

# When Do States Say Uncle? Network Dependence and Sanction Compliance

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## **Abstract**

This article explores when and why states comply with sanctions. Previous literature has suggested a duration modeling approach is needed to adequately capture the time it takes for a sanction to “work.” This approach, however, has failed to carefully account for important dynamics relevant to the modeling of sanction outcomes. Namely, present duration approaches fail to incorporate the network effects intrinsic to international sanction processes. At any given time, target states typically face both a network of sanctioners for an individual sanction case, as well as a general network of sanctioners including senders from multiple cases. We present a model that incorporates this interdependent nature of the international system by including network effects within the duration model. In addition, we are able to test whether traditional conditions that the literature claims as critical for predicting sanction compliance, such as domestic institutions, are still influential once network dynamics are adequately modeled. In doing so we are able to test two key hypothesis: (1) does dependence between the target state and its sanctioning network increase the probability of target compliance; and (2) do domestic institutions condition network effects?

# Introduction

Economic sanctions are a frequently used foreign policy tool in the realm of international relations. Typically, one or more states initiate sanctions against another state when they perceive the target state as non-cooperative. The trigger for economic sanctions can occur in many contexts: the target state breaks a previous agreement, the target state openly disobeys international law, or the target state engages in behavior that is simply unfavorable to the political preferences of another state. Take for example, in November of 2012 when the Obama administration imposed sanctions on the Iranian government for blocking Internet access, mobile-phone lines and satellite television channels from the public. Policymakers engage in heated debate over the use of sanctions as a means to avoid war while still taking action against a number of events from human rights abuses to civil war. The motivations for sanction initiation are cross-cutting, spanning across a diverse and interdependent mix of policy issues and political actors.

While the concept of sanctions— the idea that countries can put pressure on their economic ties to other countries in order to influence policy— is relatively straightforward. Yet, the study of when and why sanctions work is complex. While earlier research on sanctions argued that sanctions have little influence on targets (Lam 1990; Dashti-Gibson, Davis and Radcliff 1997; Morgan and Schwebach 1997; Drezner 1998) more recent research suggests that the effectiveness of sanctions is dependent on an interaction of several factors, namely: the number of senders acting as a part of the sanctioner group and the type of issue in dispute (Miers and Morgan 2002); the strength of domestic institutions within the target state; and the type of regime governing the target state (McGillivray and Stam 2004).

We agree with the theoretical and empirical literatures which suggest that several conditions are at work when predicting the outcome of sanctions. We argue, however, that political scientists have thus far failed to incorporate a key factor into their analysis: network dependencies. Drawing on the work in international relations on trade and conflict, we suggest that sanction cases are best conceptualized as a network phenomenon and must be modeled as such. In each and every sanction case, there is not only a network

of sanctions (i.e. how many states in the international network are sending or receiving sanctions in a given time frame) but there is also the micro-level network of the sanction case itself (i.e. there is typically a target who faces a network of sanctions). We analyze the endogenous structures inherent to network dynamics— such as reciprocity— and argue that these structures must be accounted for in our study of sanction outcomes. Furthermore, we extend on previous work that suggests duration models as an the most appropriate approach for modeling sanctions outcomes by building network measures into the duration framework. In doing so we are able to then return to key hypotheses from the literature and assess whether conditions such as regime type and internal stability influence sanction outcome once network dynamics are adequately incorporated into the model.

We leverage the network modeling approach to produce an accurate test of when and why sanctions end. ETC / CLOSING PARAGRAPH

## **When do Sanctions End?**

Previous work on the duration of sanctions, or when and why a target state will decide to comply with a particular sanction, has more recently focused on the role that domestic factors play. Marinov (2005) argues that sanctions “work” by destabilizing the leaders of the governments that sanctions punish. This is generally in line with other work which suggests that sanction outcomes are dependent on domestic stability and the strength of domestic institutions. For example, if a regime is already experiencing a high level of internal conflict, such as protest or violent clashes, the onset of an economic sanction against trade would weaken the regime even more. This heightens the cost of resistance against the sanction (Dashti-Gibson, Davis and Radcliff 1997).

Similarly, (Dorussen and Mo 2001) suggest that domestic support determines the duration (or “ending”) of sanctions whereby when the target state’s domestic constituency supports resistance against the sanction, the leader has greater incentive to not comply with the sanction, which effectively increases the sanction’s duration. Further supporting the idea that domestic institutions condition whether and when states comply with sanc-

tions, Lektzian and Souva (2007) argues that because of differing institutional incentives, economic sanctions are more likely to succeed against nondemocratic regimes than democratic ones. While all of these studies present empirical evidence for the general claim that domestic factors condition sanction outcome, none of them are able to also control for third party, or network level dependencies.

Research on compliance have historically utilized a logit or probit-estimation approach. However, others have argued that a duration modeling approach more accurately captures the important time-variant dynamics relevant to understanding the sanction process. Bolks and Al-Sowayel (2000) points out that a duration-modeling approach is able to include variables that fluctuate throughout the tenure of an individual sanction case. Clearly, if the goal of researchers is to be able to understand and predict when a target state is likely to comply to a sanction, then researchers have clear incentives to include time-variant data. Using a duration-model approach allows for the assessment of whether over time a specific factor such as political instability increases or decreases the probability that a target country will comply with a sanction.

McGillivray and Stam (2004) employ a hazard model to analyze a data set of 47 sanctions cases. They find that leadership change does strongly influence the duration of sanctions, but only in the case of non-democratic states. Similarly, Bolks and Al-Sowayel (2000) consider the determinants of economic sanction duration using a duration model approach. These authors also look inside the target state to define domestic conditions that influence sanction outcome. They suggest that the “decision-making” environment can either hinder or help the leader take countermeasures against the sanction. This “decision-making” environment is affected by factors such as a lack of coordination between government actors and local instability.

Clearly, domestic conditions seem to matter for predicting sanction compliance. However, it remains unclear whether external factors also influence duration compliance. If internal stability matters, then shouldn't it also matter whether the network of sanctioners are critical trade partners, allies, or neighbors who's dissatisfaction might help or hurt future chances at stability? External factors have been incorporated into previous

analysis as largely dyadic or monadic variables, but such an approach fails to capture and account for the complex interdependence structure that international politics inherently exhibits. Take for example international trade dynamics. While it is intuitive to many researchers that trade dependence between target and sender states likely influences the duration of economic sanctions, in order to adequately measure trade one has to analyze the trade *network* relevant to each sanction case. By avoiding this, researchers miss a wealth of structural information that is critical to understanding the ebb and flow of international cooperation and conflict. This point is by no means original to this project, but has gained increasing support in the literature; most prominent is the work on trade networks (Hoff and Ward 2004), conflict (Dorff and Ward 2013), alliances (Warren 2010) and intragovernmental organizations (Cao 2009; Greenhill 2010).

Furthermore, current duration approaches are unable to account for the history of interaction between countries, and thus ignore previous cases of compliance and sanction interdependence between target and sanctioning states. It is likely that over time, complex interdependencies emerge where if country  $i$  complies often to country  $j$ , country  $j$  might also be more likely to comply to country  $i$ . This process is typically known as reciprocity, and is one of the network attributes we account for in our analysis below. Basic concepts like these are currently ignored in the research on sanction compliance. This paper aims to fill this gap.<sup>1</sup>

## Accounting for Network Effects

Duration approach fails to incorporate network dynamics. We conceptualize network dynamics in terms of “pressures.” We specifically consider three main types of “network pressures.” First by capturing how other interactions between states— such as trade— might influence sanction compliance. Second, we consider that target states often face multiple sanctions by multiple sanctioners at one time. Third, we consider that reciprocal compliance occurs over time between states within the network. We incorporate all three of these relational effects into our duration model and assess whether these network

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<sup>1</sup>either as a footnote or a part of this paragraph we need to include Cranmer’s article.

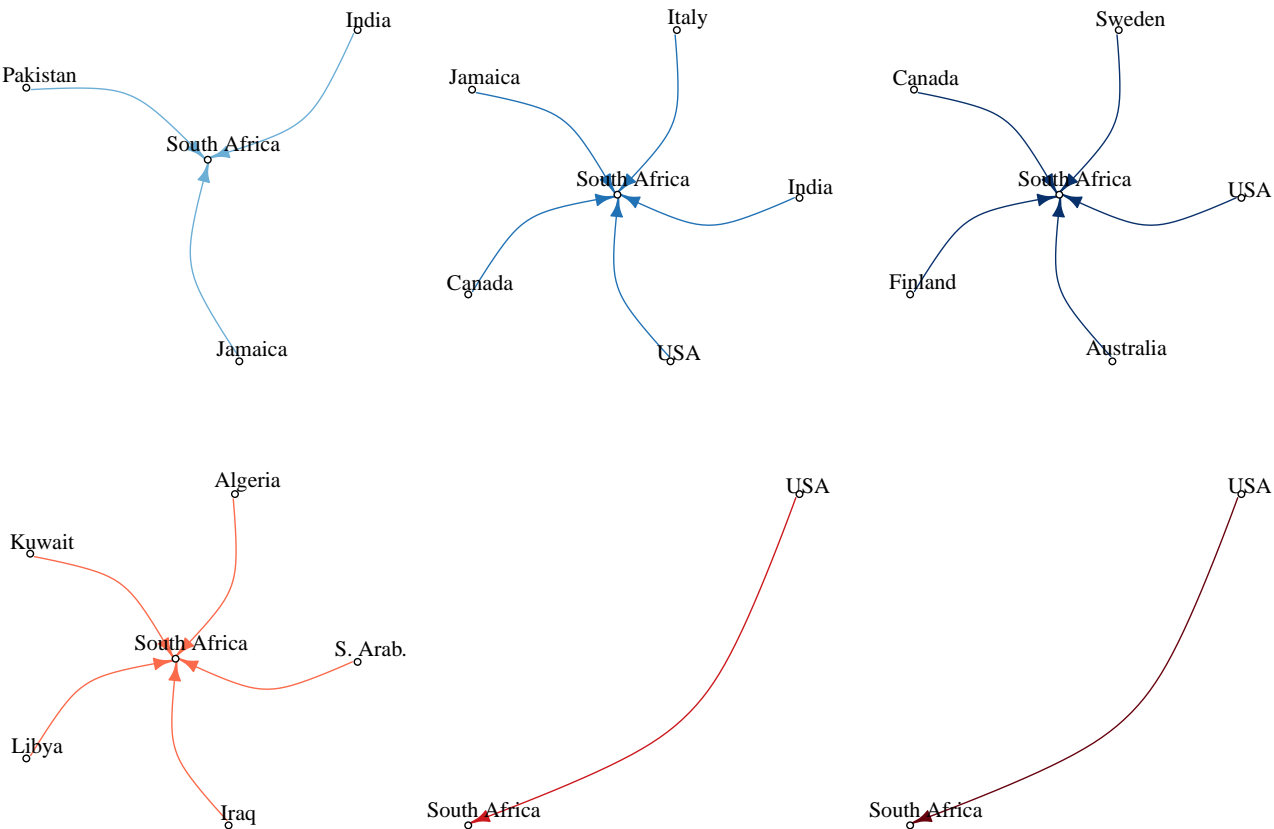


**Figure 1:** 1984 Sanction Spaghetti Bowl

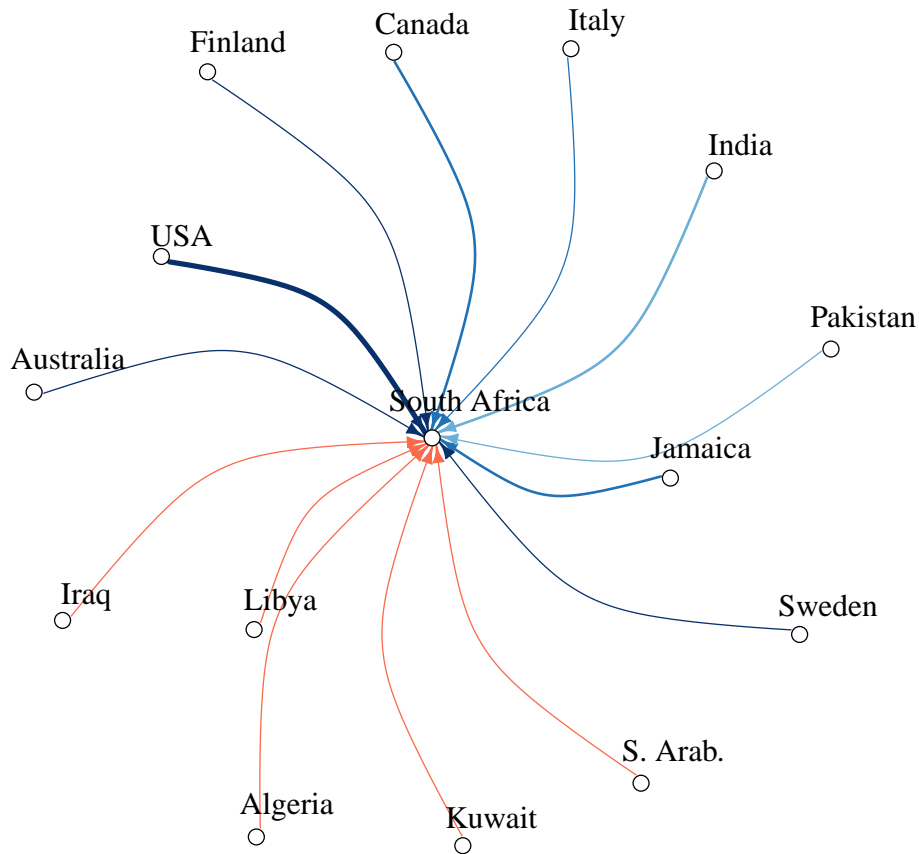
dynamics condition the effect of domestic institutions.

- **Sanction Case Network:** The relationship between sender(s) and the target matters for sanction compliance. Sanctions involving coalitions of sender(s) will be more quickly resolved than sanctions sent by just one state. Sanction cases where relationships are more proximate will be more quickly resolved.
- **Aggregate Network:** Targets of sanctions often face a multitude of sanction cases at any given point in time. States under the pressure of a multitude of sanctions will more quickly resolve sanction cases than those facing only a few.
- **Target states with stronger democratic institutions** that are under the pressure of sanctions will more quickly comply than those with less democratic institutions. Sanctions are designed to impose costs on key groups within countries. Affected groups will lobby the government to reach an accommodation with sanctioning states. The ability to successfully lobby is dependent upon political institutions

(Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999; Barro 1973; Ferejohn 1986)



**Figure 2:** South Africa 1984 Sanction Case Network



**Figure 3:** South Africa 1984 Sanction Case Network

# 1 Conceptualizing Networks

Two types of network effects that we capture:

- Sanction Case Network
  - Number of senders associated with a sanction case
  - Mean Number of other sanctions being sent by senders
  - Distance: The average distance between sender(s) and the receiver
  - Trade: The share of total trade that the sender(s) make up for the receiver
  - Alliances: The proportion of sender(s) that are allied with the receiver
  - IGOs: The average number of common IGOs that the sender(s) and receiver belong to
  - Religion: Similarity of religious group makeup between sender(s) and the receiver



- Aggregate Network
  - Sanctions Received: Total number of sanctions to which the target state is currently exposed

Add in reciprocity talk here.

## Empirics

To test the effects of network pressures on sanction compliance we use the Threat and Imposition of Sanctions (TIES) Database developed by Morgan, Bapat and Krustev (2009). This database includes over 1,400 sanction case initiations and outcomes from 1945 to 2005. Our focus here is restricted to sanctions that are prompted as the result of an economic issue. The TIES database categorizes the issue(s) involved in the threat or impositions of sanctions, we focus on four:

- Release citizens, property, or material
- Improve environmental policies
- Trade practices
- Implement economic reform

Restricting our analysis to sanctions stemming from these issues during the period of 1984 to 2005 leaves us with 184 sanction cases. Our unit of analysis is the sanction case-year, providing us with a total of 1,920 observations. Our dependent variable measures whether states are complying.

We define compliance as:

- Complete/Partial Acquiescence by Target to threat
- Negotiated Settlement

- Total/Partial Acquiescence by the Target State following sanctions imposition
- Negotiated Settlement following sanctions imposition

## 1.1 Modeling Approach

Describe duration model using cox proportional hazards with time varying covariates

$$\begin{aligned}
Compliance_{i,t} = & No. Senders_{j,t} + Distance_{j,t} + Trade_{j,t} + \\
& Ally_{j,t} + IGOs_{j,t} + Religion_{j,t} + \\
& Sanc. Rec'd_{i,t} + \\
& Constraints_{i,t} + GDP Capita_{i,t-1} + \\
& Internal Conflict_{i,t} + \\
& Constraints_{i,t} * No. Senders_j + \epsilon_{i,t}
\end{aligned}$$

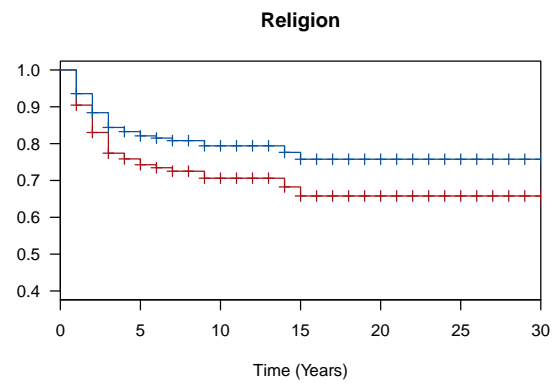
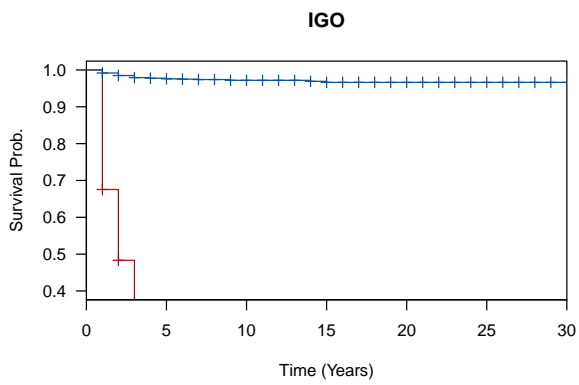
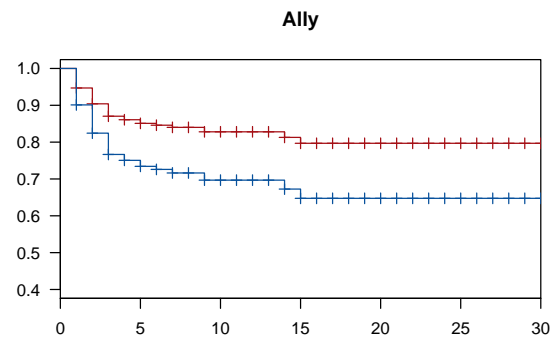
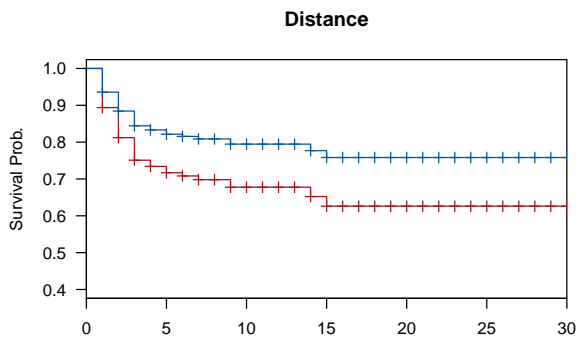
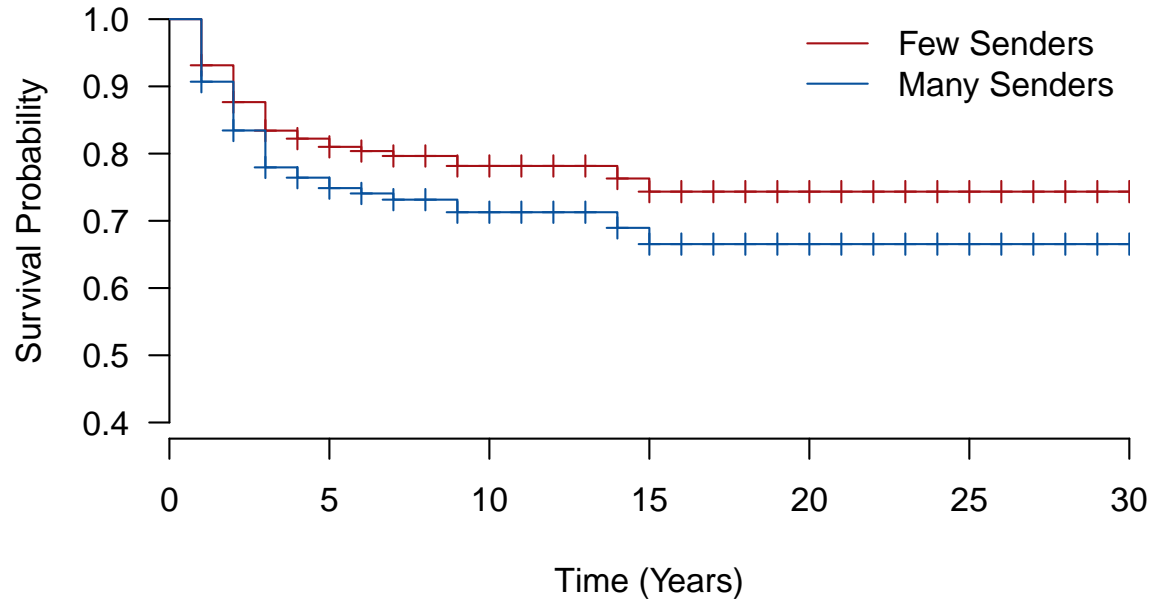
- $i$  represents the target of the sanction
- $j$  represents the relationship between the set of sender(s) for a particular sanction case and  $i$
- $t$  the time period

## 2 Results

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Number of Senders $_{j,t}$		0.324** (0.106)	0.303** (0.117)
Distance $_{j,t}$		-127.462** (54.376)	-123.569** (58.037)
Trade $_{j,t}$		28.701** (11.733)	20.596 (13.506)
Ally $_{j,t}$		0.494 (0.363)	0.604 (0.393)
IGOs $_{j,t}$		-0.027** (0.009)	-0.037** (0.011)
Religion $_{j,t}$		-0.322 (0.335)	-0.428 (0.381)
Sanc. Sent $_{j,t-1}$		0.011** (0.005)	0.013** (0.005)
Sanc. Rec'd $_{i,t-1}$		0.048 (0.052)	0.099* (0.057)
Constraints $_{i,t-1}$	-0.006** (0.002)		-0.004** (0.002)
Ln(GDP per capita) $_{i,t-1}$	0 (0.001)		-0.001 (0.001)
Internal Stability $_{i,t-1}$	0.003 (0.005)		0.002 (0.006)
n	2084	1752	1438
Events	57	64	54
Likelihood ratio test	9.13 (0.06)	39.02 (0)	50.18 (0)

**Table 1:** Results of duration models with time varying covariates estimated using Cox Proportional Hazards. Standard errors in parentheses. \*\* and \* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$  and  $p < 0.10$ , respectively.

**Figure 4:** Survival Probability by Number of Senders in a Sanction Case



### 3 Conclusion

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