that no direct link between sanctions and positive change could be established (The Star, 1985d). Similarly, Britain under Margaret Thatcher argued for a long time that imposing sanctions would mean more pressure to the black community than the South African Government (Evening Post, 1985). British MP Donald Anderson shared that he is "not convinced that black working man stood to benefit from sanctions" (Financial Mail, 1984).

On the side of businesses, Harry Oppenheimer, a prominent South African businessman and industrialist said in an interview: "But for [sanctions] a price has to be paid, and as usual it is the blacks who are paying it in the form of lower provisions for social services than would otherwise have been possible" (Sunday Times, 1984). In the same vein trade unions viewed sanctions with caution as "disinvestment by multinationals has on balance benefitted South African capital rather than workers or black communities" (South Africa International, 1989). Hinting at a similar outcome, it has been argued that "[T]he pro-disinvestment agencies do not appear to have done their homework on the black worker attitudes. Jobs and job security will always rate highly in the list of worker priorities." (Daily News, 1984). In 1984, several surveys by Lawrence Schlemmer of the University of Natal in Durban, found that 75 percent of black people opposed disinvestment and sanctions (Maloka, 1999).

On the flip side, people clearly felt that sanctions would help put pressure on the South African government and give momentum to the black majority's demands and protests. Weiss (1999) summarizes that in "South Africa, substantial political gain was achieved without life-threatening suffering; in fact, the black majority supported sanctions and even benefited from increased employment resulting from import substitution" (p.501). Similarly, Maloka (1999) describes how "[m]any blacks, especially those in the ranks of organized labor, accepted that eliminating apartheid entailed heavy costs" (p.189). After the declaration of the state of emergency in July 1985, many were "prepared to suffer personally as long as they contributed toward overthrowing the apartheid government" (ibid, p.185).

Criticizing Schlemmer's survey as misleading and politically biased, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) issued its own survey on black attitudes about sanctions in September 1985. They found that "49 percent of the respondents opted for conditional divestment, with 24 percent encouraging total sanctions" (Molaka, 1999, p.185). The survey was meant to "gauge the extent to which blacks were prepared to sacrifice for the anti-apartheid struggle" (ibid).

Representatives of the main opposition party ANC representing the bulk of black South Africans at that time were among the fiercest advocates for sanctions. After a European Communities (EC) delegation visit to South Africa, Luxemburg's Foreign Minister Poos confirmed that "[t]hey [the representatives of the ANC] asked us to impose sanctions" (The Star, 1985b). Many exiled opposition movements saw sanctions as "necessary accompaniment" of the struggle against apartheid (South Africa International, 1989). Apart from the ANC, "the UDF and the NIC [felt] encouraged by promises from the Labour Party in Britain and the Democratic Party in the United States that they will take a tougher line with the Botha Government in [South Africa] if they regain power" (Daily Dispatch, 1984). Many people felt reassured that "the disinvestment issue is being debated locally and overseas where anti-apartheid groups have advocated disinvestment and economic sanctions against South Africa" (Sowetan, 1984b). Prominent figures like Archbishop Desmond Tutu after winning the Nobel peace prize reinforced that he advocates for "peaceful change in [his] country, and [he] also called for economic pressure against South Africa as one of the last peaceful methods for change" (Sowetan, 1984a).

The empirical evidence does not give a straightforward answer to the question of whether protestors perceived the sanctions as supporting their movement. The implications of these mixed findings will be discussed in the next section.

5. Discussion

Following the theory, we should see a more successful protest mobilization after the imposition of sanctions. Indeed, the NAVCO 2.0 dataset provides that with the start of the second defiance campaign in 1984 and the imposition of comprehensive multilateral sanctions in 1985, the number of protestors increased multifold. In addition, secondary literature suggests that new allies, in form of the church and liberal whites, could be found. This is in line with Grauvogel et al.'s (2017) finding that the perceived possibility of success through sanctions and the enhanced legitimacy of protests, increased their size and diversity.

The first step of the causal mechanism is also supported, because the local media reported about sanctions. Because punitive measures were imposed in response to human rights violations, they got a fair share of attention. The second part of the causal mechanism and the question of whether sanctions were perceived as moral support remains more ambiguous in the analysis. One possible explanation may be that advocating for sanctions was a criminal offence in South Africa (Sowetan, 1984a). This finding from the analysis might explain why many

people did not openly support the call for sanctions even if they supported them as such or even voiced their opposition against them to not get on the wrong side of the regime. Measurement bias and the possible overreporting of people advocating against sanctions may distort the findings on sanction support. Finding unbiased data is one of the most common issues of peace and conflict research (Höglund & Öberg, 2011). A remedy may be additional triangulation for example through an opinion survey about sanctions at that time.

Furthermore, the theory may have an issue of endogeneity. It assumes that with the imposition of sanctions, mobilization increases. However, it is possible that the rising number of protesters underlined the urgency of the anti-apartheid struggles and increased pressure on the international community to impose sanctions. The causal mechanism that local media reports about international sanctions may be reversed in that international media covers more intensely large and diverse campaigns. Both effects of imposing sanctions to stimulate protest mobilization as well as protest mobilization attracting sanctions reinforce each other. Including more fine-grained steps in the causal mechanism and making the direction of sanctions influencing mobilization more explicit and not vice versa, should help circumvent this issue of reversed causation.

Lastly, the case selection may face certain limitations. Typical case studies usually lack external validity because it is difficult to account for confounders (Ruffa, 2020). Even if the within-case temporal comparison of the second defiance campaign, which took place under sanctions, with the counterfactual of the first defiance campaign without any sanctions can mitigate confounding factors such as economic performance, socioeconomic factors, and regime type, there may be other unknown variables that can only be detected by investigating a larger population of cases. Nevertheless, it should be positively highlighted that single case studies benefit from stronger internal validity and provide better understanding of the causal mechanism (Collier, 2011). Therefore, the single case study format helps breaking down the steps between the dependent and the independent variable arguably allowing for a deeper analysis than it would have been possible for a large-n study.

6. Alternative Explanation

Even if I found a link between the imposition of sanctions and increased numbers of protest participants this correlation does not imply causation. Social reality is multicausal and there are often competing explanations to a single outcome. One of these explanations touches on the presence of grievances. Cederman et al. (2013) argue that inequalities can quickly transform

into grievances. Under the South African Apartheid Regime there were huge discrepancies between the white elites and the black majority population, the latter being deprived of political and human rights and suffering from inequalities in education, health and basic infrastructure (Özler, 2007). Levy (1999) points out that with the sanctions in place “the repression of the black majority continued and at times intensified” (p.8). If sanctions were perceived as deepening existing inequalities, it is viable to consider that the relation between sanctions and protest mobilization is not as positive as assumed.

Parts of the analysis suggest that many effects of the sanctions were in fact solely borne by the black community leading to unemployment, loss of housing and threat to fulfill basic needs (Saturday Star, 1986), thereby exacerbating existing grievances. Mueller (2018) finds that economic grievances inspire protests. This relates to Gurr’s theory of relative deprivation and “the idea that economic hardship caused by sanctions will lead to political action (Gurr, 1970). Similarly, Allen (2008) argues “When the population feels the pinch of sanctions, this deprivation logic of sanctions anticipates a political response” (p.919). Thus, under the grievance explanation sanctions were not seen as positively mobilizing but the people’s despair forced more and more of them on the streets to join the protests.

The grievances explanation also falls into line with the recognition that protests were not as peaceful as commonly assumed. Grievances are often associated with violent protests mobilization (Bartusevicius, 2014) as emotions of anger and resentment may cause mobilization to “spill over into violence” (Cederman et al., 2013 p.46). With increasingly deteriorating living conditions and lost hope in nonviolent strategies, the opposition groups formed military wings during the second defiance campaign which coincides with the imposition of sanctions.

Therefore, the grievance explanation may explain increased nonviolent protests as well as the violent episodes. However, it cannot explain why the increased diversity of protests specifically why white people – who were arguably not as aggrieved by the sanctions – started to support the nonviolent protests.

7. Conclusion

This paper set out to answer the research question of how sanctions affect the mobilization for nonviolent campaigns. Findings from the NAVCO dataset support the hypothesis that with the imposition of broader sanctions at the beginning of the second defiance campaign, protest mobilization became more successful in terms of participation size and winning over allies as sanctions increasingly legitimized nonviolent protests. This conclusion is strengthened by the comparison of the successful protest mobilization during the second defiance campaign with the first defiance campaign during which mobilization stagnated and could not find meaningful allies.

However, regarding the causal mechanism, the empirical evidence remains inconclusive. While I note that the local media reported on the sanctions as expected and they were used by the international community as a signaling tool to turn words of condemnation into action, it is contested whether the black population perceived them as positive and as reinforcing mobilization. As a remedy, I have discussed an alternative which may explain why sanctions might enhance protest mobilization. Looking to the grievance literature, parts of the collected empirical evidence suggests that sanctions exasperated existing grievances of the black population and thereby induced more protest mobilization. While this explanation can explain the increased number of participants, it cannot explain why certain groups such as the church or parts of the white population increased their support during the second defiance campaign.

Leaving this puzzle open to future research, it may be interesting to replicate the analysis on other cases to test whether more support for the causal mechanism can be found elsewhere. In this vein since the analysis due to the placing in the 1980s was carried out on traditional media i.e. newspapers, the change of the signaling function with the rise of social media may be an avenue that is worth exploring.

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