

The Impact of External Interventions on Governance Outcomes in Fragile and Non-Fragile States

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Topic Description and Motivation

Research Question

How do external interventions affect governance outcomes in fragile and non-fragile states?

Why It Matters:

- Understanding the long-term impacts of interventions is critical for informing policy on state-building, peacekeeping, and aid distribution.
- External interventions may stabilize regions in the short term but undermine sovereignty and governance in the long term.
- Governance Improvement and Political Stability are critical for global development and peace.

Literature

- **Collier (2007)**: Peacekeeping can reduce violence short term but often fails to create lasting governance improvements.
- **Paris (2004)**: Liberal peacebuilding models often overlook local contexts, leading to unsustainable reforms.
- **Kaplan (2008)**: Over-reliance on aid fosters dependency, weakening state sovereignty.
- **Chauvet & Collier (2008)**: Impacts of foreign aid differ based on the initial institutional quality of the state.
- **Duffield (2010)**: Highlighted how interventions can disrupt local political systems, leading to governance vacuums.
- **Fortna (2008)**: Argued that while peacekeeping reduces conflict, its governance impacts are limited.

Hypotheses

- **H1:** External interventions negatively affect state legitimacy.
 - This relationship reflects how external influence can undermine the public's trust in their government by challenging sovereignty and the authority of domestic institutions.
- **H2:** External interventions negatively impact political stability.
 - Interventions, while often intended to stabilize, may inadvertently disrupt the balance of power, fuel internal conflicts, or exacerbate tensions, leading to a destabilized political environment.
- **H3:** External interventions negatively influence the rule of law.
 - The hypothesis suggests that greater foreign involvement weakens legal institutions and adherence to laws. This erosion of the rule of law has serious implications for governance, institutional integrity, and the protection of citizens' rights.

Data Sources and Description

- **Sources:**
 - **Fragile States Index (FSI):** Data is provided by The Fund for Peace, the FSI assesses the levels of stability and pressures faced by countries, considering social, economic, and political factors. It includes metrics such as external intervention, state legitimacy, and public services.
 - **World Governance Indicators (WGI):** Data is compiled by the World Bank, the WGI includes indicators of governance performance, such as political stability, government effectiveness, and rule of law.
- **Dataset:**
 - It consists of the FSI and WGI values for 30 countries (15 fragile, 15 non-fragile) spanning 2006 – 2022.

Data Sources and Description

- **External Intervention:** It reflects the extent of external influence on the country.
- **State Legitimacy:** It helps assess the impact of external interventions on public trust in the government and the state's perceived legitimacy.
- **Public Services:** It captures the state's capacity to deliver healthcare, education, and infrastructure.
- **Political Stability & Absence of Violence:** It measures the success of interventions in stabilizing fragile states.
- **Rule of Law:** It reflects the strength of legal institutions
- **Government Effectiveness:** It provides insights into the overall quality of governance structures post-intervention.
- **Total FSI:** It represents the overall fragility of the state.

Table 1. Summary Statistics

	Total FSI	State Legitimacy	Public Services	External Intervention	Political Stability & Absence of Violence	Government Effectiveness	Rule of Law
Count	510.00	510.00	510.00	510.00	510.00	510.00	510.00
Mean	64.99	5.30	5.15	5.21	0.58	0.53	0.58
Standard Deviation	38.34	3.84	3.70	3.66	0.30	0.32	0.34
Min.	14.60	0.20	0.60	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00
25%	27.08	1.10	1.50	1.40	0.30	0.22	0.26
50%	57.55	5.65	4.20	5.70	0.68	0.55	0.60
75%	103.78	9.20	9.00	8.78	0.87	0.84	0.92
Max.	114.90	10.00	10.00	10.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

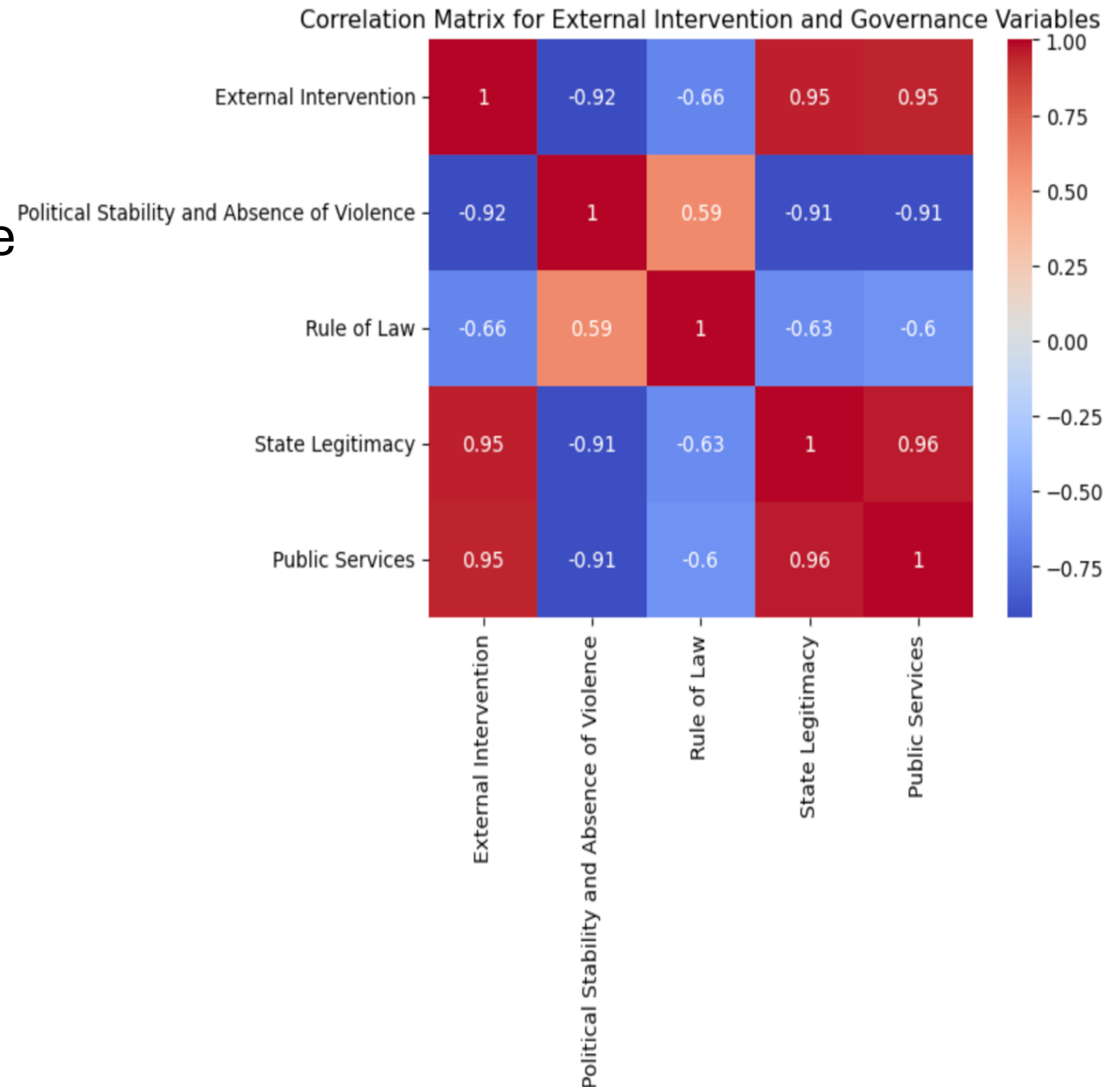
Preliminary Insights from Summary Statistics

- Fragile states show greater external intervention but lower governance scores.
- Non-fragile states exhibit better governance outcomes with minimal intervention.
- High standard deviations highlight substantial variability in governance indicators.

Visualization

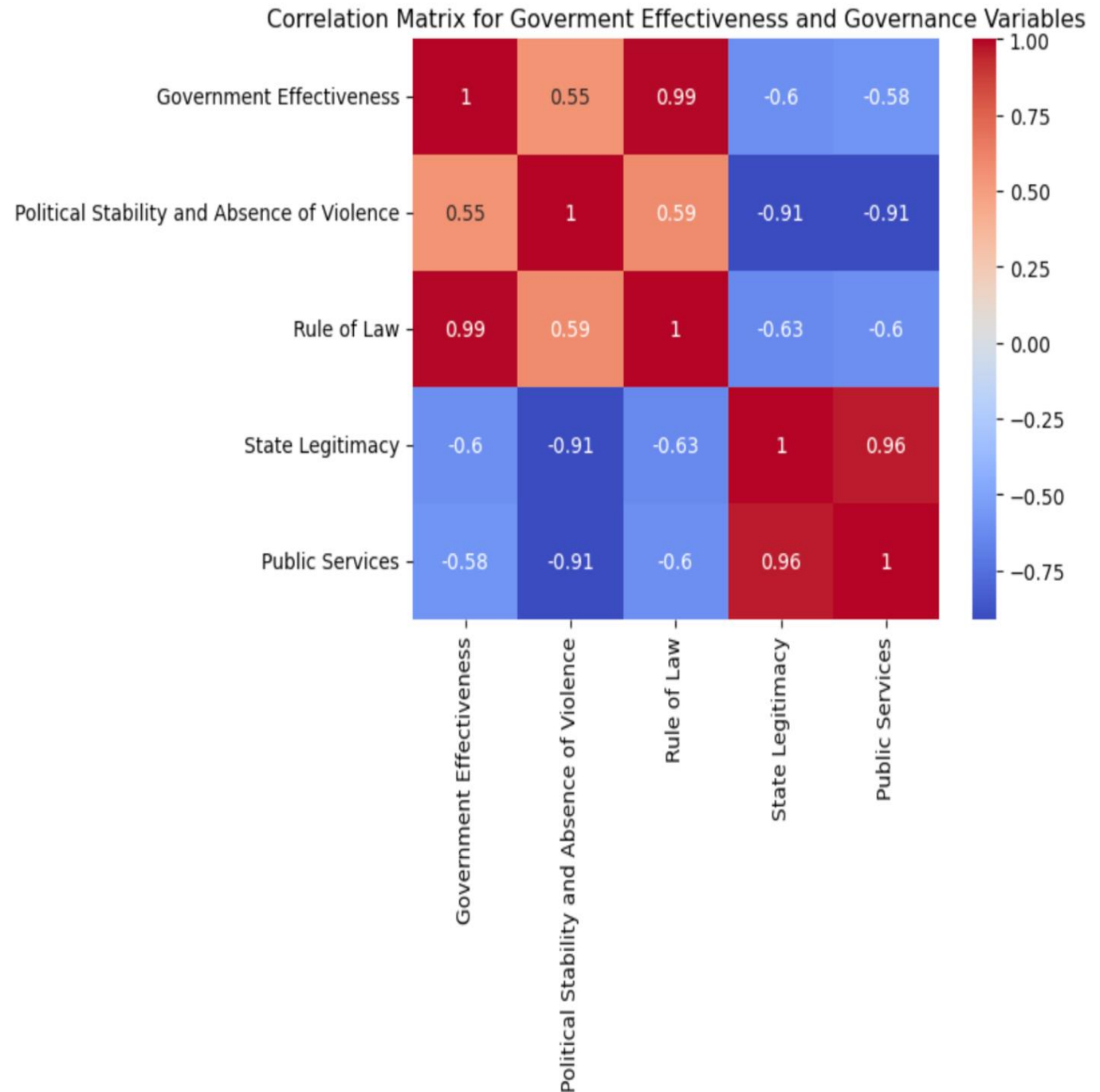
Figure 1: Correlation Heatmap:

The mixed correlations highlight the complex impact of external interventions: while they may strengthen certain governance areas, such as legitimacy and services, they can destabilize political systems and undermine the rule of law. These findings emphasize the need for carefully balanced approaches to intervention, particularly in fragile states.



Visualization

Strong government effectiveness can foster political stability but may not uniformly improve other governance dimensions such as the rule of law, state legitimacy, or public services. This highlights the need for balanced governance strategies that address both institutional efficiency and public trust.



Visualization

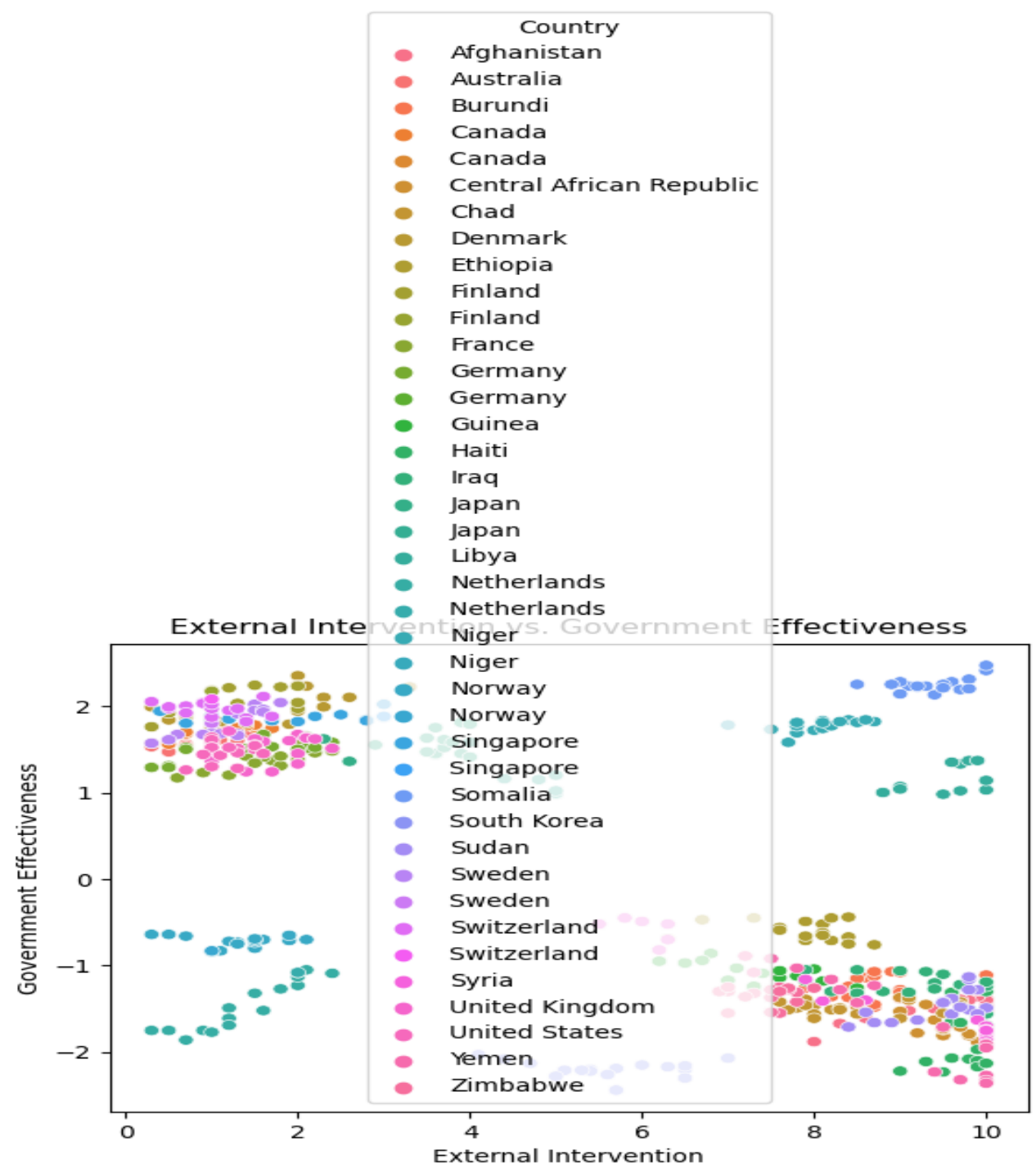
Figure 3: Scatter Plot

Non-Fragile States:

Clustered on the **left side**, exhibits low levels of external intervention and high government effectiveness. This suggests that strong governance structures can function effectively with minimal external support.

Fragile States:

Concentrated on the **right side**, with high external intervention and low government effectiveness. Despite significant intervention, governance outcomes remain poor, highlighting the challenges of external reliance.



Visualization

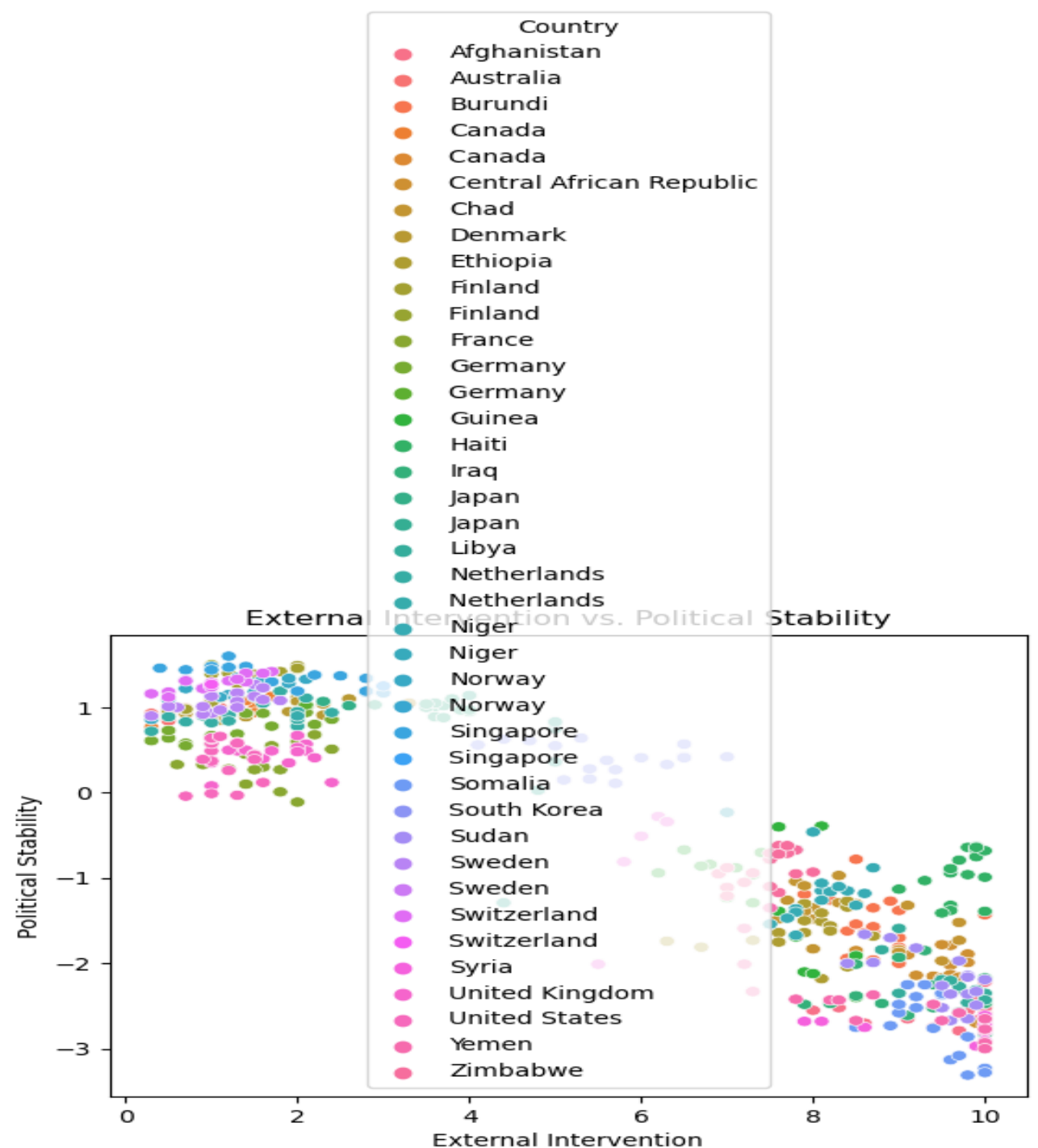
Figure 4: Scatter Plot

Fragile States:

Clustered on the **right side**, indicating high levels of external intervention but low political stability

Non-Fragile States:

Located in the **top-left quadrant**, characterized by low external intervention and high political stability.



Visualization

Figure 5: Scatter Plot

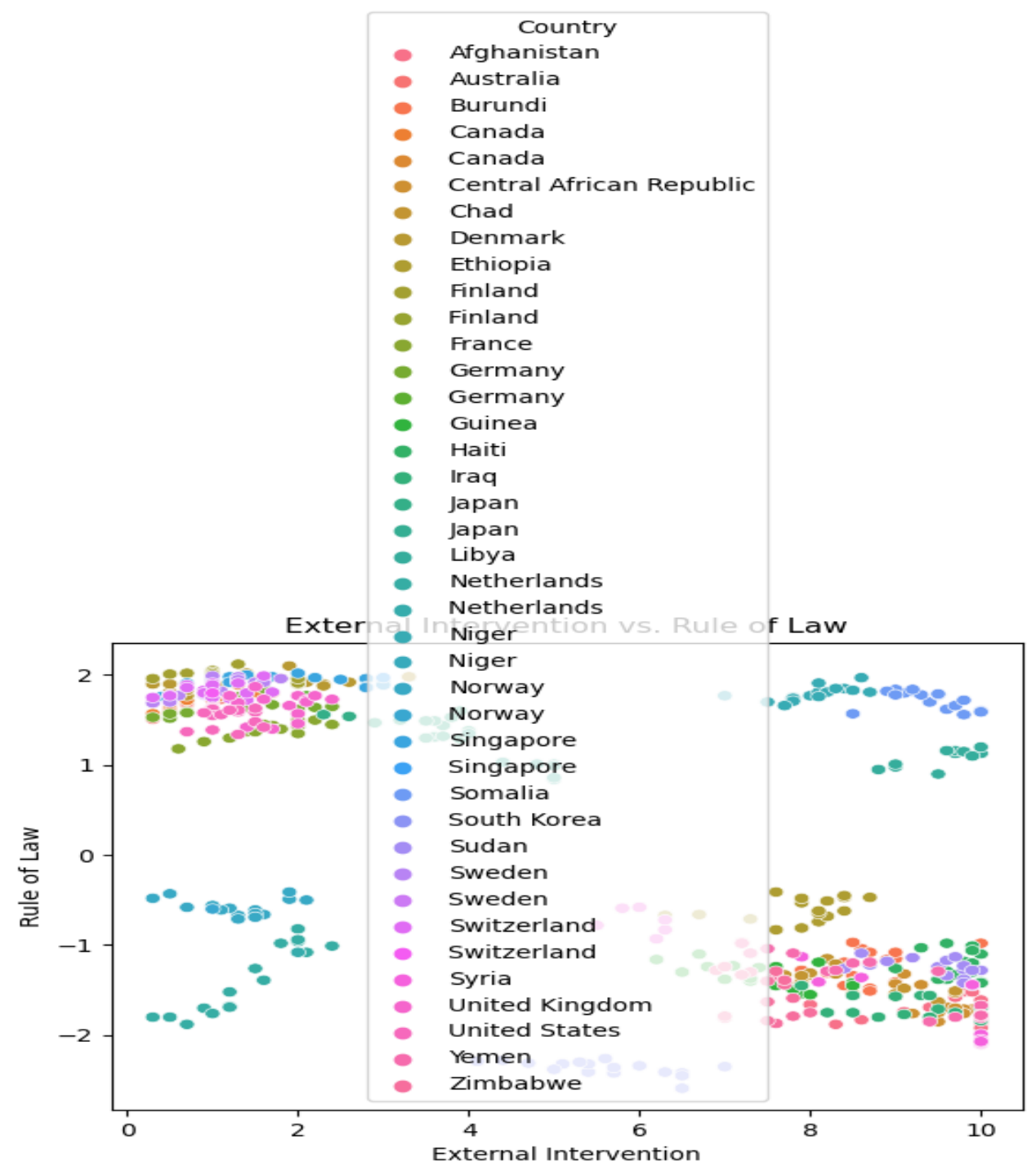
Non-Fragile States:

Clustered on the **left side** with low external intervention. Exhibit **higher rule of law scores**, reflecting robust governance and legal systems with minimal foreign support.

Fragile States:

Found on the **right side** of the plot, with high external intervention levels.

Negative rule of law scores indicating persistent challenges in establishing strong legal systems despite significant external support.



Fixed Effects PanelOLS Regression Method

Table 2. PanelOLS Summary for H1

	State Legitimacy
External Intervention	0.0720** (0.0363)
Public Services	- 0.1393*** (0.0374)
Total FSI	0.0782*** (0.0074)
Number of Observations	510

Table 3. PanelOLS Summary for H2

	Political Stability & Absence of Violence
External Intervention	- 0.0307*** (0.0066)
State Legitimacy	0.0006 (0.0084)
Public Services	- 0.0269*** (0.0069)
Total FSI	- 0.0033** (0.0015)
Number of Observations	510

From Table 2:

External Intervention has a positive influence on state legitimacy.

Total FSI Score have a positive and highly significant impact on state legitimacy.

Public Services have a negative relationship with state legitimacy.

From Table 3:

External Intervention has a negative and statistically significant impact on political stability.

Total FSI Score has a negative and significant relationship with political stability.

Public Services has a negative and significant effect on political stability.

Fixed Effects PanelOLS Regression Method

Table 4. PanelOLS Summary for H3

	Rule of Law
External Intervention	0.0079** (0.0036)
State Legitimacy	- 0.0018 (0.0046)
Public Services	- 0.0097** (0.0038)
Total FSI	- 0.0035*** (0.0008)
Number of Observations	510

From Table 4:

External Intervention has a positive and statistically significant effect on the rule of law. Total FSI Score has a negative and highly significant relationship with the rule of law. Public Services: Negative and significant effect on the rule of law.

Table 5. PanelOLS Summary for H1 with Interactive Effects

	State Legitimacy
External Intervention	0.1486*** (0.0462)
Public Services	- 0.0452 (0.0514)
Total FSI	0.0804*** (0.0074)
External Intervention x Public Services	- 0.0144*** (0.0054)
Number of Observations	510

From Table 5:

External Intervention has a positive and significant effect on state legitimacy. Public Services has negative but non-significant effect on state legitimacy. Total Fragility Score (FSI Total) has a positive and highly significant relationship with state legitimacy. Interaction Term (External Intervention x Public Services) has a negative and significant effect on state legitimacy.

Fixed Effects PanelOLS Regression Method

Table 6. PanelOLS Summary for H2 with Interactive Effects

	Political Stability and Absence of Violence
External Intervention	0.0080 (0.0079)
Public Services	0.0206** (0.0088)
Total FSI	- 0.0021* (0.0013)
External Intervention x Public Services	- 0.0073*** (0.0009)
Number of Observations	510

Table 7. PanelOLS Summary for H3 with Interactive Effects

	Rule of Law
External Intervention	0.0307*** (0.0044)
State Legitimacy	0.0175*** (0.0047)
Total FSI	- 0.0031*** (0.0007)
External Intervention x State Legitimacy	- 0.0039*** (0.0004)
Number of Observations	510

From Table 6:

External Intervention has a small, positive, but non-significant effect on political stability. Public Services has a positive and significant effect on political stability. FSI Total has a marginally negative but non-significant effect on political stability. Interaction Term (External Intervention x Public Services) has a negative and highly significant effect on political stability.

From Table 7:

External Intervention has a positive and significant effect on rule of law. State Legitimacy has a positive and significant effect on rule of law. FSI Total has a negative and highly significant effect on rule of law. Interaction Term (External Intervention x State Legitimacy) has a negative and highly significant effect on rule of law.

Results

- External intervention can positively influence governance outcomes like state legitimacy and rule of law.
- Effectiveness diminishes in contexts with strong domestic factors (like public services, state legitimacy).
- Interventions may lead to governance disruptions, dependency, or weakened domestic authority.

Conclusions

- External interventions negatively affect state legitimacy by eroding citizens' trust in their governments.
- Perceived challenges to sovereignty undermine the authority of fragile states.
- Contrary to stabilizing goals, interventions are linked to declines in political stability.
- Interventions weaken legal institutions and adherence to laws.

Policy Implications

- Focus on empowering local governance rather than imposing external solutions.
- Prioritize sovereignty and the integrity of domestic institutions.
- Offer targeted aid without destabilizing existing systems.
- Develop collaborative approaches that strengthen local capacity.

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Thank You, Any Questions?